

TEACHERS AS AGENTS OF CHANGE

A MASTERS PROGRAMME DESIGNED, LED AND TAUGHT BY TEACHERS

Edited by_

David Frost, Sheila Ball, Val Hill and Sarah Lightfoot

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FOREWORD — BY JOHN BANGS

It is both a pleasure and an honour to have been invited to write a foreword to 'Teachers as Agents of Change'. As Head of Education at the National Union of Teachers (NUT) for twenty years and now Senior Consultant to Education International, I have seen the constant struggle by classroom teachers to make their voices heard whether it is on pedagogic practice in their schools or on how their schools, or indeed the education system, are run.

My work with David Frost on teacher leadership in 2011 presented a big opportunity (Bangs & Frost, 2012) to influence policy in relation to the teaching profession. Education International, the global federation of teacher unions, had asked us to develop a framework it could use to promote policies which would enhance teachers' self-efficacy, voice and leadership - something that was an international first. Drawing on the experiences of networks of teachers and a number of far sighted teachers' unions, we were able to construct a framework of principles for policies that would promote teacher leadership. The study carried a powerful message; that it was perfectly possible for education systems to rethink their approach to school leadership. The global organisation for industrial countries, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) responded. Their Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), which found that teachers who were involved in school decision making had higher levels of job satisfaction and self-efficacy, drew on our framework and urged policy makers to consider providing system level guidance on distributed leadership (OECD, 2014).

In a previous HertsCam book, 'Empowering Teachers as Agents of Change: a non-positional approach to teacher leadership', I described some international developments in policy in relation to teacher leadership, including the International Summits on the Teaching Profession. These developments were both optimistic and fragile. While there are countless schools and networks of teachers across the globe, only a few countries have grappled with the question of how to co-construct with teachers and their unions, the kind of guidance the OECD has proposed. The US is one, although that looks threatened by the Trump administration. Countries such as Scotland, Finland, Denmark and Singapore have shown interest.

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However, it is quite possible that this idea, attractive as it is, will not have a hope of being implemented until there is a critical mass of teachers in each country who see themselves as professional practitioners who can exercise leadership and become more influential in their schools and networks. Indeed, a powerful thrust towards achieving that critical mass would be if teachers' organisations – their unions – provided the professional sites for teachers to network and share their practice. In short, policy developments, however encouraging, have not yet answered the big question: what does the practice of teacher leadership look like?

One answer, unequivocally, is what we see in HertsCam. It is, above all, a professional network created by teachers for teachers who collaborate to develop their practice. Policy, in England at least, seems to be focused almost entirely on the development of 'academies' and 'free schools' but the type of school at which teachers are employed is not the most important issue. What is important is how teachers' leadership practice in their schools can make a vital contribution to the development of their collective professional knowledge.

What makes HertsCam so distinctive is that its programmes – the MEd in Leading Teaching and Learning, the Teacher Led Development Work (TLDW) programme and the Network Events programme are led, managed and taught by teachers themselves. This is what makes the HertsCam masters degree programme the first of its kind globally.

In the last eight years, through Education International, I have worked closely with OECD on the policy implications of teachers' perceptions of themselves as professionals. From numerous studies and surveys, there is one thing which is absolutely clear. There is a great deal of evidence (e.g. OECD, 2017) that students with high levels of self-efficacy and well-being are enthusiastic about learning. It is little different for teachers. There is emerging evidence that teachers with high levels of confidence and efficacy, who are in control of their professional lives, have the greatest positive influence on student learning (TALIS, 2014).

This book, setting out in detail the experiences of HertsCam teachers, collectively describes a picture of teacher leadership in practice, with all the positive effects this has on student learning. Not only is it a fascinating description of teachers' creativity, but HertsCam is a model for the future development of the teaching profession globally. One indication of this is that the OECD included a description of the HertsCam MEd in Leading Teaching and Learning as an example of teacher leadership in its Background Report for the 2016 International Summit on the Teaching Profession.

I was privileged to be able to attend the first HertsCam MEd graduation ceremony in October 2017. It was very satisfying that day to talk to the graduands who are clearly teachers in control of their own professional destiny.

FOREWORD — BY SAL JARVIS

When David Frost and Val Hill first approached me in 2014 to ask if the University of Hertfordshire (UH) would be interested in HertsCam's MEd which had previously been part of the provision of the Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge, there were so many reasons to say no. We already had a taught masters programme in the UH School of Education aimed at practicing teachers, and the structure of the proposed programme, to which HertsCam seemed quite wedded, didn't fit at all well with University structures. We also had a number of established education partners across the UK who were leading either franchised or externally validated programmes – did we really want another? What's more, did we want a partner that wasn't an established school or college, with a clearly sustainable business model, as the others were, but was a small charitable organisation run by a seemingly loosely affiliated group of teachers, and led by a soon to be ex-Cambridge academic, who was also soon to be standing down from leadership of HertsCam. Well, did we?

In spite of all reasons to say no, the University of Hertfordshire prides itself on its connections with business and the professions: 'Community and Partners' is a key strand in our strategic plan and in the School of Education, we were committed to 'doing partnership' equally, by working alongside, and learning from, our partners to enable change and to support our students to have a lasting impact on the lives of young learners. We were also seeking to develop a distributed leadership approach in the School, wanting to empower all staff as leaders of change, so the HertsCam team's emphasis on this – on teachers' self-efficacy and sense of moral purpose – coupled with their huge enthusiasm for the programme, was very appealing. Reader, we partnered with them and the rest, as they say, is history.

I feel immensely privileged to have been invited to speak at the first HertsCam graduation even though, by then, I had moved out of the School to become the University's Pro Vice Chancellor (Education and Student Experience). I am so glad we said yes. The process of programme development was challenging for both sides, but that is as it should be.

The value of a real partnership lies in that challenge: in the opening up to new possibilities, giving the chance to see from a different perspective and to notice new things; in the need to defend rigorously those things you hold dear. In the process of this development both partners did that and, I think, we both enriched our understandings of how a masters programme could support school and teacher development, as well as of what the programme could be. As a consequence, we now have an international first: a programme led by, for, and with, teachers. It offers a new model for educational change and policy development: one which is driven by the insights and practice of teachers themselves and in which the reactions of children, not policy-makers, provide the impetus for change.

I can't wait to see how it develops!

— *Sal Jarvis is Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) at the University of Hertfordshire.* —

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- The University of Hertfordshire (UH) for entering into a partnership with HertsCam in order to validate the programme as a degree and for ongoing quality assurance
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- Open Society Foundations' Education Support Programme for their financial support of our International Teacher Leadership initiative in 2009 and for continuing guidance and encouragement
- Herts for Learning, a company which provides educational support services, for the sponsorship which has enabled us to publish this book
- The Centre for Educational Leadership (CEL) at UH for their case studies focusing on the work of HertsCam and the masters programme
- The schools which have enabled participants to attend the residential conferences and workshop sessions and enabled members of the teaching team to give their time to this endeavour
- The John Henry Newman School, Stevenage for hosting our MEd 'twilight sessions'
- The University of Cambridge Faculty of Education for its historical role in enabling the development of a masters programme that was the forerunner of the current programme
- Wolfson College, Cambridge for the space to meet to devise the programme prior to its validation in 2015

THE HERTSCAM MED TEACHING TEAM

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David is a founding trustee of the HertsCam Network and an Emeritus Fellow at Wolfson College, Cambridge. As a member the University of Cambridge Faculty of Education (1996-2016) he pursued the question of how to empower teachers as agents of change through his research and teaching. He was the co-ordinator of the programme that was the forerunner of the HertsCam MEd, part of the Cambridge provision from 1999-2014. He has published widely and spoken about teacher leadership at events all over the world. He continues to guide and support the work of HertsCam.

Sheila Ball

Sheila is a teacher of English at The Meridian School in Royston, Hertfordshire. She graduated from the forerunner of the HertsCam MEd in 2002 and later joined the Teaching Team. She has occupied senior leadership positions in a number of secondary schools and a school within the category of 'alternative provision'. She was part of the team which developed the MEd programme and is currently the deputy Programme Leader. She is currently the Programme Leader for the Teacher Led Development Work programme. She has played a major part in the International Teacher Leadership initiative.

Val Hill

Val was an English teacher and an assistant headteacher at Birchwood High School (2003-2017). She graduated from the forerunner of the HertsCam MEd in 2008 and subsequently joined the Teaching Team. She was a co-leader of the team which developed the HertsCam MEd programme and became its first Programme Leader when it was launched in 2015. She has also played a major part in the International Teacher Leadership initiative.

Sarah Lightfoot

Sarah has been a teacher and senior leader in primary schools specialising in 'Early Years' – the education of very young children. She was a member of the MEd Teaching Team following her graduation from the forerunner of the HertsCam MEd in 2003. She was part of the team that developed the HertsCam MEd programme, becoming its deputy programme leader in the year it was launched. She is the current MEd Programme Leader.

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INTRODUCTION

The MEd in Leading Teaching and Learning is one of the programmes provided by the HertsCam Network, an independent, teacher-led, not-for-profit organisation¹ committed to educational transformation through support for teacher leadership. HertsCam is a registered charity committed to working with schools to enable teachers to lead change. It is run by teachers who could be characterised as activists; they are committed to the continuous improvement of their own practice and the provision of leadership to build collaborative innovation; they take on roles as facilitators within HertsCam programmes and engage in advocacy on an international scale.

Teacher leadership and enhanced professionalism

We adopted the term teacher leadership some years ago because it has rhetorical value. Actually, it is an American import, but in the USA and in other parts of the world it tends to be assumed that teacher leadership is simply what ‘teacher leaders’ do. This elision can be clearly seen for example in the document drawn up by academics and unions in the US under the title of Teacher Leader Model Standards (Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium, 2011). In HertsCam we use the term in a more inclusive way based on the belief that any education practitioner – whether they be a headteacher, a holder of a middle leadership position, a teacher with no formal position, a classroom assistant or an auxiliary member of the team such as the school librarian – can be empowered and enabled to exercise leadership.

The point is to enable teachers to broaden their mode of professionalism so that it includes a commitment to being influential within their schools, throughout the network and in the wider system. We built on ideas such as Eric Hoyle’s ‘extended professionalism’ (1974) and Judyth Sachs’ ‘activist professionalism’ (2003), adding the focus on leadership and emphasising the centrality of the individual’s values and sense of moral purpose. For us the term ‘teacher leadership’ is helpful because it suggests a mode of professionalism which is maximally agential. For HertsCam, ‘enhanced professionalism’ is the key to the transformation and capacity building that are necessary for school improvement and education reform.

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Leading development work

Our key vehicle for supporting teacher leadership is the teacher-led development work methodology through which we provide support for anyone who wants to design and lead a project focused on a particular aspect of change. To enable teachers to lead change we have found the idea of the development project useful. There are several advantages: first, it is time bounded and therefore seems a practical proposition to busy teachers; second, it is focused on a specific challenge or problem; third, it involves project design and an explicit action plan which is subject to consultation and negotiation with colleagues. The concept of development work is the antithesis of 'implementation' which implies that ready-made practices can be simply put into place. In our experience, authentic and sustainable change occurs through a process of managed collaboration informed by scholarship and professional dialogue. A carefully worded definition can be found in Chapter 1 of this book.

To enable participants in our programmes to design projects, we offer a step-by-step approach in which each individual is invited to analyse their professional situation, reflect on their core values and consult with colleagues in order to identify an agenda for change. This personal act of reflection and agenda-setting is key to releasing the powerful force of the individual's moral purpose. Agency is maximised when the focus for change is something that the individual really cares about and can imagine how they might lead a project that could improve the life chances of children in their schools. Once a focus is identified, individuals are assisted in designing a process of intervention in which they work collaboratively with colleagues to review practice, explore possible routes for improvement and develop new practices. Along the way, colleagues, students, parents and others are drawn into dialogue and collaboration. What is learnt, both about the substantive focus and about leading change, is shared through network events in order to contribute to a process of mutual inspiration. At the conclusion of the project, the assessment of evidence arising leads to the award either of the Certificate in Teacher Leadership in the case of the TLDW programme, or a masters degree in the case of the MEd in Leading Teaching and Learning.

Narratives and advocacy

The construction and sharing of narratives is key to the way we seek to enhance professionalism in HertsCam. Narratives in the form of vignettes and exemplars are deployed in the teaching of our programmes and participants are assisted in narrating their own experience in workshops. At network events, participants tell their stories informally, perhaps around a poster depicting the progress of their project, or more formally when leading a workshop. These narratives are not limited to the passing on of practical tips; the best of them are inspirational in the sense that they convey some kind of moral lesson and encourage others to reflect on their own moral purpose as educators. They advocate for good pedagogic practice and enhanced professionalism.

Narratives are also at the centre of our many publications. For example, we published a journal called 'Teacher Leadership' between 2006 and 2012 which carried a total of 77 teachers' narratives about development projects they had led. These are all available for free download at www.teacherleadership.org.uk. In 2014 we published a book 'Transforming Education Through Teacher Leadership' (Frost, 2014a) which has since been translated into Serbian and Russian. A second book in 2017, 'Empowering Teachers as Agents of Change: a non-positional approach to teacher leadership', was more extensive with the majority of the 40 or so authors being practicing teachers. This book is currently being translated into Arabic and there are also plans to publish a Russian version and discussions about the possibility of a Chinese edition. The intended audience for our publications is wide. We want teachers across the world to be inspired to lead change themselves. We want experienced teachers and others who may be in a position to provide support to be encouraged to become facilitators of teacher leadership wherever they are in the world. We would also like policy makers and shapers to see that there is so much to be gained by waking the sleeping giant of teacher leadership (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001).

We have advocated in more direct ways for these ideas and practices in many parts of the world. Teachers from HertsCam have played major

roles in workshops for collaborators in places including Greece, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Portugal, Serbia and Croatia. We have participated in network events involving teachers in Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Kazakhstan, Montenegro, Portugal, Serbia and Turkey. We have helped to establish teacher leadership programmes in all of these places as well as in Egypt and Palestine. We have spoken at conferences and seminars in Australia, Azerbaijan, Canada, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, the Netherlands, Portugal, Scotland, Serbia, South Africa, Spain and the USA. It is this desire to reach the widest possible audience that led to the decision to publish this volume as an e-book.

What are we advocating for?

There are many more reasons to advocate for enabling and encouraging teachers to embrace the mode of professionalism referred to above. Our perspective on the transformative power of teacher leadership has been enriched through our international collaborations. In 2008, the launch of the International Teacher Leadership initiative put us in contact with organisations such as Open Society Foundations and Education International as well as a range of interested parties located in NGOs (non-governmental organisations) and universities. As we explored the possibilities of non-positional teacher leadership with collaborators in the Western Balkans, southern Mediterranean countries, Turkey and so on, it became clear that the HertsCam approach had implications far wider than school improvement.

As we argue above, non-positional teacher leadership focuses on enhanced professionalism in which teachers develop the capacity to initiate and lead change. This has been evident not only in HertsCam, but also in the many countries where the ITL initiative was active (Frost, 2011) and more recently in contexts such as Egypt and Palestine (Eltemamy, 2017; Ramahi, 2016, 2017). However, what has been more pronounced in the international context is the contribution that teacher leadership can have to the development of the democratic way of life by enabling voice, collaboration and egalitarian ways of working in institutions (Vranješević & Čelebičić, 2014; Woods & Roberts, 2018). It has also been demonstrated, particularly in the Western

Balkans, that intercultural understanding can be fostered by casting teachers as agents of change who are committed to devising strategies for making cultural difference visible and promoting dialogue about such strategies (Vranješević & Frost, 2016; Vranješević & Čelebičić, 2014). More recently we have learned that teacher leadership can contribute to social, economic and political emancipation by enabling teachers and schools in situations where oppression is the norm to construct their own narratives about educational futures (Ramahi, 2015, 2016).

This book

This book showcases the work of sixteen teachers, brave pioneers who chose to commit themselves to what we believe is the world's first teacher-led masters degree programme. When they were interviewed for a place, each one talked in different ways about their moral purpose, their professional careers and their aspirations to be agents of change. They all expressed a desire to embrace scholarship, to study and bring fresh ideas to the development of their practice. In these initial conversations and the dialogue that followed in the seminars, workshops and residential conferences, participants pursued what we might call reflexive authenticity. For Kreber et al. (2007) authenticity is a process of becoming aware of the uniqueness of our lives and our capacity to both act and take responsibility for our actions. Reflexivity is the process through which we surface our assumptions, our ways of seeing and the power relations which surround our everyday practices (Archer, 2012). It is more than reflection; it is reflecting on our thinking and the processes through which we come to understand something.

The HertsCam MEd is focused on the development of practice. This is unequivocal. Our shared moral purpose is first and foremost to improve the quality of education for the young people in our schools. Some might suppose that scholarly activity including reading, discussion and writing assignments is somehow at odds with our practical aims, but this is far from being the case. In fact, we understand scholarship as a particular way of engaging with practice, one in which we explore and interrogate what occurs in our classrooms and schools. The conceptual and discursive tools used within the

MEd programme enrich the dialogic and reflexive processes through which we become more critical. With the benefit of this critical perspective, all of us, whether participant or member of the MEd Teaching Team, get closer to the professionalism we aspire to and find fulfilling.

CHAPTER 1:

The HertsCam MEd in Leading Teaching and Learning

David Frost, Sheila Ball, Val Hill and Sarah Lightfoot

The HertsCam MEd in Leading Teaching and Learning is a two-year, part-time masters degree programme designed to support the development of practice in schools by enabling participants to become effective agents of change.

It represents a significant breakthrough in the development of strategies to enhance teacher professionalism. Our aim in this chapter is to identify its distinctive features and explain the design of the programme.

A teacher-led programme

Perhaps the most distinctive feature of the HertsCam MEd is that it is entirely taught by school teachers rather than by university academics as has traditionally been the case. The teaching team comprises experienced 'scholar practitioners' who are all graduates of the forerunner of the HertsCam masters programme, many holding senior posts in secondary or primary schools. Members of the team work collaboratively to teach the programme and provide one-to-one supervision. The HertsCam teaching team developed the necessary expertise over a ten-year period when they were employed as additional supervisors and contributors to a programme overseen by the University of Cambridge Faculty of Education. That course had been established through a partnership between Cambridge and the Hertfordshire local education authority as part of its school improvement brief. As the co-ordinator of that programme, David Frost had recruited experienced practicing teachers as team members, most notably Jo Mylles, Sheila Ball, Tracy Gaiteri, Sarah Lightfoot, Paul Rose and Val Hill. The reason for this was not just that there was a shortage of full time academic staff at Cambridge who were willing to become involved in this challenging work, but also because these teachers could bring to bear their professional experience and knowledge as members of school senior leadership teams. This arrangement worked well for many years until 2014 when a member of the administrative staff at the Cambridge Faculty of Education identified what she thought to be a mismatch between our practice and the university regulations. The question of who was qualified to teach on the programme, coupled with increasing pressure to ensure that all masters courses at Cambridge could be recognised as 'research training', led to doubt within HertsCam about the viability of the course beyond David Frost's retirement from the Faculty of Education which was to be a just a few years hence. HertsCam needed a masters programme that could directly support the development of practice in schools and, since HertsCam had become an independent charity governed by headteachers and teachers, its Steering Committee took the decision to act pre-emptively to secure the future of

the programme. The partnership with Cambridge was dissolved and a new academic partner sought.

In our search for a new partner we explored a number of possibilities and eventually discovered that our local university had an explicit commitment to partnership with other organisations. An informal conversation with the Dean of the School of Education at the University of Hertfordshire opened the door to a rigorous process through which our masters programme and HertsCam as an organisation were subject to scrutiny, culminating in the submission of a full proposal. This was scrutinised by a panel set up by the University's Centre for Academic Quality Assurance with multiple representatives including colleagues from the School of Education and an external university. The panel met for a day during which groups of representatives of the teaching team, past students and headteachers were interviewed and the finer points of the proposal were discussed. After some amendments, the proposal was finally recommended for validation. This was an 'External Validation' which is to say that it is HertsCam's programme, managed, designed and taught by HertsCam, but the degree is awarded by the University of Hertfordshire with quality assurance mechanisms in place to ensure that the programme conforms to the proposal approved by the validation panel.

Another distinctive feature of the MEd programme is that it is embedded in a well-developed network dedicated to building professional knowledge by providing opportunities to engage in dialogue with colleagues from other schools. These take the form of 'Network Events', a programme of five or six each year, hosted by schools and held at the end of the school day, typically 4.30-6.30. Teachers lead workshops focusing on their development projects. They also display posters which provide a basis for discussion with fellow network members. In addition, an Annual Conference on a Saturday allows for more in-depth seminars, the participation of international partners and larger scale celebration. Also participating in these events are members of the many HertsCam Teacher Led Development Work (TLDW) groups which are based in schools in the region. The TLDW programme is not as

leadership of development projects in schools tends to lead to the enhancement of participants' moral purpose and their leadership capacity.

Who are the participants?

HertsCam invites applications from education professionals of all kinds including teachers, teaching assistants and others in auxiliary roles such as librarians. Their roles and responsibilities are many and varied but what they will have in common is a willingness to take up the challenge of leading change. In publicising the programme, we use the rhetoric of 'teacher leadership' because this term is used internationally (York-Barr & Duke, 2004) and it has a powerful appeal, but we adopt a very inclusive approach which we refer to as 'non-positional teacher leadership' (Frost, 2014b). This simply means that we are committed to enabling any adult working in an educational capacity to exercise leadership regardless of the particular role they occupy or formal position in the organisations in which they work. In HertsCam, the methodology for this is 'teacher-led development work' (Frost & Durrant, 2003; Frost, 2013). A key assumption is that change and improvement can be achieved through development projects which have been initiated by individual teachers and led by them over the course of an academic year. Leading a project invariably involves drawing colleagues into collaborative processes featuring dialogue, evaluation and review and, most crucially, innovation. Another key assumption is that professional knowledge in the education system is built when accounts of development work are shared within networking scenarios and subject to the critical friendship of peers (Costa & Kallick, 1993).

Programme content

The title of the HertsCam MEd is 'Leading Teaching and Learning'. Although the programme has a modular structure, the content is not neatly allocated to modules in the usual sequential and hierarchical way. Instead, our approach rests on Jerome Bruner's notion of the spiral curriculum in which learners revisit the same concepts but in increasingly sophisticated ways, eventually achieving full understanding and mastery (Bruner, 1960).

academically challenging as the masters and extends over just one year instead of two, but each year it enables over a hundred practitioners to experience the satisfaction and fulfilment of leading development projects. It is not surprising therefore that many of them subsequently apply for a place on the masters.

Aims and scope of the programme

As a registered charity, HertsCam is obliged to pursue activities which are in line with its publicly declared commitment:

To advance education for the public benefit through the provision of programmes for teachers to improve the quality of education in schools.

The MEd programme is therefore designed to enable its participants to initiate, design and lead development projects which result in improvements in aspects of professional practice and thus better learning outcomes for children in schools. It should be emphasised that we do not see these projects as research or enquiry, rather they constitute development work which we define as:

Strategic, focused and deliberate action intended to bring about improvements in professional practice. It takes the form of collaborative processes featuring activities such as consultation, negotiation, reflection, self-evaluation and deliberation which take place in planned sequence.

The HertsCam masters rests on the proposition that professional knowledge can be created and enriched through the leadership of a carefully designed, and rigorously accounted for, process of practice development in schools and other educational settings.

Because development projects are necessarily collaborative, they tend to have a transformative effect on the school's organisational structures and professional culture. In addition, participation in the taught sessions and the

work. They are asked to engage in an initial exploration of their school as an organisation by consulting colleagues, reflecting on the opportunities and challenges in the professional context and negotiating an agenda for the development of practice. The analysis is illuminated by relevant literatures and conceptual frameworks introduced in the programme sessions. At the conclusion of this module, participants submit a five thousand word paper reflecting on their organisational context and identifying in outline a focus for the development work they will lead.

Module 2 focuses on pedagogy which enables participants to explore the proposed project focus in considerable depth. A project focus will always entail aspects of teaching and learning. For example, if a participant identifies as a project focus the need for strategies that enable students from disadvantaged backgrounds to overcome obstacles to learning, this will inevitably call for exploration of issues such as how social background can make a difference to dispositions towards learning. Group sessions in this module will help the participants to develop their understanding of pedagogy by drawing on relevant literatures and conceptual frameworks and using them to enrich reflection and dialogue within the MEd group. At the conclusion of this module, participants submit another five thousand word paper in which they consider the pedagogical implications of the proposed project focus.

Module 3 enables participants to design and plan their development projects. The first step is for each participant to clarify the focus of the project in the light of the pedagogical explorations in Module 2. The planning process is supported with a series of discussions about the practical manifestations, the mechanics of leadership. This involves consideration of strategies for securing the collaboration of key colleagues to ensure that the project gains purchase in the school. It includes consideration of a range of activities designed to have a significant impact on colleagues' values, beliefs and skills as they engage in collaborative reflection, evaluation and review. Project design also requires careful consideration of sequencing and timing which is challenging when most of the time available for such development work

The subject matter is specified in the form of a Topic Framework which underpins the programme. Sixteen topics are organised into four topic groups which are summarised below.

Leadership and professionalism: This group of topics is concerned with leadership and includes the consideration of teacher professionalism and teacher leadership, the role of the teacher in leading change and building professional knowledge through the leadership of development work.

Organisations and change: This group of topics is concerned with schools as organisations especially in relation to the challenge of innovation and change. Included here is consideration of the organisational structures and processes, the idea of professional learning community and factors such as governance and accountability.

Pedagogy: This group of topics is concerned with pedagogy and includes exploration of the nature of learning and the variations that we encounter in learners. The contexts of curriculum policy and schools as learning communities are examined.

Project design: This group of topics supports the design of development projects. Here the focus is on project leadership, management and impact. There is also consideration of tools for practice development, including those which scaffold reflection and deliberation.

Structure of the programme

The MEd programme operates over two academic years. It is configured as a series of four sequential modules, but these are not discrete units; rather each module builds on the previous one so that participants are supported in progressing through a series of steps. The process that participants experience is singular and continuous although notionally organised into assessed modules.

In Module 1, participants are provided with support and guidance to enable them to conduct an analysis of the institutional context of their development

Principle 3: scaffolding the development of a learning community in which enhanced social capital allows critical friendship to flourish

Principle 4: enabling reflection on experience and thinking, through participation in dialogic activities

Principle 5: building the capacity for critical reflection and narrative writing in which scholarship illuminates problem solving in professional contexts

Principle 6: facilitation and support through the use of discursive and conceptual tools that deepen understanding of themes relevant to the development of educational practice

Principle 7: building professional knowledge and fostering mutual inspiration through the organisation of networking and opportunities for international engagement

In summary, the approach to teaching and learning on the HertsCam MEd is designed to enable participants to lead development work in their schools and provide opportunities for them to discuss their projects with other programme participants and a wider range of colleagues at Network Events. Taught sessions enable the teaching team to scaffold and enrich the discussion with reference to relevant conceptual frameworks, literatures and knowledge domains.

The next sixteen chapters present narrative accounts of each of the participants' projects. They exemplify and illustrate what teachers can achieve when provided with appropriate forms of support.

is already allocated to the core business of teaching and administration. Consultation is also a key dimension of the planning and participants are supported in their endeavours to consult their colleagues about their plan. They are also asked to make presentations within the network which generate critical feedback and advice from other members of the network. Towards the end of this module, participants submit a portfolio of evidence of the planning process. This includes items such as an image of a poster used to present an early draft of the plan at the HertsCam Annual Conference and a short paper reflecting on the process of consultation.

During the course of Module 4, each participant leads their development project which has been designed to make a difference to the quality of teaching and learning in the school or other relevant setting. The group sessions provide support that enables participants to learn about leadership and the management of change by sharing their experience and through discussion about the techniques and strategies they are using in the flow of their projects. They also reflect on what they are discovering about the impact of the developmental activities they are leading and the legacy of their projects. The narratives of their projects are the key to learning about leadership but also to the process of knowledge building within the network. These narratives form the core of a report which is submitted as the final assignment.

A pedagogy for empowerment

The programme is designed to empower participants and enable them to make a difference in their schools. The approach to teaching and learning is therefore facilitative. The programme is evaluated according to the seven pedagogic principles set out below.

Principle 1: the cultivation of moral purpose as a dimension of extended professionalism

Principle 2: enabling the development of professional practice through the design and leadership of development projects

CHAPTER 2:

Developing effective learning dispositions in young children

Nicola Vicary and Sarah Lightfoot

Nicola is a teacher and Key Stage 1 Leader at Morgans Primary School and Nursery in Hertford, Hertfordshire. When she began as a participant in the HertsCam MEd in Leading Teaching and Learning in September 2015, she was a teacher at Ponsbourne St Mary's School, Hertford.

Sarah is the current MEd Programme Leader and has been a member of the team since she graduated from the forerunner of the HertsCam MEd in 2003. She was Nicola's MEd supervisor.

Characteristics of effective teaching and learning are clearly defined in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE, 2017a).

We are charged with ensuring that there are opportunities for:

- playing and exploring: in which children investigate and experience things, and ‘have a go’
- active learning: in which children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- creating and thinking critically: in which children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

Beyond the early years, children are often exposed to a more formal approach to teaching and learning, even in Year 1. I recognised my own experiences and frustrations echoed in the voices of teachers documented in the work of Sharp (2006). In common with them I wondered how I might introduce more formal literacy and numeracy lessons when young children find it hard to sit still. I too noted how in comparison with the foundation stage, Year 1 children experience less physical space, not as much play equipment, limited outdoor access and a higher child to adult ratio.

Despite these differences in the learning environments between school departments I felt that it was still possible to make a difference to children’s dispositions to learning. My growing understanding of the culture of my new school provided further inspiration. The school vision espoused the value of the 7Cs: confidence, curiosity, collaboration, communication, creativity, commitment and craftsmanship (Claxton & Lucas, 2015). I felt this had much in common with the style of teaching and learning used in the early years curriculum. However, an explicit and consistent approach leading to the development of these ‘learning habits’ (Claxton, 2010) was not in evidence. On reflection, these were the behaviours I wanted to encourage and observe in my classroom. I wondered whether a focus on the 7Cs would support the children as learners. My next step was to consult Alis, my headteacher, about my ideas.

Nicola’s story

My development work stemmed from my observations of the young children I taught. I was concerned that many appeared to be unfocused, lacking in motivation and seemingly without a desire to learn. I was determined to address this problem, knowing that anyone can be helped to become a more effective learner (Claxton, 1999). Although I envisaged carrying out development work within my own department, the project quickly developed into a whole school initiative. Leading the project gave me an opportunity to gain support and make space to focus on what matters. As the project developed, its success sparked the interest of my colleagues and led eventually to new strategies and routine practices as well as a shift in the language and vocabulary used when talking about the learning process.

First steps

I began by analysing my school context in order to explore a potential agenda for my development work. This was crucial as I had only just taken up my new position at Morgans Primary as my MEd studies commenced. I began by considering my own professional identity and how my values had been shaped by my previous experiences. It was also beneficial to think critically about my professional practice and reflect on my professional values and the extent to which these resonated with the norms and expectations in this new setting. Consultations with the headteacher helped me appreciate the vision and priorities of the school. I then considered the obstacles that might occur when leading a new initiative. By exploring the culture of my new school in this way I achieved greater clarity about the context for my development project. The focus of my project became clear too. As I got to know the class of Year 1 children at my new school I became concerned that they did not appear to be engaged in the learning process. I considered how the transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage (3-5 years) to Key Stage 1 (5-7 years) might be a factor. This transition can sometimes be fraught for both children and teachers, due to a different pedagogical stance in Year 1 (Sharp, 2006).

Collaborating to innovate

I would be leading a much larger scale project. Initially I envisaged working with several familiar colleagues but now I realised that I would need to involve and inspire all members of the teaching and support teams. As I planned this I thought through potential barriers and strategies that would help develop connections between myself and colleagues. I thought strategically about collaboration and how I could foster an environment that would help me to achieve my aims. I believed my project plan had the potential to lay the foundations for children to become more effective learners, however its success depended on my colleagues' involvement and commitment (Middlewood, Parker & Beere, 2005).

With my headteacher's encouragement I introduced the project to the whole school at the first staff meeting of the new academic year. I reasoned that the plethora of teaching resources I had made could act as provocations and stimulate their interest. Resources included the teddy bear characters, accompanying stories about their learning behaviours, explanatory posters, keyrings, picture frames that would act as aide memoirs and certificates to be awarded to children demonstrating particular learning behaviours.

The meeting to introduce the project was an opportunity to foster working relationships. I wanted to create the conditions for collaboration between colleagues and realised that the project was a vehicle for accomplishing this. I planned a workshop style meeting to facilitate dialogue. This included my introducing the project's focus and explaining how its aims resonated with the vision for the school agreed upon by the headteacher and governors. I talked about the impact the project could have. I thought that some colleagues might be looking for measurable outcomes, but I was ready to argue that if a pupil's disposition is improved, learning would be more effective and would have an eventual impact on attainment levels and test results (Claxton, 2010). I also ensured that there were opportunities for discussion and reflection individually and in small groups.

Planning the project

I began to shape a plan for my project based on the potential impact it could have on children's dispositions to learning. I explained to the headteacher that I wanted to lead a project that would have a tangible impact on my professional practice and that of my colleagues; that it would involve improving and modifying practice so that children would have opportunities to develop the learning habits outlined above. I was convinced that adults working with children should support them in identifying and developing these dispositions. I was very keen to create quickly a number of resources to help familiarise colleagues and children with the 7Cs. I had been impressed with the work of several colleagues I had met at HertsCam network events who had also focused on developing certain learning behaviours. I had been struck by the inventive and creative ways in which they had helped younger children become familiar with the characteristics. Each had used either visual or tactile representations of each disposition. I decided to make 7 teddy bears, one to represent each of the 7Cs. These tangible characters would, I hoped, help provoke children's interest and help colleagues explain each of the learning dispositions (Gilajanki, 2012). My headteacher was supportive of my initial plans but she challenged me in an unexpected way. She asked me to modify my plans so that they would involve the whole school community in order to maximise the impact of the project.

I was excited but nervous at the thought of leading a whole school project. I was new to the school and used to teaching younger children. An added possible complication was that the school community is housed in two separate buildings; the older children and staff team in one and the younger children in another. Furthermore, each teaching team had developed their own ways of 'doing things'. I wondered how this physical distance, and possibly differing subcultures, might affect the development of a coherent approach to developing the 7Cs. Another thought occurred to me – I would now have to make 133 teddy bears.

Our discussions resulted in two agreed actions for the development of the project. Firstly, we decided to rename the 7Cs as 'learning powers' and called the teddy characters Champs.

Each Champ had a particular learning power. Secondly, we decided to launch the project with a whole school 'learning power day'. This would feature a whole school assembly. Children could come in fancy dress and we would have a whole day of activities based around each of the champs and exploring the learning powers.

Challenges and highlights

I continued to collaborate with my colleagues, ensuring that there were plenty of planned opportunities built into the school year to support and celebrate our growing understanding of how to incorporate the learning powers into our planning, our use of resources and the school environment.

Other spontaneous opportunities for collaboration also presented themselves as a result of the focus on developing working relationships between colleagues. I also monitored the on-going project in a number of ways, for example children's perceptions gleaned from discussions at established forums, reviews of children's written work and observations of teaching.

One particular challenge surfaced over the course of the year as I found that one or two colleagues were not making use of the learning powers resources. I reasoned that perhaps these colleagues did not feel happy taking what they perceived to be risks with their teaching or perhaps had not fully understood the aims of the project. I found the most powerful source of motivation for colleagues to become more engaged was the children themselves. An opportunity to reflect on children's perceptions of the impact of the project on their learning provided fresh impetus.

There were many indications of improvements in teaching and learning as a result of the project. Children related how they had used learning powers resources to support them in their learning. For example, one Year 2 child commented:

The Champs reminded me not to give up, even when things are tricky. I'll get there soon.

An enthusiastic colleague, who taught older children, requested some additional support from me. As a result, we joined together to create inventive ways of incorporating the Champs into planned learning tasks. This was a good opportunity to model collaboration to other colleagues. Another non-teaching colleague, without prompting from me, created new displays in the school hall where we hold our assemblies. These displays promoted the learning powers in powerful, visual ways to the whole school community. They also had interactive aspects which helped to catch people's attention. Another indication of impact was when parents mentioned to me that children were using the language of the learning powers in conversations at home. I seized on this opportunity to embed these new behaviours by making small booklets of the learning powers posters for children to take home and share with their parents. In addition, the headteacher added a column to the school's weekly newsletter for parents with examples outlining how children were demonstrating the learning powers.

This proved to be vital in keeping parents informed, connected and involved in the project.

Informal observations are an established method of enabling teachers to share practice with each other in the school. I made use of these opportunities by explicitly modelling how to make use of the Champs and other resources to engage children in discussion about their behaviour for learning. This strategy appeared to be successful as at least one colleague was very

positive about how she might go about using the language associated with learning powers in her own teaching. Also, I heard that other teachers were discussing how engaged and positive the young learners in my classroom were. The message from my project seemed to be spreading.

Final thoughts

I have been heartened to see that the majority of my colleagues view the project as worthwhile. As a team we are beginning to realise how much of a difference we are making to the children's perceptions of themselves as learners. I think there has been a real improvement in teachers' professional capacity. Colleagues have experimented and shared their experiences in a supportive environment. I noticed that small successes led to a growth in confidence and as teachers took more and greater 'risks,' so the project gained momentum (Frost & Durrant, 2002). Together we are developing as a productive learning community which could be attributed to having an explicit focus and shared goals. The next step was for us as a team to shift our assumptions about the nature of change, seeing it not as separate strategic events but as a process of continuous adjustment, development and improvement (Whitaker, 1995).

Sarah's perspective

Teachers have a tendency to be modest when asked about their own leadership practice. Nicola is no exception, but her project exemplifies the HertsCam approach to non-positional leadership particularly well. Embedded in her story is evidence of what leadership entails when it is exercised by a practitioner in a school setting. Nicola enacts her sense of 'extended professionalism' in that the orientation of her work is agential. The driver throughout it has been her keen sense of moral purpose. Although improving children's learning is central, the focus of her work is collegial in nature and building and creating professional knowledge was and is part of the ongoing process.

What precipitated Nicola's development work was her observations of the children she taught. Her sense of moral purpose was what initially compelled her to try to make a difference to their views of themselves as learners. Passionate care was the impetus for improving professional practice (Moyle, 2001). The process of leadership therefore grew from Nicola's emotional connection and commitment to doing the best that she could for these young children.

The HertsCam MEd programme is designed to enable participants to appreciate that leadership is a strategic process. Nicola notes here how she needed to modify her original plans after consultation with her headteacher in order to set in motion an innovation that would draw in the wider teaching team and not be limited to improving only her own practice. From this point Nicola's plan was less of a timeline concerned with creating and managing a number of tasks and more of a vehicle to help support her leadership of a process of development. She began to consider how and when she might incorporate opportunities to consult with her colleagues, to offer support and advice – and to take it – and to model the teaching and learning approach that she was keen to develop. Once this had happened Nicola found that she and her colleagues became more courageous. They were able to discuss their values and assumptions about teaching and learning more openly. Nicola found that the approach she took helped colleagues to take the initiative in unexpected ways.

Despite being new to the school, Nicola was able to foster a climate of growing openness and trust. Her work supported the growth of 'authentic relationships' in the school (Starrett, 2007). Nicola's development project enabled a team of colleagues to begin to create and build context-specific professional knowledge of their own. This knowledge came about through genuine opportunities to take action, to reflect and to engage in dialogue about the transformation of professional practice. Nicola is aware that her challenge now is to continue to embed the innovation in the norms and routine practices of the school.

The exercise of leadership and the management of change have come to be an essential part of Nicola's professionalism. Her story is a valuable contribution to our understanding of what non-positional leadership looks like in action.

CHAPTER 3:

A professional development strategy to maximise agency

Sian Jays and Liz Brown

When Sian joined the first cohort of the new HertsCam MEd in September 2015, she was a science teacher and a member of a team of 'Advanced Skills Teachers' at Dame Alice Owens' School, a secondary school in Potters Bar, Hertfordshire.

Liz is Head of Modern Foreign Languages and a Professional Mentor at Sir John Lawes School in Harpenden, Hertfordshire. She is a member of the HertsCam MEd teaching team and was Sian's MEd supervisor in the second year of the course. Liz is a graduate of the forerunner of the HertsCam MEd.

invested in the project from the beginning and so I embraced a leadership approach consistent with the values of non-positional teacher leadership (Bangs & Frost, 2016).

Leadership in the AST team

I wanted to harness the enthusiasm and commitment of the team, so I expressed my sense of moral purpose and vision with them. I asked for their ideas and contributions to the project. This enabled us all to act as agents of change, giving the project a greater chance of success.

As an AST team we discussed possibilities for a new approach to professional learning, however this identified potential barriers to the project. I realised I would have to negotiate and adjust my initial ideas. When considering how to influence the group, I drew on the principles of the 'Round Table', a metaphor offered by Perkins (2003). He used it to highlight the importance of a community sitting together, communicating effectively and working together for the advancement of a whole organisation. I was also mindful of Penlington's (2008) advice which was to acknowledge and listen to dissenting voices whilst working towards resolution. My negotiation style was noticed by a fellow AST who expressed surprise that I did not seem to be upset when others wanted to alter my project. I realise that my reading and the dialogue within the MEd community had empowered me and given me the confidence to bring about change. I had been convinced that by working through problems together new initiatives would be more robust (Frost & Durrant, 2004; Zubizaretta, 2006). This became a real strength of the project as by listening to, and working with AST colleagues, we were able to develop an approach to supporting professional development that we all had ownership of and were invested in.

We asked departmental teams to discuss their needs and those of their students in the upcoming year and choose an area for the whole department to focus on. They were offered a list from which to select a theme that had been identified, through the school's development planning process, as being of the highest priority, for example, assessment, resilience and the

Sian's story

My project emerged from discussions with colleagues in the biology department. An issue that arose was that they seemed to lack self-efficacy, that is to say, their belief in their ability to produce results (Bandura, 1997). Through dialogue with colleagues I explored possible reasons for this. What emerged was that colleagues felt a sense of isolation which was perhaps linked to the individualised nature of the school's programme to support teachers' continuing professional development. Excellent practice was neither being shared nor embedded effectively within our department so we were experiencing what Fullan (1991) called the 'ceiling effect'. This led me to focus, initially, on setting up and supporting a learning community within the biology department. The characteristics of a learning community that seemed important to me are collaboration, shared vision and the facility to critically interrogate our own practice (Mitchell & Sackney, 2011; Toole & Louis, 2002). It seemed to me that the development of a more collaborative culture might enhance our self-efficacy and enable us to share knowledge (Sergiovanni, 2005). I was also conscious of the view that improving students' experience of studying a subject depends on a coherent vision in the whole department (Wineburg & Grossman, 1998).

Having identified my professional concern, I planned a project based on the teacher-led development work (TLDW) methodology in which I would negotiate and clarify a project design, carry out development work and contribute to professional knowledge through networking (Frost, 2013). Through personal experience I knew that this would help to increase teacher agency which can improve students' learning. Initial discussions within the biology department highlighted the benefit of having a shared focus. Subsequent pedagogical dialogue intensified, and this led quite quickly to improvements in the conditions for learning. I therefore considered how I could expand my project in order to influence all teachers within the school. I could not tackle such a large-scale project alone. Fortunately, I belonged to a team of 'advanced skills teachers' (AST) which had a responsibility to develop forms of support for professional learning. I wanted the ASTs to be

their conversations, I could discern the development of a joint vision. I became quite excited about the extent of the knowledge building that was occurring; teachers were clearly enjoying the discussions and the protected time to share their practice. They commented on the rarity of having the time for reflection and discussion, and how it had been a great opportunity for them to express their fears and gain confidence from each other. When I encouraged teachers to trial new ideas with their classes and reflect on what had the most impact, another teacher said that they felt less constrained by this learning community approach. It was evident that the teachers were discovering a wealth of knowledge about assessment in their own shared experience. I felt that their self-efficacy was developing.

Throughout the year I asked teachers to share their experiences with each other and discuss the obstacles and successes. This allowed them to reflect critically on the activities they had trialled. One teacher had trialled two or three different ways of assessing but said: *it was only during this session that I was beginning to evaluate why it had worked and how it could be improved.* This demonstrated why time for reflection is an essential part of support for professional development (Bubb & Earley, 2007).

I also asked colleagues to facilitate discussions in whole-school staff meetings where they shared ideas arising from their learning community. Although they were initially nervous, colleagues in the assessment group were in fact exercising leadership. When I questioned them as to how confident they were about this, a few said that they were hesitant because they were not experts. In subsequent discussions I pointed out that they had already been leading by facilitating groups in the staff briefing and modelling what they had been trialling with each other and with others in their departments. It was satisfying to see these teachers physically sit up a bit straighter and acknowledge that they had been doing this. One colleague reflected:

■ Oh, yes. When you put it like that I guess I am a leader.

Following this discussion, I asked for another round of examples of work for an assessment booklet that we would distribute to all teachers in the school.

use of digital tools. Each department would then attend five learning community sessions throughout the year; three of these would be 'twilight sessions', at the end of the teaching day, and two would take place on the scheduled staff development days. Time between these sessions would allow for teachers to act on what they had learnt. Focusing on one area as a department, would allow for increased conversation and reflection essential for the professional development of teachers and the main drivers in improving teaching and learning (Bubb & Earley, 2007). Each AST would take the lead on a theme and support the subject departments in clarifying their professional concern, designing an action plan, trialling activities and evaluating these before sharing and embedding successful practices. This reflected the TLDW methodology (Frost, 2013) and I believed that it would enhance colleagues' self-efficacy. I was the lead AST for the assessment learning community and what follows is an account of my experiences and those of the participating teachers.

Increasing teacher agency through learning communities

The assessment learning community was made up of teachers from the English, maths and language departments. At the beginning of the year I asked all the teachers to provide an example of an assessment activity that had impacted positively on students' learning. Unfortunately, only one teacher volunteered an example. With this in mind, I planned workshop activities that I thought would enhance teachers' self-efficacy by providing tools such as a diamond nine activity which required teachers to focus on what they did well. I felt this would give teachers the confidence to openly discuss obstacles in their assessment and identify areas of concern, enabling them to discuss activities they wished to trial with their classes.

I was conscious that I should not take a lead role in these discussions but instead should actively listen. I wanted the teachers to talk to each other and ask each other for advice. Effective leadership involves creating a climate within which, as members of a learning community, colleagues could contribute and lead (Harris & Lambert, 2007). They had first-hand knowledge and experience to share and build upon and, as I listened to

This had limited their enjoyment and the opportunities to enhance their self-efficacy. Striking a balance between the advantages of forming a learning community as a department and ensuring the interests of individual teachers are met is one that I would reflect on in the future.

Final thoughts

When reflecting on the success of my project I cannot overemphasise the importance of initial consultations with the AST team. Without this process I would not have been able to exercise leadership and bring about change. The consultation, negotiations and continuous evaluation, vital to the TLDW methodology (Frost, 2012), allowed the ASTs to take ownership of the project. Leading this project has highlighted to me the importance of trust and reflection in effective leadership (Harris & Lambert, 2007). Finally, my capacity to lead and manage change would not have been possible without engaging in the academic scholarship which provided me with the confidence to listen to colleagues with opposing views, critically reflect on our discussions and make adjustments where necessary. These are also the attributes that we endeavour to develop in our students, signifying that an effective leader never stops learning.

Liz's perspective

As Sian's MEd supervisor, I have worked alongside her as a critical friend, watching her project grow from a department-based project to one which encompasses the whole school. Sian was addressing a concern she had about the lack of self-efficacy amongst members of her department and she embarked on a project that was to have a far-reaching impact in her school. By changing, along with a team of advanced skilled teachers, the structure of the continuing professional development programme in her school she enabled a wide range of teachers to develop their practice, show leadership and have an impact on teaching and learning. She found that by openly discussing the established approach to support for professional development within her school she experienced the 'ripple effect' where discussions were taking place without her presence. To engage colleagues in her project, she was able to use already scheduled staff meetings and development days

On this occasion, every teacher, including those who had previously been nervous, offered examples to use. I was greatly encouraged by the impact of the learning community on the assessment group and I consulted with teachers in different learning communities to see if their experiences were similar.

Whole school impact

I met with a range of teachers from the different learning communities and at different stages in their teaching careers. Some felt that by having a focus as a department they had been able to implement new strategies in classrooms and embed ideas more firmly.

We were able to research and select appropriate/relevant teaching and learning resources within a shared learning environment. This has encouraged discussion and evaluation.

Colleagues from all learning communities commented that they had been encouraged to implement new ideas in their lessons. They felt that students had responded positively and there was evidence in students' books, through lesson observations and in feedback from students indicating improved practice. One student commented on how the focus on resilience had helped her attitude to learning: I know it is the questions I got wrong that will be most useful for me in the end. Another student reflected on the impact of the assessment focus: Although I get annoyed with targets, they are really helping me to improve my understanding. Teachers had gained confidence in their learning communities and found themselves exercising leadership by sharing these ideas. These were really positive comments and the evidence that working in departments had positively enhanced students' learning was reassuring.

Some teachers felt that, despite their participation in discussions about possible areas for development, their opinion did not seem to be reflected in the final department choice. They really would have been more interested in pursuing other areas. It was noted at the time: There may be some reluctance from (colleagues) to focus on an area they do not feel confident or passionate about so more flexibility would be appealing.

which reduced the time pressure on colleagues. The teachers relished and thrived on the opportunities to discuss their practice in an open forum where risk-taking was the norm.

Sian has met dissenting voices which she learnt to recognise as helpful in advancing the project. In navigating her way through this she was empowered by her scholarship. The implication of this is important if we are to engage critically in educational discourse. Sian's project shows that, with the right support and structures in place, any teacher is able to lead a change as long as they desire to do so. The project has permeated the whole school and has led to teachers taking a lead, something they might not have had the opportunity to do before.

CHAPTER 4:

Reversing the roles of teacher and student

Lyndsay Gillot and Paul Rose

Lyndsay is Head of Music at Sir John Lawes School, Harpenden, Hertfordshire. She was a member of the first cohort of the HertsCam MEd in Leading Teaching and Learning which started in September 2015.

Paul is Deputy Headteacher at John Henry Newman School in Stevenage, Hertfordshire. He graduated from the forerunner of the HertsCam MEd in 2007 and shortly after that became a supervisor on the programme. He is currently a member of the Teaching Team and was Lyndsay's MEd supervisor.

the learning process, they are better able to manage the learning themselves – demonstrating independence and resilience. I needed therefore to enable us all to focus on the *whole* process of learning, especially the struggles and mistakes. I knew that the learning would need to be a socially shared endeavour involving students, staff and parents. I hoped that by sharing the early, often faltering, stages of learning, colleagues would model honesty and openness which can be so easily neglected within the pressured curriculum. In drawing attention to these aspects of learning, I hoped that it would inspire both students and teachers to recognise the importance of resilience in their learning in all subjects.

The Teachers' Music Challenge project

I introduced the idea and purpose of the 'Teachers' Music Challenge' in a morning staff briefing in order to assess the project's viability. Amazingly, by lunchtime that day, I had over forty members of the school staff interested. A key factor would be successful collaboration between teachers and students, so I needed to give careful consideration to the creation of suitable pairings.

It was important that teachers, students and the wider school community all had a role to play in the project. Firstly, I aimed to celebrate the process of learning – to highlight the importance of making mistakes and developing the resilience to learn from them. By subverting the traditional roles of teacher and student in a project where the progress of the learners was visible to the whole school community, the steps of the learning journey would be made more explicit. Secondly, I aimed to foster positive relationships between teachers and students and create a positive dialogue that transcended the curriculum. This would involve a risk to everyone's self-concept (Canfield & Wells, 1994), their established identity, so it was important that a safe, trusting partnership was established. Thirdly, I viewed it also as a potential way to invest in colleagues' personal development, thereby hopefully boosting their morale in a highly pressured working environment. A key element of the project relied on empowering both students and their teachers to feel more confident about their learning potential.

Lyndsay's story

Our school has very high academic standards, a supportive pastoral network and a commitment to investing in the development of students' wellbeing and life-long learning skills – particularly that of developing a growth mindset. However, the pressure for high attainment can distort the objective of learning so that it becomes about achieving an end rather than understanding the process. To maintain high grades, students are offered a range of support which can stand in the way of learning from mistakes and the development of resilience, which are so important in the rapidly evolving world beyond school. Promoting a growth mindset is a priority in our school's development plan so I was supported in my endeavours to explore alternative ways to rebalance the nature of the students' learning experiences.

I wanted to explore the concept of 'resilience' and how we might nurture a school-wide culture that celebrates mistakes as part of the learning process whilst still maintaining high academic standards. The aim would be to shift the focus from a performance to a learning orientation. Instead of focusing on the end product, we needed to get better at praising for effort and valuing the process of learning (Dweck, 2012). Given the current climate of performativity (Ball, 2003), development work of this kind would be easier to manage in a context that sits outside the assessed curriculum.

These insights underpinned my development project, which aimed to create a whole school community of learning through the 'Teachers' Music Challenge'. Initially I wanted to create an environment which Hattie (2000) says has one of the greatest effects on student learning – when teachers become learners of their own teaching and when students become their own teachers. In my project, traditional roles of learning would therefore be reversed, with students teaching teachers to learn a musical instrument. At the heart of the project was the need to create a community that celebrated the learning journey, rather than the end product, and made the learning process visible. This would allow students to enhance their understanding of the process of learning and would also enable them to reach higher levels of achievement (Hattie, 2000). When students gain a deeper understanding of

the project; support the students and teachers and collect feedback from the participants to communicate the project's progress to the wider school community. They had an important evaluative role, reflecting on the project and advising me on how we might improve the visibility of the learning within the school. In response to their feedback, I launched an additional Instagram competition, encouraged colleagues to make more explicit links between their instrumental learning and curriculum lessons. I also recruited additional student observers to share the story of the project amongst their peers. The ultimate aim was for all students in the school to be inspired by the message their teachers were promoting, and to feel empowered to learn with the same maturity – overcoming challenges, mistakes and setbacks – and demonstrate resilience and perseverance in their own learning.

Engaging the whole school community

For the project to succeed as a model of community learning, the whole school community, teachers and students, had to be involved and feel a sense of ownership. My first step was to present the project to the student body – to introduce the key participants and suggest how students could get involved. I did this through a series of Music Assemblies, in which I launched the project in collaboration with the participating students and teachers. Colleagues demonstrated the little they had learnt so far, exposing their beginners' mistakes, which allowed students to observe the resilience and openness their teachers were embracing in their own learning. Cognitive neuroscientists believe that our brains have evolved to make us disposed to learn by imitation (Claxton, 2007) so teacher modelling has the potential to be an extremely powerful factor in developing students' capacity to learn. The assembly also provided an opportunity for students to reflect on their own learning within the classroom, and how they might apply similar resilience to learning in their own contexts.

The Teachers' Music Challenge proved a popular topic of conversation amongst the teachers and it soon became apparent that the nature of the learning was becoming a socially shared experience. In response to this I arranged a celebration event – an opportunity to informally reflect on their challenges that term. Whilst raising a toast to the term's achievements, many

The main activities of the project focused on the regular music lessons between staff and student participants. It was important that the learning partnerships had the autonomy to construct these expectations between themselves, so the times, duration, format and frequency of the lessons were to be determined by the participants. Also, I hoped that the element of choice would boost motivation in learning (Haynes, 2008).

I wanted to extend the reach of this learning community and so explored social media for this purpose to enable students to engage with both peers and teachers. Through social networking systems we could also implement the notion of 'friend' or 'connection' that extends involvement (Popescu & Ghita, 2013). I hoped that this would also help students feel 'safe' in the creation of their own learning environment, and, by accessing media already familiar to them, be motivated by a sense of relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Consultation with students confirmed that Instagram, a social media application, would be the most effective platform. I encouraged colleagues to share their experiences weekly through uploading examples of their progress to the Instagram account or through discussions with their students. A number of colleagues were unfamiliar with how to manage an Instagram account, so this proved an opportunity for students to support their adult learners further, empowering the younger learners and further breaking down the barriers of teacher-learner. Later discussions revealed that, through breaking down these barriers, teachers and students were able to understand the learning from each other's perspectives and apply this to their own learning.

In order to engage students in a deeper understanding of the learning process and be motivated through a sense of autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 2000), I devised a process where they had some co-authorship of the project – both in their role as teachers but also as facilitators. By removing a fixed end goal, which many students and colleagues initially found an unfamiliar concept to grasp, I gave students autonomy in shaping the sequence of events and in creating key activities within the project. For the purposes of ongoing evaluation, I recruited a team of 10 student observers from Years 7–12. Their role was to help review and communicate the daily running of

frustrations and failures, and the final 'product' of a performance at the end of year Summer Prom concert. This shared community for learning has also inspired parents, governors and members of the wider community, many of whom have commented on how relevant the initiative has been to their own personal context.

Beyond the school community, I have so far shared the project with a number of colleagues through HertsCam Network Events and the HertsCam Annual Conference. A number of colleagues have approached me to discuss the project, with the intention of implementing something similar in their own schools. Each colleague seems to have a different motivation for instigating such a scheme; increasing student participation, boosting student confidence or simply re-engaging students in extra-curricular music, which has served as validation that the project has potential to enhance the learning experiences within any school community across any age range. At the heart of the project is the strong collaborative relationship and understanding that is nurtured through empowering students and teachers to look at the learning process from alternative perspectives and so better understand each other's perspectives. Colleagues have achieved varying levels of success in their music learning but significantly it was their commitment, resilience and effort that were celebrated in the final performance, not their standards of achievement. Students have responded to this and, seeing the resilience demonstrated, are applying it to their own learning. Many of the participating teachers have made clear their motivation to continue to demonstrate their own learning, and to maintaining the reflective student-teacher dialogue throughout the difficulties of learning – a more far-sighted approach to learning that I am committed to embedding within the ethos of the school in future.

Paul's perspective

For me, as Lyndsay's MEd supervisor, it has been instructive and impressive to watch how she has developed her project by utilising her own attributes and the strengths of those around her. Springing from a firmly held conviction that the current pressure to 'teach for the test' that we all face is leading to superficial learning and a diminution of the school's role in preparing students for life after school, Lyndsay made a series of wise choices in order

colleagues expressed the desire for a more tangible goal. Although I had removed such a 'fixed' goal, it became evident that setting personal targets was important for colleagues to further motivate themselves. We agreed that we would put together a performance for the upcoming school charity event that March. Colleagues who felt confident enough to try playing in an ensemble were invited to participate.

The first Teachers' Music Challenge ensemble rehearsal was a key moment in the development of the project and a powerful learning experience for the teachers, students and myself. For many colleagues, adapting to a completely new skill in an unfamiliar environment proved a considerable challenge. For some, this new challenge proved demotivating, and the student teachers were now faced with the challenge of re-motivating them. The students who supported the rehearsal found the experience illuminating; it gave them a chance to reflect on how they reacted to their own challenges and setbacks. They could then take this awareness back to their own ensemble playing. The experience encouraged both teachers and students to evaluate the ways in which they learn, and the ways that they communicate learning to each other. This highlighted the importance of continuous dialogue between teachers and learners.

The legacy

The outcomes of the project have affected stakeholders in a variety of ways. Through observations and consultations, both groups have discussed the positive benefits the challenge has had on them as learners. The student participants developed a deeper understanding about how we learn, and how they might apply this to their personal learning experiences, greatly increasing their own capacity for learning. They also developed the ability to manage expectations, overcome obstacles, differentiate, personalise learning, demonstrate patience, inspire, motivate and empathise. For the teachers, the experience was equally powerful. In addition to developing a whole host of musical skills, they allowed themselves to step out of their comfort zone, model 'good' learning, develop self-awareness and confidence, reflect on their own learning and apply this to their own teaching.

The student observers and wider school community had seen every stage of the learning process taking place before them: the hopeful beginnings, the

to maximise the chances of her project helping all to counter such short-termism. She ensured that her focus chimed with the development priorities of the school. She placed this initial phase of her development work in the far less threatening extra-curricular arena. What is more, she devised a vehicle for her exploration which suited the culture of the school – one which is not risk-averse and where teachers and students have become increasingly open to adapting aspects of their practice and then reflecting upon and celebrating the consequences.

That said, it was Lyndsay's attention to detail that contributed to the level of success and reach that the project has achieved. To have deliberately built in flexibility to the project plan may sound like a 'cop-out' but the consequences should be noted by anyone following in her developmental work footsteps. It allowed Lyndsay to genuinely work with people on aspects of the focus that they thought significant rather than there being a sense that they were working for her and her agenda. This meant that the colleagues who wished to show the fruit of their learning in a concert had the opportunity to do so. It meant that the means of communicating the highs and lows of the learning journey, Instagram, could be negotiated with the participating students. Perhaps most significantly, it meant that Lyndsay had the time and the volition to genuinely support the student participants – developing tools and approaches in the light of their observations – rather than simply inviting them to participate on her terms. All these leadership choices meant greatly enhanced commitment to the project through an increased sense of agency, and much more sustained and powerful reflection which can now be ploughed back into the school's learning culture.

Lyndsay adopted a rigorous approach to the project; she grounded her work in the literature and was assiduous in using the right processes and levers to enhance her work. However, watching her work was a valuable reminder that, at its heart, collaboration that successfully brings about improvement relies, fundamentally, on having the ability to connect with colleagues to such an extent that the personal and the professional become one and the same thing. Lyndsay's combination of clear-sightedness and responsiveness allowed this to happen.

CHAPTER 5:

Slowing the pace of activity to increase the pace of learning

Deborah Harris and Clare Herbert

When she joined the first cohort of the new HertsCam MEd that began in September 2015, Deborah was an Assistant Headteacher at Wormley Primary School in Broxbourne, Hertfordshire.

Clare is Headteacher of Peartree Primary School in Welwyn Garden City. She graduated from the forerunner of the HertsCam MEd in 2009 and later joined the Teaching Team. She was Deborah's MEd supervisor. Clare was also recently awarded her doctorate.

Deborah's story

Being passionate about improving and enriching pupils' lives, I constantly seek ways to enable future adults to be independent, deep thinkers by providing broad and rich learning experiences. In the past, improvements, although often successful, were frequently rather spontaneous or haphazard. My intention, with this project was to take a more measured and informed approach to the process of school improvement.

My professional concern arose from a growing awareness that, while pupils were generally engaged with and enjoying their learning, many were finding it hard to make connections across the curriculum and to think for themselves. Such passivity prevents learners from gaining deep understanding (Boaler, 2009). This leads to the need to re-teach key aspects of the curriculum and last-minute scrambles to memorise facts before statutory tests. At the start of my project, I noticed that short-term tactical approaches, such as intervention groups, placed increased stress upon pupils and their teachers. This approach is also at odds with our aims: to provide a broad and rich, learning-orientated curriculum (Watkins, 2001) to develop the whole child. I wanted therefore to find ways to help pupils move from surface learning to deep learning resulting in a depth of understanding and independent thought (Hargreaves, 2008).

Rationale for the project

I began by exploring the characteristics of deep learning and pedagogical approaches, which could enhance pupils' understanding of themselves as learners (Watkins, 2003). I consulted colleagues about this and it became clear that, although there are strategies for developing meta-cognition in many schools, the pressure of an increasingly demanding curriculum and preparation for statutory assessment often does not allow sufficient time for pupils to make sense of their own learning. I concluded that meta-cognitive strategies are key. Perhaps a more important concern is the pace of learning, which leaves little room for 'thoughtfulness' which a fellow HertsCam member considered in relation to much older students (Healer, 2006). This realisation led to my project focus: to empower teachers to slow the pace of activity to increase

the depth of learning, by creating opportunities to engage in intentional and deliberate thinking.

When articulating the rationale for my project, designing, planning and preparing for it, I reshaped and refined my thinking by reflecting on the feedback gained through consulting colleagues. There was an appetite and capacity for change in my school, but many teachers were experiencing initiative overload. I concluded that I needed to promote a strategy that could be woven into daily current practice. This realisation prompted me to create 'stop and think' moments: pauses that would provide opportunities for deliberate thinking. Initially these pauses would need to be modelled explicitly by teachers, but I planned that over time this could be used more independently by pupils. I developed a set of 'stop and think' graphics with, for example, one image representing 'Pausing the Activity' and another representing 'Looking Closely' and so on.

I linked my project to the school's Social Learning Agenda (Fowler & Frankel, 2015), which defines our ethos, underpins our curriculum and sets the tone for our relationships with each other. It is crucial to our collective moral purpose (Hargreaves, 2012) and emerging professional learning community (Stoll & Seashore Louis, 2007). Many of our pupils enter schooling with a set of attitudes and dispositions (Hattie, 2009) which are not conducive to successful learning, and our Social Learning Agenda aims to create an environment to combat this (Claxton, 2002). As part of a whole school review, teachers had identified 'being reflective about learning' as a priority for development. Subsequently, we agreed to adopt Watkins' (2003) model of 'Notice, Narrate and Navigate' as it chimed with this aspiration. Watkins argues that the more a learner slows down to notice their learning, the more able they are to narrate their learning. The more richly a learner narrates their learning, the more they see their role in that learning. The more they see their role in their learning, the more they are able to navigate their own learning independently.

I identified a link between pupils noticing their learning behaviour and my aim of slowing learning down to think deeply. The verb 'to think' is difficult to

education.org/resources/austins-butterfly). I started to observe the language of noticing being used in lessons; teachers were beginning to include noticing activities in professional development sessions and in whole school events such as assemblies. I led a session for teaching assistants, who also found 'stop and notice' to be a powerful tool; some adopted the 'pause' graphic referred to above. Others used a pause to ask pupils to articulate understanding or misconception. Many commented that 'noticing' was accessible to all pupils including those who struggled to grasp a concept.

The project sparked a lot of interest and activity, but I struggled to understand how 'noticing' was impacting on teachers and their pupils across the school. To gather evidence, I tried various strategies, including a blog and a noticeboard in the staff room so teachers could share examples of activities and pupil feedback. However, perhaps due to a lack of time, lack of confidence, or a view that if it was not compulsory it was not important, I failed to gather much feedback. I decided to rely instead on informal discussion and staff meetings to find out more.

I wanted my development work to be a deliberative process, so I set up a collaborative enquiry group encouraging teachers to engage in peer-to-peer learning (Hargreaves, 2003a). I saw my role not only as a facilitator but also an active member of the group, taking part in knowledge building and making collaborative decisions with my colleagues. In this way I hoped to build shared ownership and a shared commitment to the project's success. This group of five, including Steve, started to meet half termly to share our experiences of 'noticing' and 'narrating'. With increasing confidence, each group member felt free to shape 'Notice, Narrate and Navigate' to fit their own priorities and classrooms. I paid particular attention to the 'slowing down to notice' dimension and found that colleagues had taken this in different directions. I was tempted to persuade them back onto 'my' path, but quickly realised that this would inhibit creativity. Our three teachers became known as our 'first followers' (Sivers, 2010). Trust and confidence grew as ideas were aired and developed.

define and generally overused, particularly in the classroom. There are many thinking skills which pupils need to recognise and develop; noticing is just one of these. I needed to encourage teachers to slow the pace of activity and provide pupils with the opportunity to 'stop and notice'. I hoped this would not only contribute to the overall aims of my school but would also attract the attention of colleagues.

Tying my project to a whole school focus provided synergy with my colleague Steve Emmett's project, which aimed to develop independent learning through the narration of learning journeys (see Chapter 10). Our partnership provided a rich source of discussion and support, deepening and challenging my own thinking. To minimise our demands on teachers, we co-led a collaborative enquiry group, which contributed to the overall drive for school improvement.

Building momentum

From the beginning, my project was well received, but colleagues required more support to enable them to slow down and develop noticing with their classes. I therefore led a noticing activity for the whole school. We discussed how pupils often failed to notice what was presented to them, be it a picture, a poem or a calculation problem. Instead, they would rush into answering questions. Their skills of noticing needed to be developed and we employed strategies such as 'slow looking', to encourage pupils to spend time looking closely and then look again to notice more. In choosing to start with 'noticing', I had highlighted a thinking skill which would take the duration of my project to develop and explore. Feedback from colleagues confirmed that noticing is an important skill, which needed to be made more 'visible'. Pupils reported that the act of pausing was helpful. Children in my own class were now using the pause button graphic when they had not understood or when they felt they were in the 'learning pit' (Nottingham, 2016).

I set up number of further activities to help colleagues develop 'stop and notice', including watching daffodil buds flower over a few days and scientific drawing using the video about 'Austin's butterfly' (www.modelsofexcellence.org).

My personal development as a leader has been significant throughout the process. I have adopted the 'stop and think' strategy in my own leadership. The process, involving institutional analysis, reading about the topic, consultation and a robust project plan, slowed the pace at which I may have previously tried to introduce change. The project was consequently richer for it. I appreciate more fully the power of collaboration and how this breaks through the ceiling of working alone (Fullan, 2004), by generating knowledge through discussion and shared experiences. By coming 'alongside' my colleagues as a classroom practitioner, rather than as a school leader, ready to share my own findings and articulate my reflections, trust was built. I discovered, not without some internal struggle, that leading is not, in fact, about walking at the head of the pack. Instead it is about building relationships to be part of the pack and empowering others to take the lead. I will endeavour to maintain this perspective as I lead others and myself in the future.

At a time of increasing external accountability and an over-burdened curriculum, it is not surprising that the biggest concern raised by colleagues is about the pace of learning. This is a valid concern and remains a challenge.

If we continue to teach at the current pace I fear that many pupils will only learn at a surface level. They will have insufficient opportunity to resolve cognitive conflict (Nottingham, 2016). They will not be able to make sense of their learning, assimilate and accommodate new concepts (Piaget, 1969) and move through the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978) to a place of independence. I remain committed to providing opportunities to encourage pupils to think deliberately in order to facilitate deeper learning.

Clare's perspective

I was Deborah's MEd supervisor throughout her project. It was a privilege to support the development of her thinking from the beginning of the two year process. Her moral purpose, a determination to enable pupils to become independent, deep thinkers, is her driving force. Deborah is an experienced classroom teacher and marries this with her role as a senior leader. Throughout her project's development she was cognisant of this potential conflict, yet the duality of her roles served to enrich rather than hinder her

Enabling colleagues to branch out in ways I had not envisaged was a significant leadership moment. I learnt to relinquish some control over the direction of my project. At another point, 'first followers' challenged my plan to share our work with other teachers at regular intervals throughout the year. They wanted to consolidate their expertise before sharing, whereas I was keen for the aims of my project to be embedded more widely. We agreed to defer dissemination which proved to be right because it empowered the group, built trust and, when we eventually shared with colleagues beyond the group, it was more powerful. Group members could present to their colleagues as experts with evidence of the impact on pupils' learning. The 'first followers' had gained a lot from the experience, realising the power of collaboration and wanting to continue working in this way.

Subsequently, I took every opportunity to encourage the use of 'stop and notice' throughout the school. I heard about many examples of improved practice and pedagogical understanding. The impact on pupils was encouraging but was not as broad as I originally planned. I had envisaged that 'stop and think' moments would have been developed by teachers to model and provide opportunities for a variety of thinking skills. The narrowing of my project's focus to 'stop and notice' troubled me at many stages of its development. However, I now realise that although the impact may have been narrower, it has been much deeper. By focusing on one thinking skill, both teachers and pupils have been required to pause and to think deeply about the skill of 'noticing'. They have had many opportunities to explicitly practise and perfect. 'Notice' is now embedded in classroom language; teachers and pupils use it regularly and both can recognise the benefits it has brought to learning. By stopping to notice, pupils are taking control of their learning and deepening their understanding.

As well as generating impact in my own schools, my project has attracted interest outside the school. Steve and I have been invited to present our projects in different forums and the response has been extremely positive, with teachers of all age groups requesting the symbols to aid the creation of thinking time. Many report a positive impact upon pupils.

project's success. She was able to 'try out' activities in her class, influence other teachers and take a more 'bird's eye' view. She adapted her direction to incorporate a whole school focus, collaborated with other leaders and acted upon the advice of colleagues.

As a consequence, Deborah's project did not move as swiftly nor reach as widely as she had initially planned. It was nevertheless successful. This was because she embodied at each stage the principles of reflective practice (Schon, 1983); she relinquished some of control of her project, enabling the participants of her collaborative enquiry group to develop their own leadership capacity. It is through this group that she built trust and social capital (Frost & Durrant, 2002), and it is upon these foundations that her project flourished. Deborah's account charts significant and wide-ranging impact, both upon pupils and teachers. Her legacy spans beyond her own classroom, and even her own school. Capacity building depends on fostering and developing opportunities for members to examine their thinking and practice in the light of new ideas, new knowledge, new skills and new dispositions (Stoll, 2009). Deborah's project has built such capacity.

CHAPTER 6:

Developing ways to improve student self-reliance

Richard Morton and Paul Rose

Richard is a science teacher and Assistant Head of Science at Sir John Lawes School, Harpenden, Hertfordshire. He joined the HertsCam MEd in Leading Teaching and Learning when it began in September 2015.

Paul is Deputy Headteacher at John Henry Newman School in Stevenage, Hertfordshire. He graduated from the forerunner of the HertsCam MEd in 2007 and shortly after that became a supervisor on the programme. He is currently a member of the Teaching Team and was Richard's MEd supervisor.

and therefore participation in development projects can be highly variable between different groups or Faculties.

Another key preparatory task was to consider the pedagogical issues involved in developing student self-reliance. It became clear that metacognition would be a key element underpinning effective strategies (Ritchhart, Church & Morrison, 2011) and that barriers to learning such as students' social background and mindset would be significant obstacles to the success of such strategies. I also considered the use of lesson time and independent learning in developing self-reliance, concluding that much effective development of self-reliance is likely to take place within lessons with planned guidance from the teacher (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1989; Outen, 2007).

In planning my development work I consulted a range of colleagues. I presented my project plan at HertsCam Network Events and the Annual Conference and discussed it with senior leaders in my school. The feedback I received indicated that student consultations would form an important part of the evaluation process, in addition to feedback from participating colleagues. It also became clear that effective strategies to develop students' self-reliance would be a valuable outcome with potential applications across subjects and age groups.

Drawing students and colleagues into the process

The project itself ran through the academic year 2016-2017 and involved regular consultations with groups of both students and teachers who agreed to participate. Early in the year I recruited a number of older students who were preparing for public examinations. These students took part in discussion groups over the course of the year, during which I used planned questions to start open and genuine discussions. In these we evaluated both teaching strategies aimed at developing self-reliance that the students had experienced and the principles behind successful strategies. The rationale for using this relatively open format for student consultations was that students have the potential to make meaningful and valuable contributions to the development of teaching and learning due to their first-hand experiences

Richard's story

The aim of my project was to develop strategies to improve students' self-reliance, their ability to solve problems without relying on help from teachers. I had observed that this was a key limitation of students' performance in examinations, as although most worked very hard to memorise factual information, many struggled to apply this knowledge to solve unfamiliar problems in examinations (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1989). I therefore hoped that by developing such strategies and promoting their use in lessons throughout the school, students would be more effectively prepared for the demands of external examinations as well as the future demands of higher education and the workplace. However, in addition to this, and unforeseen by me as I planned this project, a much wider issue regarding students' mental health and wellbeing was highlighted.

Preparation and planning

In preparation for my development work, I considered the context and culture of my school, and the opportunities and limitations this provided for my project. My school has benefited considerably in recent years from the deliberate support by the senior leadership team for teacher-led development work (TLDW) as described by Mylles (2006) and Hill (2014). This has resulted in a culture supportive of the development of pedagogical practice, where a relatively high level of autonomy is given to teachers with regard to their own teaching. Organisational opportunities for networking and collaboration such as in-service training time, School Improvement Groups and the staff conference are used to promote these aspects of the school's identity as a professional learning community and provided opportunities for my development work. However, this context also presented potential limitations. The autonomy given to individual teachers, for example, provides challenges to the consistent uptake of innovative practices and requires a greater emphasis on influencing colleagues at an individual level – not always possible through such large-scale organisational structures. In addition, the size of the school and specialisation of Faculties (departments) means that groups of colleagues can become relatively isolated from the rest of the school

widely adopted throughout the school. Many of these discussions centred on activities that were already occurring in lessons, such as teacher-led verbal questioning, test reviews and exam question practice. It was clear, particularly from the students, that although such activities were widespread and had the potential to develop self-reliance, they were not guaranteed to be effective. However, the consensus among both groups of participants was that, with some strategic but readily achievable modifications to the metacognitive elements of these activities, they could be consistently effective (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1989; Ritchhart et al., 2011). For example, the effectiveness of reviewing tests appears to be closely linked to the teacher's explanations of answers and mark schemes, which, although requiring some time in lessons, is clearly worthwhile. Verbal questioning was another strategy with great potential, with some teachers using this skilfully to guide students' thinking processes. For example, colleagues spent time helping students practise their mental approach to problem solving (Conner, 2007; Joseph, 2010) which they would then be more confident in using on their own so they could apply this in the context of an exam. It was clear that my development work would help us to address a school development priority - improving the quality of questioning.

Trialling innovative strategies

In addition to these strategies, some more novel approaches were considered. An example of this would be the use of the website, www.kahoot.com to practise questions of a complex problem-solving nature. This website is commonly used to provide interactive quizzes to test simple factual recall, with individual students participating using their own mobile devices. However, the competitive and time-pressured nature of these quizzes – with correct answers scored by speed of response – allowed students to develop their thought processes for solving new problems while making them aware of the time they had available. This was particularly useful for biology students preparing for multiple choice questions in their Advanced Level examinations, which require complex problem-solving combined with effective time management. Another technique which was found to be particularly effective in developing problem-solving was for the students to read an exam question while covering

(Flutter & Rudduck, 2004) and that this potential may best be realised if the students themselves are active participants rather than merely a source of data (Raymond, 2001). Indeed, my experience throughout this project has demonstrated the value of student consultation through genuine dialogue, as these participants were able to provide effective evaluations of a range of strategies and also to raise important issues for further consideration.

To enable my project to have maximum impact throughout the year I also ran a series of meetings attended by teachers from across the school to discuss improvements to teaching and learning. At each meeting I reported on the feedback I had received from the students and provided written tools for colleagues to record their views. The advantages of this were that the teachers who attended brought a wide range of experience and professional capital. Colleagues included new teachers and trainees as well as heads of faculties and senior leaders. The depth of social capital was also evident in colleagues' commitment to changing practice. Their keen interest in developing teaching and learning across the school, and their shared concern about the importance of self-reliance, was evident from their willingness to volunteer their time after school despite their busy schedules. Most were happy to trial strategies in their own lessons and provide feedback on them.

During the project, these student and teacher groups discussed and evaluated a range of teaching strategies in order to establish both their effectiveness in helping students to develop self-reliance and how easily they could be adopted by teachers across different subjects, key stages and classes.

Leading both groups, I was able to link the two processes and guide discussions in each to consider common issues. The students' perspective was invaluable, as they were in a position to describe their direct experiences of learning and identify which strategies had been more or less effective and why. The teacher consultations effectively complemented this feedback from the students, as they were able to analyse it, drawing on their own teaching experience, and identify the potential for strategies to be more

self-reliance. In the coming years these strategies have the potential to be widely practised in lessons across subject and key stage boundaries, a key legacy ensuring that all students have effective support in developing self-reliance. It is hoped that this will result in the improved preparation for external examinations of the students at my school, supporting their confidence and wellbeing in addition to their academic performance.

The question of wellbeing

My project also raised an important issue for future consideration, namely the nature and extent of the influence classroom teaching has on students' mental health and wellbeing as they prepare for examinations. This issue arose from the experiences of some of the students participating in this project as their final examinations approached. While it was clear that the strategies the students had experienced in their lessons were effective, some still found that their apprehension and lack of confidence in their ability to consistently solve complex problems was negatively affecting their preparation for these examinations. It is likely that this issue will be of increasing importance with the current transition to a more challenging system of terminal examinations at GCSE and A level. Although, with support, these students did progress well and gain confidence towards the end of the year, their experiences suggest that pedagogical strategies focussed on self-reliance, while helpful, may not always be sufficient to fully prepare students for these examinations. Instead, it may well be that a more holistic approach considering the longer-term emphasis of academic, as well as pastoral, provision in schools might yield significant benefits both to students' intellectual preparation and, just as importantly, their confidence and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1989a; Vostanis, 2013). This unexpected but potentially highly significant new direction for this development work exemplifies the potential of the social, dialogic process of professional knowledge building described by Mylles (2014) and apparent throughout teacher-led development projects (Hill, 2014). Over the coming years colleagues and I will aim to explore this issue in more depth to build a realistic picture of both existing and potential best practice in this area – indeed, a development project focussing on this is currently in the planning stages.

up the command words. This very simple technique developed the habit of taking the time to process the information given and explain any observations before constructing a response, avoiding the pitfall of rushing to write an answer before fully considering the problem. This can be extended in lessons with students annotating the given information drawing on all of their own knowledge and discussing this in groups, before proceeding to construct a written response. This provided a helpful rehearsal of the process used in an exam to support the application of existing knowledge to a new problem.

The process of trialling and consultation was successful in compiling a collection of classroom strategies to develop students' self-reliance across subjects and age groups that could be readily adopted by teachers into their existing practice. The more widespread the uptake of these strategies across the school, the greater the potential for impact on students' self-reliance, and ultimately on preparation for their examinations, future studies and careers. Therefore, in order to secure a lasting impact on teaching and learning, the dissemination of these strategies among a large and diverse body of teaching colleagues was very important. In addition to those who had participated in the meetings I had led, I was able to include colleagues within my own Faculty.

At our staff conference, I gave the keynote address along with three colleagues on the theme of giving students 'freedom to learn'. This provided an opportunity to bring my development work to the attention of all colleagues as an example of overcoming barriers to learning – in this case the issue of students' self-reliance. I followed this up at a summer term staff development day by presenting this work in more detail to a group of colleagues from across the school and distributing a concise list summarising effective and accessible strategies. Although the second presentation had a smaller audience it provided an opportunity for more detailed and constructive dialogue. The potentially limiting impact due to size of audience was counteracted by the list of strategies being included in the school's new teaching and learning handbook – another product of the school improvement group meetings – which will give all teachers access to strategies which they can use in their own teaching to develop their students'

Paul's perspective

As Richard's MEd supervisor, it was no surprise to me that the project had such impact and unearthed such an important area for future development; a challenge that I know Richard will take up with great skill and enthusiasm. Throughout his development work, Richard has used all the structures and support around him to create such an effective and wide-reaching approach.

He has a clear-eyed appreciation of the culture and modus operandi of his school and has carefully harnessed these to gain maximum insight into his concern by working with many different stakeholders. In addition, he has bolstered the potential impact of the work he has led by capitalising on the wide range of opportunities for the sharing of teaching and learning practice that exists in his school.

Richard has also enhanced the effectiveness of his leadership of development work by engaging so professionally with the masters programme.

Participating in each aspect of the process with such organisation and commitment has meant that the focus of his concern and project became increasingly sharper as his understanding and ability to link theory and practice grew. His collaboration with colleagues and students led to the growth of real understanding for all as he used to these opportunities to share insights from his intelligent and reflective reading of relevant literatures.

His methodical approach to the planning and execution of his project, has meant a series of practical outcomes for the school and clear signs that the legacy of his work will be strong. It is so encouraging to witness the enthusiasm Richard and his colleagues displayed for employing their ever-strengthening skills in the leadership of the development of teaching and learning. It is also encouraging to see the emergence of a concern for student wellbeing.

CHAPTER 7:

Creating the conditions for developing effective learners

Esther Hamilton and Tracy Gaiteri

Esther is a teacher at Leavesden Green, a primary school in Watford, Hertfordshire. She joined the first cohort of the HertsCam MEd in Leading Teaching and Learning when it began in September 2015.

Tracy is Headteacher at Wormley Primary School in Broxbourne, Hertfordshire. She graduated from the forerunner of the HertsCam MEd in 2007 and subsequently joined the Teaching Team. She was Esther's MEd supervisor.

These initial consultations enabled me to design a development project which aimed to improve the effectiveness of learning beyond the Early Years. Starting with Year 1 would help to create a smooth transition for the Reception classes, further developing the learning characteristics they had already gained. To develop children's independence, resourcefulness and creativity, I considered the impact of the environment, adult roles and the balance of teacher-led and child-led learning.

A key factor in the success of my development work was that it was fully supported by the Headteacher and complemented the changing culture of the school, thus increasing the likelihood of it becoming embedded (Harris & Bennett, 2001). I drew on my authority as a member of the senior leadership team to develop a learning community within Year 1 which included new colleagues I had identified as key levers in bringing about change (Frost, 2014b). The purpose of this learning community was to establish a shared ethos, in which collaboration, dialogue and reflection were key ingredients (Watkins, 2005).

Establishing a learning community

My first action was to develop colleagues', both teachers' and teaching assistants', understanding of learning and autonomy without overwhelming them (West-Burnham & Harris, 2015). I was aware that managing the demands of the National Curriculum whilst attempting to develop children as effective learners could feel like an additional demand on colleagues who already felt stretched.

A strategic approach to planning regular meetings ensured that everyone had the opportunity to articulate their views. For example, initially I ensured colleagues felt confident in their new setting by reassuring them that they had been selected due to their experience and capabilities. I also addressed any questions and concerns through an agenda which I sent out in advance of our meetings. I also paid attention to the structure of meetings by creating tools to support colleagues' reflections. It seemed important to facilitate rather than direct, offering what has become known as 'servant leadership' (Greenleaf, 2002).

Esther's story

Reflecting at some length on the cultural context of my school confirmed a growing concern about pupils' compliance and passivity in the classroom. Interactions with children during lessons, and observations of children around the school on a daily basis, showed that they were not demonstrating the characteristics of effective learners. They were compliant with expectations and waited to be told what to do next. The way they spoke about learning demonstrated that they viewed themselves as receivers of knowledge rather than co-constructors. Many lessons I observed lacked opportunities for creativity, exploration or discovery, activities that would enable them to make sense of things for themselves or construct their own knowledge. It was also apparent that children did not view themselves as decision-makers in their learning. They viewed the teachers as being responsible for providing them with everything they needed to learn (Watkins, 2008). This lack of responsibility, ownership and scope for creativity sat uneasily with my core values and beliefs about learning.

Consultations with senior colleagues including the Headteacher revealed that my concern was shared. It became clear that colleagues had become accustomed to the managerial style of leadership that had prevailed in the past. Reflecting on the effectiveness of their practice had not been required of them and there seemed to be a lack of ownership and creativity (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). I realised that in order to develop pupils as effective learners, I would first need to consider how to develop colleagues' capacity for reflection and autonomous judgement.

Consulting the literature enabled me to understand how characteristics of effective learners such as independence, resourcefulness and creativity, which I wanted to develop in children across the school, were already specified in the documentation of the Early Years curriculum (DfE, 2017a). However, I also learned how policies, curriculum requirements and external pressures to measure children's attainment often leave these important attributes low on the list of school priorities (Ryan, 2008). Further discussions with colleagues in both primary and secondary phases at HertsCam network events highlighted issues related to older learners lacking these characteristics.

Our first formal task was to identify areas of practice which contribute to the development of effective learning. The characteristics of learners we would be seeking to foster included independence, responsibility, resourcefulness and creativity. The areas identified by colleagues matched those I had identified during my initial reflections namely:

- the role of adults as facilitators
- the role of the environment in learning
- a balance between teacher-led and child-led learning

Whilst we all recognised the potential impact these areas could have on learning, it was challenging to identify one area as a focus, therefore, I sought to plan a way forward developing all three areas simultaneously.

The initial meetings I had led with the new Year 1 team to identify necessary changes seemed to have immediate positive impact on the children transitioning to Year 1. Changes were visible in practice and were having a positive impact on children's learning and adults' practice. This paved the way for influencing practice in other year groups.

Observing the learning environments across the school revealed that the older the children were, the less space was available for them to explore and discover for themselves. For example, in Years 5 and 6 the classrooms consisted mainly of tables and chairs; resources were placed in the middle of the table for the children's convenience; there were no interactive displays or areas set up to support independent learning and lessons tended not to feature concrete experiences. It was difficult to see how environments such as these could promote characteristics such as independence, creativity, resourcefulness and exploration. Addressing this was essential.

The challenge of initiating change

Building on my approach to facilitating reflection within the Year 1 team, I provided the following support strategies to enable other colleagues in the school to reflect on their provision and how they plan for children's learning:

- tools to scaffold reflection
- planning opportunities to consult and collaborate with colleagues
- opportunities for informal and formal discussions
- protected time for collaborative planning

Whilst these strategies allowed me to clarify my intentions and engage in professional dialogue with colleagues, there was no evidence of immediate change to practice or impact on children's experiences in the classrooms. Reflecting on this revealed some key learning points. Firstly, colleagues were not truly collaborating. Teachers listened and discussed ideas but then planned alone, on the basis of what they thought I had probably meant, mediated of course by their previous experiences. Secondly, it was a challenge to convince colleagues of the value of the project or spark the same enthusiasm for development work when it wasn't possible to replicate my experiences as a Year 1 teacher. Thirdly, without having observed the new approaches to teaching and learning, teachers were uncertain how to embed them in their practice. This was particularly evident in Years 5 and 6. I realised that lasting and authentic change in practice requires commitment and confidence from all involved and that this takes time to develop. I also had to consider my own understanding of how the interaction between the three aspects listed above – adults as facilitators, the learning environment and the balance between adult and pupil-led learning – shape children's learning.

Consultation with fellow participants on the MEd programme led me to consider that I could maximise impact if adults were able to work alongside me and experience what I was proposing. Consequently, I identified a teacher in Key Stage 2 who needed some support and was willing to collaborate. I arranged time for a collaborative sequence of planning, modelling and teaching. Despite the greater investment of time required, this was by far the most effective strategy in implementing change in classroom practice and taught me the value of a more focused approach.

understand effective learning. This can be both challenging and threatening. My development work is not an extra or a stand-alone project, but is about building a culture for learning (Senge, 2006). To ensure that the potential legacy of the project would be fully realised, strategies for developing the characteristics of effective learners were included in the teaching and learning policy. This was to be integral to the way we would move forward as a school and ensure each child has the best possible chance to be an effective learner.

Tracy's perspective

As an MEd supervisor, I am always interested in the legacy of projects beyond the two years of study during which the project is undertaken. It is clear from Esther's account that her project is chapter one of an ongoing narrative and will potentially have a significant impact on the whole school.

Esther was a new teacher to the school when the school was categorised as 'Requires Improvement' following an Ofsted inspection. As a member of the senior leadership team, Esther was in a position to influence the change in culture and leadership. The MEd gave her legitimacy and purpose in examining the school's ethos. Her analysis and interpretation of what she discovered enabled her to identify what needed to be addressed in order to move the school forward. Her greatest concern was about the effectiveness of learners. I have found this to be an issue that concerns many teachers and school leaders in a range of educational settings and therefore it leads us to question why learners are passive and how we might change practices to address this concern. This was at the core of Esther's project.

Interestingly, Esther identified from her experience of teaching younger children how different the approach to learning is in comparison to that of older children. The Early Years' curriculum places great importance on developing characteristics of effective learning in our youngest children and there is less focus on curriculum areas in favour of primary areas of learning such as personal, social and emotional development, physical development and communication and language. As Esther discovered, developing the child appears to be the spine of the early years curriculum whereas the

Impact and next steps

Without doubt, the impact of my project was on the quality of the transition from the Reception class to Year 1, both within my own school and, as a result of networking, two other schools. The project also had considerable impact on my practice as a leader.

The project was, in only a short time, highly successful in changing the transition to Year 1, creating a learning environment and a balance of teaching in Year 1 which harmonized with children's previous experience. This enabled learning to remain child-led for much of the day, with the environment and adults facilitating learning through exploration and discovery, and developing skills of resourcefulness, creativity and independence along the way. A combination of a well-designed enabling environment, collaboration in the Year 1 learning community and the Deputy Headteacher's work with Learning Support Assistants (see Chapter 13) has led to the development of adults as facilitators of learning rather than transmitters of knowledge. To ensure the changes would be sustained, provisions were made for a Year 1 meeting to take place in July which would include teachers already familiar with the daily routine and set up. There would also be continued support from the senior leadership team.

I have also seen an impact in the way some individual teachers now view learning and consider provision. They are now more reflective with regard to facilitating opportunities for children to develop effective learning skills. Although my development work has not transformed all colleagues, I recognise that this is just the start of a long journey. A move to teaching Year 5 in the year following the project would change my immediate sphere of influence and I planned to lead by example and collaborate with colleagues who teach younger children to further extend impact.

As a leader, I have learnt that embedding change will be an ongoing challenge rather than a two-year project, which is why it is important to plan for legacy. Asking professionals to reconsider their practice is effectively asking them to reflect upon their values, on how well they do their job and how well they

national curriculum appears to have subject knowledge as its spine. From the start Esther knew which three areas of practice she wanted to develop and was given an excellent opportunity to trial these by taking a Reception class up into Year 1. She was able to collaborate with colleagues in this year group to effect positive changes to teaching and learning. I know that other schools in the network have been influenced by Esther's work and have trialled similar approaches in their own schools.

What has been most interesting about Esther's development work is the challenges she has faced in affecting whole school change and the challenges she has faced in realising her role as a leader and an agent of change. Esther intended to share her project intentions with all staff, plan some time for joint planning and consultation and open up professional dialogue. This she hoped would lead to whole school change. However, she soon realised that true collaboration was difficult to establish and that changing others' thinking and challenging their values was no easy feat. Her project was highly ambitious and required time and opportunity to work closely with colleagues. A highly reflective practitioner, Esther was flexible in adjusting her plans and seeking out levers for change. Choosing to work with a willing colleague in a different phase as well as collaborators who were also undertaking projects to bring about a change in culture, enabled her to find a way forward. Whilst Esther acknowledges that this is a start to a much longer journey, where she has managed to work closely with others, she has brought about positive change: learners who take more responsibility for their own learning and who enjoy learning in creative ways. Esther's project and the growth in her capacity to lead change truly embodies the spirit of teacher-led development work.

CHAPTER 8:

Creating a professional learning community through blogging

Laura Saunders and Val Hill

At the time that Laura led the project accounted for here, she was a teacher at Turnford School in Cheshunt, Hertfordshire. She joined the first cohort of the HertsCam MEd in Leading Teaching and Learning when it began in September 2015. This coincided with the school changing its status to an academy and being renamed as Haileybury Turnford having been sponsored by one of the country's leading independent boarding schools, Haileybury.

Val was an assistant headteacher at Birchwood High School and the first Programme Leader of the HertsCam MEd. She graduated from the forerunner of the HertsCam MEd in 2008 and subsequently joined the Teaching Team. She was Laura's MEd supervisor in the first year of her study.

Yet a development of this kind was not going to be without challenge. My school was in a time of considerable change; a process of 'academisation' that resulted in a fast succession of leadership teams and external pressures to demonstrate rapid improvement. In such an intense context, I was creating further change that might be deemed unnecessary to colleagues, when so much else was to be expected of them. Yet I remained resolute that this development would improve learning in ways that would be efficient with regard to teachers' resources including time and beneficial to student learning. To achieve this I needed to focus on my school as a learning organisation (Senge, 2006) in which individual values and needs could be resolved (Dalin, 1993). I wanted to develop the use of blogging that would impact on teachers' professional learning and the sharing of practice which would ultimately improve students' learning. In introducing a new digital platform to colleagues, I realised that I was perhaps also fuelling anxieties about performance and ability to adapt. Bull et al. (2008) argue that teachers' lack of knowledge constrains their abilities to use internet-based developments to engage learners. I therefore needed to develop a supportive environment where colleagues could gain confidence and see the power of blogging for their own professional practice.

Studying the academic literature helped me to reflect on the complex learning environment and roles of teachers as learners, and, at the same time, facilitators of learning. I gained a deeper understanding of what learning communities are (Watkins, 2005) and how I might go about creating an online learning community through the use of blogs (Hemmi, Bayne & Landt, 2009). I was encouraged that Evans and Powell (2007) recognise the potential for building a community of practice in teacher education around blogs and was able to explore digital pedagogy and debates surrounding the use of digital tools both in the curriculum and in continual professional development. One challenge was gaining an understanding of balancing a teacher's skill verses their willingness to embrace a new development. I found it was crucial to provide teachers with different kinds of support depending on what skill they already had or their willingness to try new things. The challenge was to minimise barriers and maximise impact (Rose & Meyer, 2002).

Laura's story

Embracing the possibilities presented by emerging technology is increasingly expected of teachers. When done well, it can improve the learning experience for students, reduce teacher workload and offer cost efficiencies to schools. There is also inherent risk; the decision of which platforms to use, investment costs, the fear of ineptitude that can arise among teachers in using new technologies, and leadership considerations around whether a whole school approach is viable are all considerable. Yet I had seen the transformational power that blogging had had on my own students' learning, self-efficacy and confidence, and I knew that developing its use throughout my school would be of benefit not only to students in other subject areas, but also to my time-poor colleagues. I wanted to lead a development project that would result in significant improvements in my colleagues' confidence and competence in their use of blogging both in their classrooms and in their own professional learning.

The origin of the project

In a previous development project focused on Media Studies, my students documented their learning progress via a blog using a variety of digital tools and integrating them into their learning. I wanted them to understand that integration is defined not by the amount or type of technology used, but by how and why it is used (Earle, 2002) and by helping them to be reflective about the use of the medium I developed the engagement, confidence and competence of my students. Those who did not always thrive with the written word could showcase their learning through video footage. It captured each individual's journey through the course efficiently, more so than I have found in the past with traditional exercise books. The resulting coursework was of a higher quality, contributing to better examination outcomes for the students than I might previously have expected. The impact of the development work was evident, not least from the students' keenness to use blogs elsewhere in their learning, and colleagues became inquisitive about the idea of using them in their own subject areas. This then became the focus of my development project; to facilitate the more widespread use of blogs in teaching in my school.

In clarifying the design of my development project, I reflected on what had previously been successful with students at my school through the TLDW programme. I considered how I might encourage similar activities with colleagues. I realised through discussion with colleagues both within my school and at networking events organised by HertsCam, that while the benefits of blogging were both exciting and clearly evident, there were barriers to teachers taking the step away from the traditional method of recording progress or using blogs to facilitate interaction in the place of meetings. Dialogue was the key in the development of my project and it was also central to its intended legacy.

Leading change in a changing context

Learning how to lead at a time of considerable change turned out to be an important, unintended outcome of my project. During the two years of my development work my school has seen a rapid succession of senior leadership teams, with three different principals each with their own vision, external pressures, and desire to see rapid improvement in the school. There were challenges associated with this; for example, the agreed staff development time allocated by one principal could no longer be justified by another. There were also far reaching changes to the curriculum and teachers found increasing demands on their time, from full timetables with reduced planning time and an extended day that required greater student contact. Without allocated time to meet with and support colleagues with their own blogging development there was the potential for the project to fail. My project was based on harnessing non-positional leadership to create change (Frost, 2014a, 2017), but the changing hierarchy in my school was proving to be a challenge. A shift came when another principal's focus was on staff recruitment and retention and blogging seemed to be important for this. It could be a support mechanism for newly qualified teachers to share classroom best practice and seek support. Although this innovation began to thrive, it was not the focus of subsequent senior leaders and so had limitations, revealing the impact of senior leaders on the creation of a school culture (Lieberman, 1988). Furthermore, colleagues who were committed to developing blogging in their practice were leaving the school with their

fledgling blogging capability. The complexities of leading in a time of change meant that I had to be responsive and resilient, working with each change in circumstance and be adaptive in my planning and leadership (Heifetz, Grashow & Lensky, 2009). I might have hoped for a less turbulent setting for the seamless realisation of my vision, but I would not have had such opportunity to develop as a leader without the challenges I encountered. As Michael Fullan said, 'problems are our friends' (1993).

Despite the issues, there were significant successes derived from the development of blogging. The Newly Qualified Teachers' blog was well utilised by new colleagues for accessing session material and discussing topics raised in their professional development sessions. Colleagues were able to reflect on their own learning and to share good practice. They, perhaps more than established colleagues, were in need of a mechanism for support via a method that was time efficient and accessible, both within and outside school, and found the blogging platform provided this. Developments with department blogs also indicated impressive change. Colleagues in the Art and Design and the Technology departments built impressive blogs, utilising the medium well, both sharing resources and showcasing students' progress. Both departments demonstrated how swiftly they could develop the learning experience of students with a product that offered portability, flexibility and enhanced peer-learning opportunities (Mota & Scott, 2004). Confidence in using blogging has improved for teachers and students in these departments as they are now able to use digital technology effectively and are conscious of their own skills of reflection and analysis. Teachers have been able to share knowledge and engage in dialogue instantly online, promoting reflective practice and collaboration.

Yet the most significant impact was initially not envisaged: the development of blogging beyond my school. The first factor that facilitated this was initially perceived as a threat to my project: the transience of my colleagues' tenure. An initial frustration had been that colleagues committed to blogging were leaving to take up teaching posts in other schools, their blogs going with them. However this was soon to be a triumph. I had the opportunity to

support former colleagues, and their new teams, in fulfilling my vision but in their own schools. Further opportunity came from the colleagues I met through the HertsCam Network who wanted to use the medium to develop practice. The collaborative nature of the MEd means that sessions are taught by school teachers and MEd participants have the opportunity to showcase their developments during oral presentations. It was in one such session that colleagues' interest in blogging was piqued, not only considering their own classroom practice but how blogging might aid the leadership of their projects. These exciting developments reinforced my belief that blogging could improve learning and teachers from different disciplines could develop the skills and achieve impact with minimal support.

In summary, leading change within a school in challenging circumstances is complex. The process of project planning at a time of continual change can be disheartening, yet it can also bring unforeseen possibilities and opportunities. I have come to see the importance of incorporating learners' cultural capital into the educational curriculum, and ensuring experiences are relevant and purposeful rather than simply repeating the model of the previous educational orthodoxy. It has proven difficult at times; I experienced a fast and unpredictable shift towards a traditionalist agenda in my school which seemed incongruous with new technological developments, but the effective use of digital technology and the resulting experiences has brought about success to students and professional satisfaction to teachers in my school and continued contact with colleagues in the local area I met through network events has brought further success. I have been able to influence individuals from different schools, subjects and key stages, something I had not imagined at the conception of my development work.

Towards the end of this process, I was appointed to a post in a different school. I was excited to be joining a school where teacher leadership is embraced and where I would be encouraged to share my blogging widely. I envisage that digital tools will continue to develop and take on increasing importance in learning and deciding which should be embraced and how they might best be integrated into teaching practice will continue to engage me as a teacher

determined to lead effective change in this area. Harnessing the power of a digital tool where learners' work is evidenced, edited and reflected upon instantly, with the opportunity of immediate publication to a virtual audience for peer review, remains an exciting tool, whether those learners be students or teachers.

Val's perspective

Laura was obliged to spend much time adapting her development plans due to the significant turmoil caused by several changes of senior leadership and the sudden imposition of different priorities. It is to her immense credit that she not only managed to keep her development work alive but also inspired colleagues to continue it within their own institutions even once they had left Haileybury Turnford school. Laura's talent for inspiring colleagues throughout the network had been noticed even before she joined the masters programme. She had led a seminar at the HertsCam Annual Conference in 2014 and had presented her ideas to a large audience with very positive results.

It is easy to see how a project which asks people to explore an area which demands the commitment of time and makes them feel vulnerable might come to a halt in times of stress and change within an institution. However, Laura continued to engage colleagues and help them see the value and possibilities of the enterprise. This was a result of her adaptive and empathetic approach. Not only was she able to inspire but she seemed to grasp very early on the power of 'servant leadership' (Greenleaf, 2002). Timorous colleagues benefited from support and all kinds of practical help which enabled them to make progress.

Laura has learned much about change and leadership along the way and modelled a sense of professional integrity in maintaining a commitment to development of practice amidst the most challenging of circumstances. Alongside an established practice of blogging in her school and others, Laura has achieved a shift in culture which values dialogue, determination and commitment to shared values. She has demonstrated that non-positional teacher leadership can grow in challenging circumstances and provide a

stronger sense of purpose and value when other aspects of the profession might be in a state of flux. The sustaining force of this sense of purpose and agency (Fullan, 1993a) has been shown powerfully by Laura's leadership and the ensuing growth of her development work.

CHAPTER 9:

Developing strategies to promote a growth mindset in music

Colette Hewitson and Jo Mylles

Colette is the Subject Leader for Music at the John Henry Newman School and she joined the first cohort of the HertsCam MEd in Leading Teaching and Learning when it began in September 2015.

Jo is currently Headteacher of Challney High school for Girls in Luton, Bedfordshire, but at the time that Colette undertook her project, Jo was Deputy Headteacher at Sir John Lawes School, Hertfordshire. Jo graduated from the forerunner of the HertsCam MEd in 2005 and subsequently joined the Teaching Team. She was Colette's MEd supervisor.

Colette's story

Analysis of examination results in the summer of 2015 confirmed that in GCSE music there was a disparity between outcomes for practical instrumental playing and those for the listening and theory component. I became concerned that it had become normal practice in the music department for students to stretch themselves to attain highly in their practical coursework but were willing to settle for a lower grade in the listening and theory component. I shared these concerns with the colleagues in my department suggesting that some students were afraid of failure and this was inhibiting them from embracing challenge. We agreed that, by adopting a growth mindset (Dweck, 2012), students would be able to overcome the fear, embrace challenge and work at the areas causing concern rather than judging themselves and thinking negatively.

In the early stages of the masters programme I wrote about my observations and explored the idea of growth mindsets and how teachers might encourage students to stretch themselves rather than capping their potential. I investigated Dweck's notion of fixed and growth mindset. According to Dweck, a growth mindset is a belief that everyone can grow and improve (Dweck, 2012). If our students were to adopt this approach they would seek feedback on how to improve, persist and cope better with change (Busch, 2015). My observations focused on students' fear of failure, not only in theoretical musical activities, but also in practical work. I became convinced that the development of a growth mindset was required for our learners to overcome this apparent barrier. However, the fixed mindset problem did not apply to all students and all curriculum areas. As a department, we reflected on the areas of good practice and where we felt a growth mindset could be nurtured and fostered in music. I reflected on the 'Musical Futures' initiative which promotes a student-centred model harnessing the idea of the growth mindset.

Consequently, I designed my development project to enable us to promote a growth mindset within the Music department. Consultation with key stakeholders allowed me to refine the focus of my development work and

concentrate on Years 7 and 8. Dweck (2000) warns of the need to combat the fixed mindset before it becomes entrenched therefore I decided that the ideal starting point would be with the younger students in our school (ages 11-14). As a result of thorough consultation, my project received a good level of support and the potential for change was recognised.

Collaboration as a way forward

Collaborating with and consulting colleagues is a vital part of the teacher-led development work model (TLDW) and I knew this approach would lead to more sustainable change (Hill, 2014). Although I was the Subject Leader, I was concerned that this should not be perceived as solely 'my project'. I began by inviting my colleagues to reflect on the learning dispositions that we were noticing in our students. We shared some of our experiences of students not embracing the challenge of music education and adopting a fixed mindset.

Experience of our discussions resonated with my reading about social and intellectual capital (Frost & Durrant, 2002). I wanted to use the existing social capital within our department to build our intellectual capital, developing a shared understanding and building knowledge about our students. Key discussion points were that some students:

- enter secondary school in Year 7 and begin studying a subject that has had little attention previously at primary school
- have not had specialist musical instrument lessons and feel inferior to those around them
- attain well as a performer but do not engage with the theoretical demands of music examined in the listening exam
- who are exceptionally able, are not challenged in the first few years of their time with us and then are suddenly put off by the challenges and the 'need to think' at Advanced Level (ages 16-18)

These examples all demonstrated a lack of a growth mindset. In order to move music education forward in the school, my colleagues and I needed to

first understand the benefits of a growth mindset approach and then design a more appropriate curriculum.

Discussions moved to areas where we were fostering a growth mindset, in particular Musical Futures which had previously formed our Year 9 curriculum. Musical Futures is a model of self-directed learning that enhances student motivation, enjoyment and skill-acquisition in music lessons (D'Amore, 2009). Students learn an instrument they have not previously played and experience an incremental development in their skill. However, due to government reforms, students now opt for their GCSE subjects in Year 8 and so not all pupils can experience Musical Futures in Year 9. To maximise the impact of Musical Futures in our school, I suggested that we needed to build the foundations at an earlier stage.

The place of moral purpose in my development work

My project was driven by my strong sense of moral purpose, my professional concern and my desire to improve practice and the learning experience of our music students. In order for this project to be successful, I was mindful that to create sustainable improvement in practice, I needed to mobilise the moral purpose within my team. In one of our meetings we reflected on what we do and why we do it. It was important to share what I believed in with my department. I was both apprehensive and felt vulnerable in approaching this but shared with colleagues that we should promote:

- music for all students
- a vibrant curriculum for all to achieve
- progress irrespective of background
- progress irrespective of prior experience
- trust, respect, and independent learning through learning a musical instrument.

Members of the team agreed that these factors were at the heart of what we do. This gave me the confidence that over time, my moral purpose had genuinely impacted on my departmental colleagues by igniting theirs (Fullan 2001).

The music department as a professional learning community

We were making great strides on an intellectual and practical level, working together to build intellectual capital, creating a professional learning community, in which teachers were critically interrogating departmental practice (Stoll & Seashore-Louis, 2007). Whilst at this stage the importance of fostering a growth mindset was not fully appreciated within the department, we were nevertheless modelling a growth mindset by embracing change.

I suggested that we should build our knowledge base further by looking at the lessons taught by the peripatetic teachers in our department. Lesson observations showed that discussions about problem solving, planning and memory were taking place. Learners were challenged beyond the instrumental skill and were strengthening the dispositions necessary for the twenty first century learner including confidence, courage, resilience and risk taking (Claxton, 2008). We discussed the quality of the relationships built and reflected how lessons were student-centred. We also considered how to bridge the skills gap between students who learn a musical instrument and those who do not. I concluded that to address this gap, I needed to design a project that would enable everyone to learn a musical instrument from Year 7. We decided that this would be the ukulele: some colleagues had experience of teaching the ukulele, informing me that it gave a level starting point.

Phase 1 – getting started

I was leading a review of our learning programmes with a view to incorporating the ukulele project, but it was difficult to maintain momentum due to external constraints. I decided to pilot the project with two of my Year 7 classes. I was then able to gather feedback from the pupils, trial lesson plans and invite staff to participate in informal observations.

My lessons focused on the skills and techniques of playing the ukulele. Students provided feedback on the learning process in their learning logs and I also noted down my observations following every lesson. I shared developments with my team and they offered to give up time to visit my lessons, talking with the students.

Phase 3 – embedding

Phase 3 was the most fruitful in terms of agency and self-efficacy as we were all, students and colleagues alike, embarking on the voyage of the project. There was a greater sense of self-belief that we would bring about a transformation in those we teach. This echoed my reading of Bangs and Frost (2016) that teachers who believe in their own efficacy are resilient and learn from their experience. There was a genuine dialogue about learning within the department; it was not forced and everyone was truly collaborating. At this stage, the professional learning community was working at its best. Colleagues noticed that students did not want lessons to end as learning was becoming a timeless process. This resonated with my reading about the idea of 'flow' (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Colleagues beyond the music department were noticing that ukuleles were becoming increasingly used across the school.

Outcomes and next steps

The ukulele project promoted a growth mindset in pupils, evidenced in their ability to take risks. Engagement levels in the subject increased with more pupils dedicating time to rehearsing. Students articulated their progress to parents and colleagues showed a greater understanding of the learning process.

There is now a genuine and active dialogue about learning in my department, sharing of resources and an increased sense of responsibility for what goes on in classrooms. The belief in growth mindsets has extended to teachers as well as students. There is a more open approach to observations and acceptance that we can learn through sharing experiences. I also think that members of the music department have become energised and inspired to work as agents of change with a greater sense of moral purpose (Bangs & Frost, 2016).

I am a different leader as a consequence of leading the development work and I understand that leadership takes on different guises. Interrogating the six leadership styles promoted on the National College for Teaching and Leadership website it seems to me that the leadership I exercised during

Observations demonstrated the following:

- students had a greater sense of responsibility and felt trusted
- students were enthusiastic about this style of lesson
- lessons had become student-led
- the project had scope for progression
- students pushed themselves to sing and play at the same time
- students talked about learning as documented in their learning logs

Responses confirmed that the project had potential for success. To bring about the impact we desired as a department, I had hoped the next phase of my development work would involve the whole team committing to the ukulele project, but this was not the case.

Phase 2 – the scope for impact widens

Two of my team were keen to participate and what was previously seen as 'my' project was becoming 'our' project. One teacher who had previously avoided singing with whole classes was now actively seeking opportunities to sing with the class whilst developing instrumental skill and technique on the ukulele. During this period, we observed a shift in confidence amongst our classes and students were stretching themselves.

The success of the project relied on creating the appropriate conditions for change. Phase 2 therefore included just three departmental staff undertaking the project. It seemed to me that if I could lead as a role model, I would be creating an environment that the other two teachers would want to be part of. This resonated with the idea that your primary influence is the environment you create (Senge, 2006). I worked with colleagues who were willing to observe, but were less keen to actively participate. On reflection I believe it was low confidence levels that were limiting their involvement. To address this I incorporated a third phase where all students in Year 7 were learning the ukulele.

the project corresponds with the categories of 'affiliative', 'democratic' and 'coaching' (Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2013). I concur with Sergiovanni (1992) that the secret to successful leadership is to replace communication with conversation. As a team, we have become connected to the project, part of a greater whole and have developed the desire to contribute to a larger purpose (Fullan, 2001).

With regard to the future we aim to develop our learning programmes further and will share our experience with other departments as well as with the county music service.

Jo's perspective

Colette became a Subject Leader in the school at which she was a student some years earlier. Exercising leadership when some of the teachers who taught her were still on the team must have been a considerable challenge, but she rose to it admirably. I think she managed to do this because she took steps to sensitise herself to the professional culture and adjusted her project plan accordingly. Throughout the project Colette showed herself to be committed to the 'can do' spirit both with her colleagues and with students. The idea that some students 'can't do music' was banished and replaced with a positive mindset. She modelled this herself and offered support to enable its development in others. The principles of 'servant leadership' (Greenleaf, 2002) saw her through.

Colette's project has been a refreshing counter to the marginalisation that has resulted from the weighting given to those subject areas prioritised in the government's 'Progress 8' assessment scheme (DfE, 2017b). For some teachers in arts subjects, this pressure has been daunting. It can lead to a feeling of impotence, but Colette has shown us that when faced with such a challenge, the best way forward is to be strategic rather than defeatist. She is a very reflective practitioner and was able to model this for her colleagues, being innovative in her own practice, engaging colleagues in collaborative reflection and enticing them to participate in the rewarding process of innovation.

CHAPTER 10:

Notice, narrate, navigate: developing a framework for reflection on learning

Steve Emmett and Sarah Lightfoot

When Steve became one of the pioneers of the new HertsCam MEd programme in September 2015, he was a deputy headteacher at Wormley Primary School in Broxbourne, Hertfordshire.

Sarah is the current MEd Programme Leader and has been a member of the team since she graduated from the forerunner of the HertsCam MEd in 2003. She was Steve's MEd supervisor.

It resonated with my concern and my classroom observations. What really stood out for me was the link between reflection and learning intentionally.

My initial consultations led me to think that the children were rarely strategic or deliberate about their learning. They appeared not to know themselves as learners and were unaware of their potential to be in control of their own learning. This led me to conclude that they needed to be effective meta-learners (Biggs, 1988), intentionally and strategically choosing the most appropriate strategy; monitoring and checking progress against goals; adjusting behaviours, feelings, moods, strategies and the environment and applying their learning in new or similar contexts (Jackson, 2004). So how could I develop effective meta-learning?

Chris Watkins had proposed 'learning story boards'.

The more richly someone narrates their learning, the more they see their own role in it. The more someone sees their own role in their learning, the more they become able to plan, monitor and review i.e. an effective learner (Watkins, 2010: slide 23).

I adopted the idea of 'appreciative storyboards' which involve children recalling an occasion when they learned well and representing this by drawing and writing a brief story.

The project

My aim was to enable children in our school to be more reflective about learning by empowering them to develop their own appreciative narrative; stories the children create and tell themselves about successful learning experiences (Davies & Lewis, 2013; Watkins, 2015). I designed a time-bound, strategic process which made use of a wide range of visual and participatory tools. The project plan was the result of consultation, critical reflection and collaborative deliberation and from this a carefully considered and sustainable project emerged that left me well-placed to influence practice in my school (Hill, 2014).

Steve's story

The origins of this project are rooted in my school's ambition to maximise the children's learning potential through a social learning agenda (Frankel & Fowler, 2016). I had been concerned about underachieving children coming to school without the skills required for learning. The perception of many children was that their learning and behaviour was beyond their own control. They viewed learning as simply being taught (Watkins, 2011), as something done to them. Of course, it is true that social and economic inequalities (Hertfordshire County Council, 2013) contribute to pupils' view of themselves as learners, but in my view, there was scope for developing our practice.

I began by analysing the organisational context of my school. At that time, an inspirational new headteacher had recently been appointed to lead a teaching team in which there was a strong sense of moral purpose ready to be unlocked (Fullan, 2003). The conditions were perfect for a transformation of the organisational culture of the school (Hargreaves, 2003b). Only months after beginning the transformation process, it was possible to discern the features of a professional learning community in the culture of the school: opportunities for varied professional learning for all teaching staff were increasing, levels of morale were high and pupils' engagement with learning had increased (Leithwood & Janzi, 2005). After consultation with colleagues, I was able to identify a professional concern that would be broadly supported: the need to develop children's capacity to engage in reflection about learning.

I began to explore the idea of a reflective learner through my reading. I came across this description of what was happening in another classroom forty years ago.

[learners'] ... had little insight into their own ability to learn intentionally: they lacked reflection. Children do not use a whole variety of learning strategies because they do not know much about the art of learning... Furthermore, they know little about monitoring their own activities; that is, they do not think to plan, orchestrate, oversee, or revise their own learning efforts (Brown, 1978: 400).

Learning stories

This involves young children telling a successful story about their learning; the teacher supports the child with noticing the key learning words and writing them down. For example, *I can be a super learner by working together and to keep on trying*. The children begin to take control by selecting matching visual images and sticking them on to their story. The child then re-tells the story to their peers. The sharing of the stories often seems to inspire others to engage with similar learning experiences.

Storyboards

For older and more confident writers, teachers used the storyboard approach (Watkins, 2010). Children reflect on a successful learning experience by retelling the story with words and pictures across three sections titled: beginning, middle and end. The important element of the process is the 'unfinished sentence' designed to illuminate what has been successful and what needs to be repeated in the future. For example, *I can help myself to solve problems by...* I discovered that storyboards are most effective when they are first completed with the teacher before they are attempted individually.

Navigation poster

Rather than completing a written storyboard, the children verbally narrate a successful learning experience. However, similar to the storyboard, the children complete the unfinished sentence, which I renamed a *navigation point*. This vital element is designed to summarise the main learning and give the children a secure point to navigate a way through similar experiences in the future. Each child's navigation points are captured and compiled on a poster for the class.

The legacy

My intention was to develop the use of appreciative narratives to enable children to be more reflective and deliberate as learners. Originally, I proposed the use of storyboards which provided the learner with a prompt to talk about a positive learning experience in the form of a story with pictures.

My project would be complemented by that of my colleague, Deborah (see Chapter 5). Our professional concerns and proposals were related; we wanted the children to be more reflective, intentional and strategic learners. Drawing influence from Watkins (2015), we presented our separate projects under a single whole-school title: Being reflective about learning – notice, narrate and navigate. I focused on how appreciative stories of prior experiences might influence future learning: narrating.

What would effective appreciative narrative look like? I consulted pupils and learned that the most vivid narratives included reflective language such as 'At first...' and 'Next time...' They also included accounts of action such as asking questions, thinking, the group deciding and portrayals of emotional responses using language such as 'it was hard' and 'I am no longer scared'. They would also include vocabulary specific to the topic they were reflecting on. Having developed a framework for appreciative storyboards I could begin to collaborate with colleagues to build knowledge and make a difference to classroom practice (Frost, 2013).

To narrate learning effectively we need first to notice how we are learning (Watkins, 2015). Deborah and I expanded the concept of noticing to include both surface and deep noticing. Surface noticing refers to more obvious and literal observations such as saying what you see or recognising emotions. On the other hand, deep noticing requires higher level thinking such as making connections or deliberately using previous strategies (Hattie & Donoghue, 2016). To make this more tangible for the children, I said that surface noticing is like snorkelling, whereas deep noticing is more like scuba diving. This analogy helped children to learn how to slow down their thinking and become more aware of how they are learning.

The project relied on a group of volunteer teachers who designed their own versions of appreciative narratives. I affectionately refer to this group as the first followers because of their courage to collaborate, innovate and show others the way (Sivers, 2010). From our collaborative development, three different forms of appreciative narratives emerged: learning stories, storyboards and navigation posters.

I soon discovered that storyboarding had the potential to be a collaborative experience where small groups, or even the entire class, could create stories of learning. At first, storyboards seemed to be very accessible, but colleagues soon began to point out the inaccessibility for pre-writers and children with limited reflective vocabulary. I addressed these issues by collaborating with colleagues to develop reflective prompts, learning words and the learning story. The first followers explored noticing and narrating, developing original and effective approaches to support children with discovering and sharing their stories. As a result, learning stories, collaborative storyboards and navigation posters were developed as effective ways of creating and re-telling positive learning experiences.

As the children are exposed to specific learning words, their awareness of learning is heightened (Tarrant & Holt, 2016) and they begin to recognise and name attributes for themselves; they *notice*. Once they have the language to describe how they are learning, then they are able to create meaningful and memorable learning stories: they *narrate*. I discovered that these stories are likely to be more memorable if they are connected with a strong emotion (Curran, 2008). Children demonstrated that they were able to transfer their learning more effectively when their stories were captured, for example, on a navigation poster or learning story. If these stories are retold and celebrated with their peers, they not only influence the learner but also the classroom community. As this becomes part of the teacher's routine practice, the culture of the classroom begins to shift and appreciative narratives are used naturally and begin to influence future learning. They become navigators of their own learning.

At the conclusion of the project, I was able to extend Watkins' statement referred to earlier, to take account of noticing and navigating:

The more someone notices their learning, the more they are able to narrate their learning. The more richly someone narrates their learning, the more they see their own role in it. The more someone sees their own

role in their learning, the more they become able to plan, monitor and review (i.e. navigators of their own learning).

(adapted from Watkins, 2010)

Leading this project had a substantial effect on my view of leadership which was enhanced through the critical scholarship (Hill, 2014) I developed as a participant in the MEd programme. I discovered a few salient things that have reshaped me as a leader. These discoveries were not necessarily the result of successful experiences and, in fact, the most illuminating moments were those that were unsuccessful. I discovered that development work requires careful consultation over a sustained period of time to ensure the focus of the project is truly something worth bothering colleagues about. It is best to work with a few first followers who are prepared to collaborate, play and innovate. A participatory approach enabled colleagues to explore and build on their innovations. I learned that it is crucial to develop the confidence to communicate regularly with a range of colleagues, particularly those least involved. The more people talked about the project, the more it became part of the school's teaching approach. Possibly the most significant discovery was how to collaborate with a senior colleague to bring two projects together and achieve a common approach. This required extensive deliberation and critical reflection through honest professional dialogue.

The learning words used in my project are now at the centre of the social learning agenda and explicitly taught as part of the curriculum. The 'notice, narrate and navigate' approach has been established as a learning tool and will be promoted as a mechanism for enabling children to be more deliberate and reflective about learning. Although it feels like the journey has only just started, this project has already enriched the organisational capital of my school through enhanced professional dialogue (Frost, 2013) about learning and the role of reflection. The project has also been welcomed by colleagues beyond my school.

Sarah's perspective

As a deputy headteacher, Steve knew that the project had to be one in which the whole staff team could be involved and could ultimately affect pedagogical practice in every classroom. His starting point was a positive view of learners, his firm belief that learners, whatever their backgrounds and current dispositions, have the potential to own and direct the process of learning.

From our conversations along the way, it was clear to me that the transformative effect of Steve's project was being felt right from the beginning as he consulted his colleagues and analysed the organisational conditions pertaining in the school at that time. What I found particularly interesting was that the project was entirely about reflection and dialogue. Teachers and children were all engaged in a process of learning: how to look at learning, how to notice it and how to navigate the challenging pathways and how to tell the story of learning. Some might think that Steve should have drawn more on his authority as a deputy headteacher, but he chose instead to concentrate on developing his leadership skills and using leaderful behaviours such as modelling, supporting and encouraging, and working alongside his colleagues to achieve shared goals.

Following his successful completion of the MEd programme, the MEd Teaching Team were delighted to welcome Steve into the team. He is the first graduate from the HertsCam MEd to become a member of the Teaching Team but I am sure he will not be the last.

CHAPTER 11:

Improving professional practice with disadvantaged students

Kristian Jones and Sheila Ball

At the time he led the project accounted for below, Kristian was an assistant pastoral leader with responsibility for disadvantaged students at Barnwell School, Stevenage in Hertfordshire.

Sheila Ball is a teacher of English at The Meridian School in Royston, Hertfordshire. She graduated from the forerunner of the HertsCam MEd in 2002 and later joined the Teaching Team. She is currently the Programme Leader for the HertsCam Teacher Led Development Work programme and deputy MEd Programme Leader. She was Kristian's MEd supervisor at the time he carried out this project.

children face, as well as the importance of collaborating with both students and colleagues. In conversation with one colleague, I reflected on the values which underpinned my attitude to teaching. It became clear that we were both committed to forging amongst our students a desire to learn, but we had a limited understanding of how to differentiate our teaching to achieve this for disadvantaged students. Interestingly, my colleague commented that strategies for other groups of students, such as those with special educational needs, were well established and easily accessible and wondered whether they might be useful with disadvantaged students.

To better understand the student perspective, I consulted some students who identified the factors which they felt led to more productive learning. For example, an opportunity to discuss a learning activity before starting it, fun activities involving the teachers as well as the students, and group work in which students could help each other.

All of these they said helped to improve their confidence. The factors they said made learning difficult included working in silence and struggling to answer questions which they didn't understand and the teacher moving on too soon or talking too quickly. They also said that a major hurdle was not being able to read questions or discuss with peers before tackling a problem.

What I learned from the above consultations was that there were pockets of effective practice but overall I was concerned about the frequency of ineffective teaching from the perspective of this group of students. To deepen my understanding of the issues, I explored the literature on how children learn, in particular, the importance of self-regulation (Duckworth, Akerman, MacGregor, Salter & Vorhaus, 2009). I reflected on the potential impact that disadvantage could have on learning both in school and at home, identifying barriers such as low levels of literacy, Special Educational Need and the structure of the curriculum. I found that learning takes place most effectively when students are resilient when they experience failure (Claxton, 2002) and that resilience can be nurtured by the school as a learning environment.

Kristian's story

When I embarked upon my masters, my school had been facing pressure from Ofsted to improve. Serving a community which included many disadvantaged families had always presented a challenge and the outcomes of a series of inspections had led to an approach adopted by the senior leadership team that many colleagues felt was authoritarian. Policies were often created at the top of the hierarchy and passed down with the result that many colleagues were reluctant to share ideas, unwilling to experiment and suffered from a fear of failure.

For my project to be successful therefore, I knew that I would have to develop an atmosphere of trust, appealing to colleagues' professional values and sense of moral purpose. My role as a pastoral leader included responsibility for addressing the needs of disadvantaged students identified as meeting the criteria for the 'Pupil Premium', a government funding mechanism to target resources where they were most needed (DfE, 2010). I therefore sought to develop a strategy to create conditions where experimentation was possible and colleagues could focus attention on developing teaching and learning, by building from the 'bottom up' (Knapp et al., 2003). I also thought it might be advantageous to try to rekindle the practice of teacher-led development work (Frost, 2003) which, as many published accounts show (Johnson, 2006; Delany, 2007; Ollerenshaw, 2007; Thandi, 2007; Anderson et al., 2015), had been longstanding at my school. In that tradition, I sought to create a collaborative environment, within which the experiences of colleagues could be shared.

Conversation and clarification

At the point at which I had been asked to take responsibility for this issue, there had been little focus on the teaching of disadvantaged students. Consultations with colleagues revealed a view held by some that disadvantaged students were primarily the responsibility of mentors and support assistants and not classroom teachers. Some colleagues on the other hand shared their experiences of overcoming obstacles that such

Collaboration to improve teaching

I decided to approach one of the assistant headteachers to discuss my concern and the aims of my project. I explained my intention to create a collaborative, knowledge sharing group, with a focus on identifying successful teaching strategies for disadvantaged students. By so doing, I intended to harness colleagues' intellectual capital and, through professional dialogue and reciprocity, to improve effectiveness (Hargreaves, 2001). Regular meetings would enable colleagues to engage in professional knowledge building. The practical nature of development work and the creation of a 'disadvantaged teaching toolkit' would impact the school's approach to provision for planning for such students. The collaborative nature of the project resonated with previous successful school initiatives and so my concern was understood and my aims widely supported by most of my colleagues.

My initial steps were to engage like-minded individuals in dialogue, so I invited colleagues to attend a meeting to discuss the challenges we faced as a school in one of the most deprived areas in the county (Hertfordshire Community Foundation, 2016). Following my invitation, I was approached by a colleague who was responsible for the school's 'Good to Outstanding' project. It became clear that we were working towards similar goals, and agreed it would make sense to work together to develop a learning community. As a result, I formed a group of nine colleagues with a range of responsibilities across the school from newly qualified teachers to members of the senior leadership team. The group was named the 'Pupil Premium Inclusion Group' (PPIG) reflecting the pupil premium funding the school receives to support students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The aim of this group was to identify factors which might inhibit learning for disadvantaged students, and then attempt to overcome them with carefully planned strategies. My intention was to create the conditions to support reflection and collaboration and to tap into colleagues' tacit knowledge. Sharing this knowledge would help others in improving their strategies to address the learning of disadvantaged students. This concept of a professional learning community,

an environment free from the fear of failure, where sharing and critically reflecting on each other's experiences can foster improvements in practice, resonated strongly with me (Stoll et al., 2006). I sought to build trust by ensuring meetings were open, where colleagues could share honest accounts of their teaching without the fear of blame. To stimulate dialogue, I shared extracts from publications such as the Education Endowment Foundation toolkit (Higgins et al., 2014). However, I wanted the group to critically evaluate the literature and draw their own conclusions. This process led to the creation of an agreed list of strategies.

Members of the PPIG were invited to meet monthly to discuss strategies, culminating in a reflective summary from each member at the end of the term.

Although the meetings seemed to be generally successful, it became clear that some members of the group had not engaged as actively as I had hoped. I attributed this in part to competing school priorities. However, given my commitment to non-positional teacher leadership (Frost, 2014b), what was of more concern was the lack of drive from these colleagues to engage in experimenting with strategies to improve the learning of disadvantaged students. With this in mind, I discussed my concern with a colleague which led to the conclusion that the project would be more likely to succeed if we could identify a representative from each faculty. This conversation proved to be a major development in the project. Not only did it increase the number of colleagues directly involved in planning and improving the teaching of disadvantaged students, it also widened the reach to others in their departments. As a result of this we reformed as a group of 'pupil premium representatives' (PPReps), identified in consultation with heads of faculties. In the initial meetings of the reconstituted group I proposed a similar approach to the one used before, but this time I wanted to mobilise the leadership capacity that had developed by asking a member of the Physical Education faculty to lead the meeting. Through this process, a sense of trust, essential for successful collaboration, (Frost & Durant, 2002) was nurtured. Encouraged by this, I deliberately sought out opportunities in subsequent meetings to further develop shared leadership.

During the second term, PPREps developed their own strategies to address the challenges they noticed disadvantaged students were facing. This process began with each colleague identifying a weakness in their department's teaching of such students, followed by five weeks of attempting to improve this provision. Across the five weeks, we met to discuss any barriers or successes, before evaluating the emerging strategies and producing a summary of the impact. These summaries were then accumulated and made into a toolkit to support colleagues' planning.

Outcomes and next steps

Although only active for a short time, my project has been successful in laying the foundations for improvements in planning provision for disadvantaged students. Disadvantaged students' needs are now being met more frequently. Colleagues have a heightened awareness of the varying needs of disadvantaged students and access to a system of support for planning. What is more important is that more colleagues now seem willing to experiment with their practice and accept responsibility for meeting the learning needs of our vulnerable students. Finally, at a whole school level there has been a significant cultural shift including a restructuring of the senior leadership team. In the new academic year, two of the Pupil Premium representatives will assume whole school responsibility for disadvantaged students, supported by a representative from each faculty. The toolkit of strategies built over the course of the project would be a key resource in further developing a more inclusive teaching environment for students and securing the legacy of my project.

It is interesting to reflect on how this legacy was secured. Aware of my impending departure from the school, I made a presentation to members of the senior leadership team in June 2017, with the purpose of outlining the impact of the project and to set the foundations for knowledge sharing across the school. I proposed that the toolkit entitled 'PP Planning Support' would be better shared at the start of the new academic year and introduced by the incumbent member of staff leading disadvantaged student progress. I appealed to colleagues' moral purpose by expressing

the view that new ideas may be more meaningful if they are introduced in an organised and sustainable manner, and that any new ideas should allow for flexibility to meet the needs of students (Smith, 2007). Fortunately, I was successful in securing the inclusion of my project in the school's planning for the following September.

Sheila's perspective

Supporting Kristian throughout the two years has been a thoroughly rewarding experience. His focus is a moral imperative for us all in education. There are no easy answers. The needs of these vulnerable learners are complex and as Kristian highlights, meeting their needs can be made problematic by external pressures and a culture at odds with self-improvement. Fear of failure is toxic for both students and teachers, however, Kristian managed to create the conditions for some colleagues to experiment with practice and develop the confidence to take ownership for their professional learning and the leading of learning in the classroom. More importantly, those conditions resulted in colleagues sharing their successes and failures without fear of judgement, but with the aim of understanding what works and how to improve practice.

Kristian's journey was not an easy one; however, it is clear that the structure of the MEd programme enabled him to fully appreciate the cultural context in which he was working and how his concern resonated with colleagues. It has been a delight to see his confidence develop, particularly during the project itself where his leadership qualities, his moral purpose, his humility and commitment to the development of others shone through. A key leadership moment I think for Kristian was the realisation that it wasn't necessary for him to be in the driving seat at all times, but it was important to facilitate the leadership of others, something he succeeded in doing. Crucially, he had the humility to consult colleagues at a point when the project was not going as well as he had hoped and to act on their suggestions leading to the creation of the group of Pupil Premium representatives. Aware of his departure at the end of the school year, Kristian acted strategically to secure the legacy of his project. Because he had developed colleagues' leadership capacity

throughout the duration of his project, he was able to secure the structural changes necessary to ensure that colleagues' knowledge for meeting the needs of disadvantaged students could be built upon.

CHAPTER 12:

Developing strategies to promote creativity

Ruth Fuller and Jo Mylles

Ruth teaches art and is a Senior Learning Advocate at John Henry Newman School, in Stevenage, Hertfordshire. She was a member of the first cohort of the HertsCam MEd when it began in September 2015.

Jo is currently Headteacher of Challney High school for Girls in Luton, Bedfordshire, but at the time that Ruth undertook her project, Jo was Deputy Headteacher at Sir John Lawes School, Hertfordshire. Jo graduated from the forerunner of the HertsCam MEd in 2005 and subsequently joined the Teaching Team. She was Ruth's MEd supervisor.

Ruth's story

Studying for my first degree in Silversmithing and Jewellery introduced me to a way of working which I have found crucial in everything I have done subsequently. The creative thinking structure – formulating a problem, preparation, incubation, illumination and verification – described as the typical creative process (Lawson, 2005) – cemented a common working approach. Whether teaching art and design, leading the department or creating a learning programme, it is simply the way I work, and it was essential in designing and developing my development project. My aim has been to inspire students of all subject areas and enable them to become life-long learners, seeing the value of working and thinking creatively throughout the whole of their lives (Eisner, 2002). This was the focus for my work in relation to the MEd.

Preparation for the development work

I began with an exploration of the organisational culture at my school through dialogue with colleagues and students. This confirmed that in my school there is mutual respect which supports development work (Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross & Smith, 1994). As has been well documented, we had been developing the teacher-led development work approach over many years (Rose, 2008; Heasman, 2009; Timpson, Fuller, Kitson, Gallagher, Rose & Ball, 2017) and so I thought that an initiative such as mine would be well received.

I subsequently wrote a paper through which I was able to deepen my knowledge and appreciation of the value of creativity in learning. The key elements include creativity as a way of thinking and being, and the belief that, rather than it being god-given, the capacity to develop creatively can be acquired by anyone (Hallgarten & Ellison, 2016). Creativity builds intelligence and draws upon imagination (Sternberg, 2006). Being curious and open-minded, willing to learn from mistakes and forge links between ideas, are all ways in which we can be creative (Gelb, 2009). My reading not only affirmed my beliefs but also secured them and provided me with a quiet authority. The literature provided strength

through knowledge, which helped me to share ideas with colleagues and students across different curriculum areas.

In designing my project, the understanding that leading change is a shared responsibility that does not have to be seen from a hierarchical point of view (Hargreaves & Hopkins, 1992) was invaluable. I learnt over the two-year period that collaboration is vital. Fundamental to the teacher-led development work (TLDW) approach is the idea of teachers being driven by their moral purpose. When teachers develop their own ideas, they feel a sense of empowerment (Fullan, 2004), providing the strength and resilience needed (Bangs & Frost, 2012). I was also grateful to my colleagues in the Senior Leadership Team for allowing me to lead a process of change. Consultation was key to the creation of my plan.

The development work

The project itself focused on developing the creative skills of teachers and students in the sixth form. If I was going to influence colleagues and students outside the art department, I needed a group of teachers and students from a range of subjects to work with. I invited several colleagues to be involved and they nominated students from their teaching groups to form the student creativity group. This provided me with a representative group of students. It was important to show that creativity is a skill open to us all, not just those normally associated with the visual or performing arts (Winner, Goldstein and Vincent-Lancrin, 2013; Robinson, 2011; Kelley & Kelley, 2015). Teachers and students studying a range of subjects including design and technology, English, history, mathematics, physical education, psychology and religious studies, strengthened the message of the importance of creativity and I am very much indebted to them.

When we started working, I met with both teacher and student groups separately on a number of occasions before bringing the groups to work together. I needed to get to know them as a team, provide a common goal and build their trust in each other (Nussbaum, 2013). I also wanted to enable the groups to talk to each other in an uninhibited way. I was

their own ideas about how they could work together with their teachers to make their learning more interactive, creative and participative (MacBeath, Frost, Pedder & Frost, 2008). Students came up with a range of ideas that we called a menu and I arranged a creativity teacher-student session where ideas could be shared. The teachers showed great interest in the students' ideas and the students felt empowered, seeing their ideas discussed and utilised within their lessons. One idea was explaining something as if talking to a five-year old. Another idea was 'Ask Me' badges which were made and worn to instigate conversation about aspects of their work. A 'Roll a Penny' game was created where subject topics were labelled on a grid; wherever the penny rolled and landed determined the focus of the group's work providing an element of fun and surprise. Teachers and students worked together to develop learning in ways that were fresh and creative for everyone.

As time went on, there were moments when I simply gave a couple of questions to get the conversation going and sat back and listened to their ideas. One idea would lead to another. Someone would say something which the group would build upon, agreeing, disagreeing or looking at it from a different point of view. The students became confident within the group. There was plenty of laughter, plenty of enthusiasm and plenty of ideas. The students built a network of support amongst themselves. This was evident when I was summing up the thoughts of the group in order to remember what everyone had said. My assumption was that I should attribute particular ideas to individuals, but the students challenged this and insisted that every student was credited for the ideas as a whole. I felt delighted that they were working in this way, that they were valuing everyone in the group and felt that everyone had something of worth to contribute. The positive energy and social capital they had developed as a group allowed creative ideas to be discussed more openly and honestly (Etelapelto & Lahti, 2008). They were able to take a lead in their own learning and were developing their skills of enquiry (Eisner, 1985). Rather than being trained and filled with knowledge to remember and recall at a later date, they were being creative, showing empathy, developing strong relationships and beginning to understand the power of creativity (Barnes & Shirley, 2007).

the bridge between the groups. We worked in a democratic and ethical manner by making sure everyone understood that their opinion mattered. The relationships within the groups developed so that everyone felt their voice was heard, everyone had the opportunity to say what they really felt. Exploring creativity was the starting point. It was important to have a shared understanding and the groups arrived at some key ideas for which I found support in the literature. Creating something new, being innovative, using your imagination, looking at things from different perspectives were all ideas offered by teachers and students (Maley & Bolitho, 2015).

Leading on from this I made everyone's ideas into a game to help them create processes to make lessons more creative. Colleagues wanted students to find a love for the subjects they were studying and to see their importance in the world. Being able to make connections between things is a process which assists creativity and the teachers' group wanted to encourage this. We created the 'Outside-Inside' idea in which students would bring in ideas from the world outside school (Sawyer, 2012). They would listen to the daily news, read, go on visits and within their daily routine find ways of relating their subjects to the world (Sefton-Green, Thomson, Jones & Bresler, 2011). Their ideas and new knowledge were presented to the rest of the group. Teachers were delighted with the response. Students were raising ideas including how to talk about their favourite films, the power of different athletes and how they build stamina, and how small we all really are in the observable universe. Students were bringing fresh ideas into the classroom, sharing not only with their peers but also influencing their teachers. They were beginning to develop their confidence and show their love and interest for the subject in a wider sense (Eisner, 2002).

As Morgan (2009) suggests, questionnaires were not useful ways of engaging students and finding out what they think; instead, I had regular meetings with them which proved invaluable. To continue to develop creatively, we needed to keep finding new ways to develop the learning. I had done a lot of work with the student group on the nature of creativity and how it might look in their lessons. The students subsequently began to develop

confidence of colleagues and students, stronger relationships between students and teachers, and students having a greater responsibility for their own learning, were all vital.

Jo's perspective

It was such a pleasure to see Ruth overcoming the self-doubt we saw in the early stages and really developing as a writer and as a leader of change. As Ruth's MEd supervisor throughout the two-year period I learnt a lot through our dialogue. For example, I learnt how a teacher can model creativity through the way she exercises leadership. Ruth's leadership was underpinned by sound values and an instinctive grasp of the essential features of the concept of a learning community. Her sense of moral purpose was always strong and evident in the way she consistently put the needs of students at the centre of everything she did.

A great strength of Ruth's project was the recognition of the centrality of students and authentic engagement with them was a core thread in the development process. It was so much more than the tokenistic consultation we often find. In her story, Ruth cites Hart (1992) who put forward the 'ladder of participation' as a device to indicate a continuum where the lower rungs are manipulation, decoration and tokenism moving through increasingly authentic modes of participation to a state where young people initiate action which they share with their teachers. I think that Ruth has been working at the level of the uppermost rungs of Hart's ladder. In her project the students were genuine collaborators who worked alongside their teachers to push the boundaries of learning.

Outcomes

As the year progressed, ideas from the development work influenced the process of induction week for the new Year 12 group for the next academic year. In preparation for the induction week, the creativity student group, along with the director of sixth form presented the creativity group's ideas to the whole staff. Our work would be the model to be adopted for all induction lessons that year. This had never been done before. We had never had protected time to plan induction lessons nor had specific direction on how to engage students using ideas from other students. Students were in the lead and demonstrating their ability to initiate action; they were working together with their teachers to make a difference (Hart, 1992). The approach was modelled by one of the students and the student menu was shared. The creativity team supported the teachers in designing their induction lessons. The students saw their ideas in action which strengthened their belief they had a part to play in the development of their own learning and that of others too (Flutter & Rudduck, 2004).

To widen impact on the school community, we planned to influence a larger network of teams of teachers and students with the ultimate aim of placing creativity at the heart of learning and fully embedding creative practices in lessons. Outside-Inside as a concept for developing independent learning skills is now being used for the development of teaching and learning across the whole of the sixth form. Furthermore, creativity is beginning to be seen as a key component in learning alongside literacy and numeracy. The senior leadership team invited me to design and lead a lower school creativity curriculum for the following academic year. This would develop the creative skills of our younger students and provide them with a foundation for being effective in the world in which they live and work (Robinson, 2013).

Creative thinking is an essential component of human thought (Craft, Cremin & Burnard, 2008). It has also underpinned action that has changed the world (Csikszentmihalyi, 2013). It is heartening to have big areas of influence within the school, seeing the impact ripple out beyond the initial creativity groups. However, the quieter manifestations of impact such as enhanced

CHAPTER 13:

Transforming the practice of learning support assistants

Maxine Dalton and Tracy Gaiteri

When Maxine joined the first cohort of the new HertsCam MEd, she was Deputy Headteacher at Leavesden Green, a primary school in Watford, Hertfordshire.

Tracy is Headteacher at Wormley Primary School in Broxbourne, Hertfordshire. She graduated from the forerunner of the HertsCam MEd in 2007 and subsequently joined the Teaching Team. She was Maxine's MEd supervisor.

noticed that they seemed to find it difficult to act autonomously when working with children, preferring to be directed by the class teacher and working to teachers' plans and worksheets. It seemed to me that a lack of self-efficacy was at the heart of this. Perhaps, they assumed that their professional identity should be constrained by the relationship between teachers and assistants in which the teacher is the expert and author of knowledge and the teaching assistant merely a vessel for 'received wisdom'. Project-based learning offered a solution that might encourage self-efficacy, develop autonomy and nurture a more fulfilling professional identity.

A period of reflection and consultation led to the conclusion that, in order to address my concerns about the use and effectiveness of the LSAs, my development work would need to effect a shift in professional identities. The process would involve weekly sessions with the LSAs where they would learn about and discuss pedagogical themes that were relevant to the whole school. They would undertake weekly tasks that required them to collaborate and speak with their class teachers and then feed back in the following session. The intention was that this cycle of discussion and reflection would help to build a climate for collaboration. I worked in a consultative mode, initially focusing on three key LSAs. I supported them in designing their own projects in which they would focus on aspects of their practice, gathering evidence to discuss with their colleagues each week. I envisaged that the impact of this would be seen in their everyday interactions with learners around the school as well as in their discussions during collaborative weekly forums.

The issues

I planned for the project to address the professional learning needs of LSAs, however when I began to scrutinise the context and culture of my school, other issues became apparent. In my school, a culture shift was underway and, although LSAs were exposed to the change in ethos, it appeared that they were not embracing it, or that something else was hindering change. They were working with the lower ability children in isolation from the class as a whole. From discussions with pupils and teachers, and through direct observation of classroom practice, it became clear to me that roles and

Maxine's story

Before undertaking the MEd, I had been fortunate enough to be part of innovative learning communities within a number of schools. As a new deputy headteacher, participating in the HertsCam MEd enabled me to really examine my own philosophy of education and the context of my new school. In the early stages, I clarified my thinking about teaching and learning and the organisational culture of my school. I considered the roles of other adults in the school community and how they could be encouraged to develop their own practice. In particular, I focused on the Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) in our school.

I searched for reports of relevant research and found a review by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF, 2015). The conclusions of that study seemed relevant to my setting: the deployment of teaching assistants was not always conducive to raising attainment, particularly when their support substituted, rather than supplemented, teaching from teachers. Such provision was usually for pupils who were low attaining or identified as having special educational needs. Evidence, although limited, suggested that when teaching assistants were provided with support on a one to one or small group basis, or when they worked together with teachers effectively, there could be increases in attainment.

The school's LSAs recognised the need for training to improve their practice, but they had never considered pedagogy or learning to learn and requested only curriculum or subject knowledge-based training. It became clear to me that there were areas of professional learning, essential to their roles that they were not even aware of. Furthermore, it seemed to me that this was limiting their potential for developing their own expertise. However, it was also limiting their capacity to be agential, that is, to exert influence and innovate within our school (Giddens, 1984). This meant considering a different approach to support for continued professional development for both LSAs and teachers. The type of support provided would have to address the lack of pedagogical understanding and would need to promote collaboration both between teachers and LSAs and amongst the assistants themselves. I also

responsibilities needed clarification. This had also been found in research at the London Institute of Education (Kerry, 2006). My initial observations revealed a number of specific areas for development. Firstly, it was clear that both class teachers and LSAs saw the role as re-teaching children with insecure learning and misconceptions, outside of the classroom. This meant that these children were excluded from creative curriculum time. Secondly, class teachers expected LSAs to teach key concepts without sufficient pedagogical understanding or necessary preparation. Thirdly, it transpired that communication between class teachers and LSAs was generally not effective. Fourthly, assistants were focused on outcomes such as completed worksheets - the doing rather than the learning process. This led to a belief amongst LSAs that knowledge-based training would improve their practice since they saw themselves as being deployed in the place of teachers. Finally, and perhaps pivotal, was an unspoken hierarchy among the LSA team which hampered trust and collaboration.

Developing the community

Already in place was a set time during the school week for a forum which the LSAs were expected to attend. My dilemma hinged on participation in the forum being obligatory and I would have preferred to have been able to rely on voluntary attendance. Nevertheless, I felt this would be a useful forum which had the potential to impact on their practice by providing appropriate support for their professional development. The use of micro self-evaluation (Chapman & Sammons, 2013) and appreciative inquiry projects (Hammond & Hammond, 1996) had already been established in our school with colleagues being expected to undertake projects focused on key aspects of practice linked to the school development plan. Teachers are given time out of class for reading and supervisions with the headteacher and they are expected to undertake a project within their own classroom. The success of this type of support for teachers' professional learning was clear. Teachers had expressed their enthusiasm for leading projects in which they could make changes in their classroom practice. They also appreciated being able to collaborate with colleagues and share the professional knowledge emerging throughout the school. It seemed obvious therefore that this would be a good way to develop

the practice of the LSAs who had not been involved in the teachers' projects and appeared to be operating quite separately, often defaulting to rather traditional practices.

I knew that it would be challenging to engage LSAs in this sort of initiative because their contracts specify particular working hours and their pay and conditions are quite different to those of the teachers. Many of them commented that their remuneration did not justify undertaking extra work, including the development of their own practice. Some did not acknowledge any need to change their approach and had little motivation to do so. LSAs did not consider themselves to be 'academic' in that they did not read the kind of research-based texts that the teachers were encouraged to read. However, on a positive note, many had taken up this poorly paid role because they were driven by a strong sense of moral purpose. Many said that they cared about children and their learning and said that they wanted to help them, sentiments that I could capitalise on. As I wrestled with the challenge of how to engage LSAs in my project, I benefited from the opportunity of a conversation with the author of 'Leading with a Moral Purpose' (Ryan, 2008) who was acting as a mentor to the Headteacher of my school. He advised me to ensure that the LSAs' job descriptions specified an expectation that they would develop their practice through project-based approaches. This expectation seemed appealing to them, although I personally felt that, if I could encourage them to participate fully in the meetings of the forum, this sort of accountability-based approach would not be necessary.

At the start of the project I came to realise that the LSAs were still influenced by the leadership approach modelled by the previous headteacher. The trust that is essential to the success of a school had become weak (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). LSAs were not able to engage in critical reflection and discussion as a group. One reason for this was that they did not trust each other or myself in my position as Deputy Headteacher. If they voiced a difficulty, they feared that they would be regarded as incapable which might result in them being reprimanded by senior leaders and a lowering of their

standing in the eyes of their colleagues. Conversely, if they talked about their practice in positive terms, they feared being labelled 'teacher's pet'. In retrospect I think that the main reason they were not able to reflect on their practice was that they had never been asked to do so before. It was alien to them. I needed to remedy this thoughtfully and carefully, by developing trust among them and by facilitating open and honest dialogue. Perhaps, if I could create an atmosphere of trust within this group, it could be extended to the relationship between LSAs and their colleagues, whether they be teachers or senior leaders. I also needed to create opportunities for genuine and purposeful collaboration between all concerned.

Outcomes and next steps

The outcomes of the project have been manifold. In the first instance, LSAs have realised that they have a key role within the changed culture of our school. They now feel that they have permission to intervene with children's learning in the flow of the lesson rather than afterwards when the moment is lost. Secondly, they have renewed confidence about their curriculum knowledge, feeling able to report outcomes of assessment to their class teachers. Thirdly, they have a language to talk about learning. For example, they speak about being scaffolders of learning and often refer to the children's ability to self-regulate when talking about their learning. Most importantly, there is no longer a hierarchy amongst the LSAs. The group now behave more like a professional learning community (Stoll & Seashore Louis, 2007). As individuals, they have chosen areas of focus and have created their own networks within the team, supporting each other in developing their pedagogical understanding. The forum meetings have become opportunities for collaboration, trust-building and the development of practice.

At the conclusion of the academic year, I planned my next steps focused on sustaining the momentum. The LSAs' reflection on the value of their projects was encouraging. Their projects were aligned to the teachers' project foci and there was a shared language between teachers and LSAs. The academic year that followed would bring further opportunities for

collaborative project-based development. Opportunities to network with other local schools enabled us all to celebrate what we had achieved, build and share knowledge and engage in more invaluable professional dialogue.

Tracy's perspective

I was Maxine's MEd supervisor at the time she led this project. She had recently been appointed to the school as the Deputy Headteacher and had previously worked in a highly innovative, outward-looking and risk-taking professional learning community. The culture of her new school was very different but she was determined, in partnership with the newly appointed headteacher, to bring about much needed change to a school that had just been put into the category of Requires Improvement by Ofsted. It was fascinating to see how Maxine learned more about her context, consulted and reflected and began to form a plan to initiate further change in the school. Maxine soon realised that she would need to focus on a significant sub-community – the Learning Support Assistants. Quickly, Maxine recognised the challenges that she would face in developing the assistants under a new ethos as they had had little investment in their professional development, had been under-valued and poorly deployed. In addition there was an unspoken hierarchy and disrespect for development and change amongst the group. She initiated a detailed programme which taught key principles of pedagogy, introduced a learning to learn agenda and developed a common language about learning. She skilfully planned activities which promoted paired and group work, tasks and reflective activities and discussion. Maxine built a learning community where trust and collaboration flourished. As a result nearly all of the LSAs developed a more positive professional identity and greater sense of agency and self-efficacy which helped to reinforce the developing culture of the school. That isn't to say that the mission is complete; Maxine is aware that this is just the start but knows the blockers and levers to help her development work in the future.

I was so inspired by Maxine's project that I initiated a similar project in my own school which had a similar, profound and positive effect on my teaching assistants. Likewise, another member of Maxine's MEd cohort initiated a

term's project with the assistants in her school and was able to present their project work at a learning network to which I belong. Listening to her story, I found that many of the outcomes resonated with those of Maxine's project. Maxine has managed to create the ripple effect, spreading impact within the school and beyond. There is an important lesson here which concerns the power of investing in people. We need to provide opportunities to enable colleagues to achieve and realise their potential as well as forums to share their learning.

CHAPTER 14:

Developing the capacity to improve disadvantaged students' learning

Sarah-Jane Eastwood and Sheila Ball

Sarah-Jane Eastwood was a teacher of English at Birchwood High School, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire when she joined the first cohort of the HertsCam MEd in Leading Teaching and Learning when it began in September 2015.

Sheila Ball is a teacher of English at the Meridian School in Royston, Hertfordshire. She graduated from the forerunner of the HertsCam MEd in 2003 and later joined the supervising team. She is currently the Programme Leader for the HertsCam Teacher Led Development Work programme and deputy MEd Programme Leader. She was Sarah-Jane's MEd supervisor.

strategies such as counselling, emotional literacy workshops, parental meetings and other interventions, but these have had limited success. Although the purpose of these strategies was to support students' learning, there was no mechanism to ensure that the support provided was connected to what happens in the classroom and this is what my project set out to change. The senior leadership team's quality assurance procedures, such as 'learning walks', had identified pockets of expertise within my school. Mindful of this, I designed a development project which aimed to establish a professional learning community (Bolam et al., 2005; Stoll, 2003) in which colleagues could regularly share their ideas and concerns about the provision for specific students. I worked with a group of eight colleagues from different subjects and responsibilities to gain a whole-school insight into our disadvantaged students. To concentrate our efforts, a focus group of underachieving disadvantaged students was selected from Years 8, 10 and 11. The development group including myself regularly trialled classroom strategies and reflected on our experiences every four to six weeks.

I acted strategically to ensure that what we were learning would have a whole school impact (Hill, 2014). Firstly, as a result of the group's experimentation and reflection, I created a toolkit of classroom strategies for engaging disadvantaged students to share with colleagues across the school. Secondly, I approached senior leaders who could see the potential of the toolkit. Consequently, I was able to lead a whole school workshop focused on strategies to engage disadvantaged students. What was key here was that I facilitated my colleagues' leadership capacity by enabling them to lead the workshop. For example, the development group hosted an afternoon of 'speed-dating' style activities where each development group colleague had an assigned table and a particular student from the focus group to discuss. Colleagues were encouraged to participate in ten-minute rounds of collaborative discussion in the hope that they would be able to trial the suggested activities within their own classrooms. After this session, the level of commitment to the project soared as colleagues began to see the benefits of collaborating and changing their classroom approach (Tschanen-Moran, 2014).

Sarah-Jane's story

The impetus for my project arose from an Ofsted inspection which highlighted the academic underachievement of our disadvantaged students as a key area for improvement. Being the only comprehensive, co-educational secondary in the area, we enrol students from a variety of backgrounds and a range of abilities, with approximately fifteen percent of our cohort eligible for pupil premium funding. My school's culture is centred on educating the whole child by providing them with every possible opportunity and improving the transferable skills required for later life (Claxton, 2002). This has proved largely beneficial for our students in helping them to become well-rounded individuals. However, I wondered whether such a focus had resulted in the academic progress of vulnerable groups, such as the disadvantaged, being side-lined.

The question of why disadvantaged students under-perform has been asked nationally in educational institutions and, indeed, has become a prevalent concern for all educational practitioners (Ofsted, 2016). For most schools, the answer has remained elusive, however there do seem to be some common factors such as absenteeism, poor learning behaviour and a lack of resilience (Bandura, 1989b; Dweck, 2012; Music, 2014). My school is no exception with regard to these findings. Absenteeism for this group of students is twice as high as the national average and behavioural sanctions such as detentions and exclusions are high across all year groups. Worse, many of these students are considered repeat offenders, and the sanctions in place ostensibly to aid their learning often hinder it instead (Sheppard, 2013). For some of our disadvantaged students the challenges from their home lives create barriers to their academic learning within school (Maslow, 1943; Vygotsky, 1978).

The project

From consultations with colleagues, students and my own reflections it became evident that the behaviour patterns cited above stemmed from a lack of self-esteem and resilience (Dweck, 2012). My school's pastoral team had experience of addressing these emotional barriers through support

In addition, the workshop resulted in a closer collaboration between myself and one of the assistant principals to plan future whole school workshops with the same focus. Our discussions also identified the need to encourage peer observations and coaching relationships to further cement professional dialogue initiated during the workshop. Although peer observations were being trialled as part of the school's new quality assurance procedure, the focus was developmental, rather than judgemental to avoid impacting negatively on colleagues' confidence. There was an agreement that the purpose of the professional learning community (Bolam et al., 2005; Stoll, 2003) was to build a strong and safe environment to facilitate successful collaboration between colleagues, and so this became a main focus for senior leaders.

The impact

During the project, I taught a challenging Year 8 class with many of its students identified as underachieving and disadvantaged. Due to a poor learning attitude and lack of confidence, the class' previous experience in lessons had made them difficult to manage and expectations were low. Even though teachers are usually driven by a strong sense of moral purpose, I wonder how I would have taught this class had it not been for this project: leading my project reignited my moral purpose namely, the importance of helping all students to achieve their full potential (Hill, 2014). After nearly a year of trialling strategies, my relationship with this class is built on the satisfaction of their achievement and I have requested to teach them next year for the start of their GCSE course. All but two of the students achieved either in line with or above their expected target grade in their end of year assessment which, considering their low starting points, is a testament to the project's success. By developing my capacity as a classroom practitioner, I believe my students have become better learners 'against the odds' of their backgrounds (Shain, 2015: 8). This success has been experienced by several members of the development group and I have received emails from other colleagues who have witnessed positive outcomes by trialling the suggested strategies. Furthermore, some colleagues have cited fewer behavioural sanctions such as warnings and fewer removals of disadvantaged students from lessons.

This positivity around teaching disadvantaged students has grown during the course of the project as colleagues have gained a greater understanding of what it is to be disadvantaged and the barriers some of these students face that inhibit their learning potential. Colleagues seem less fearful of seeking advice. The results of consultations with colleagues showed that they found the workshop 'very useful' and wanted to have other opportunities to engage in such collaborative dialogue. The frequency of the project's activities, and the support of the development group colleagues, has impacted positively on my school's culture (Sergiovanni, 2001). Colleagues seem more motivated to help disadvantaged students by adapting their classroom practice. In addition, the project has resulted in a structural change with regards to the roles of our senior leaders: a new deputy principal has been appointed whose responsibility it is to redesign the whole school approach to behaviour and attendance and the central role of one of the assistant principals is now the teaching and learning of disadvantaged students, with myself working alongside as a critical friend.

It is not possible to state that the above changes are a direct result of my project as they had been part of the senior leadership team's discussions before my project's activities even began. However, from consulting with senior leaders, it appears that the project's reach has helped to create a consensus that these roles are necessary, and to support colleagues to continue to build their capacity as classroom practitioners through collaborating in meaningful ways.

Whilst enjoying high points such as building my capacity as a leader, there were also difficulties. The hardest defeat was being informed that an improving student in my Year 8 class was being removed from the school. I will always wonder if he would have been able to remain had he been the focus of a project like mine sooner. If I was seeing such improvements in his learning within my classroom, perhaps there was the potential for this in all his subjects. This experience reignited the importance of my project and how it is part of our moral duty as teachers to do the best for our students (Gove, 2013).

The legacy

As the project developed, I witnessed a renewed momentum for the teaching and learning of our underachieving, disadvantaged students. I was keenly aware of the need to secure a legacy to help other disadvantaged students who risk exclusion, by improving their self-esteem and confidence through developing teachers' capacities as classroom practitioners.

A greater emphasis on whole school monitoring and a design for a 'Top Ten' system have been discussed for the following year. This works on the premise that the top ten underachieving disadvantaged students are identified following each six-weekly data trawl, for higher level intervention from pastoral leaders and members of the senior leadership team. Furthermore, the students will be part of a staffroom photo display and will be clearly identified thus enabling all colleagues to focus on their needs. To complement this new system and to continue the knowledge building of colleagues, a 'One Page Profile' for each underachieving disadvantaged student with information on how to engage and support them in lessons will be introduced. Together these plans are particularly important as they will allow colleagues to feel more supported with the students most challenging to teach. Planning the monitoring system allowed further opportunities for shared thinking between colleagues about individual students and their individual needs (Ainscow et al., 2000).

Final thoughts

In the end the things that are hardest to measure, such as mindsets and school cultures, are unsurprisingly the most important factors when it comes to school improvement (MacBeath, 1999). Some of my project's impact is tangible, such as fewer sanctions and improvements in students' grades. However, this early on, the most significant impact can be seen in the shift in colleagues' mindsets, and their increased consideration of the learning of disadvantaged students in their planning and delivery of lessons. This is no easy feat and I am proud of what the project has achieved in so short a time. Originally, I planned to improve the academic outcomes of disadvantaged students and I believe that this is now possible due to the foundations the

project has laid to motivate and enable colleagues to build capacity on a regular basis. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that rather than a 'quick fix' that could peter out over time, sustainable change takes time to embed (Hargreaves & Fink, 2007). Students and colleagues have in some way had their learning shaped by the effects of this project. I need to ensure that the opportunities for regular collaboration remain, otherwise what has been learnt will be quickly forgotten.

At the beginning of this journey, the main aim was driven by Ofsted and this will inevitably remain an important goal for my school. However, what I have learned is that what is important is not gathering evidence to help tick Ofsted boxes, rather it is what you learn on the journey about yourself, your students and your school that can enable you and your colleagues to become 'agents of change' (Frost, 2008). I owe the success of my project to two main factors: my colleagues' support and moral purpose and the decision to complete the development work. Leading development work enabled and motivated others to lead change. Had I chosen a different path, my project would have lacked the level of consultation and collaboration that it needed to make it truly accessible to the whole school (Hill, 2014). Ultimately you do not require a title in order to lead, as long as you have a commitment to exercising leadership that inspires change for the better.

Sheila's perspective

It has been a delight to see the impact of Sarah-Jane's project over the two years. As she says, from the start her remit was clear: the learning of the most vulnerable students in her school. At the time this project was in place, I was Vice Principal in a school in the category of what is euphemistically called 'alternative provision' and was therefore keenly aware of the disparate challenges and needs of disadvantaged students. Sarah-Jane scrutinised her school's culture to identify the conditions necessary for her development work. She was also able to consult widely with colleagues and students to better understand the barriers to learning for disadvantaged students in her school. Delving into relevant literature further illuminated the issues and, more importantly, possible strategies. Sarah-Jane soon realised that whilst

there was some excellent practice regarding the teaching of vulnerable students, there was a need to focus on classroom strategies across the school. Consequently, Sarah-Jane's focus became the development of colleagues' capacity to improve the learning of disadvantaged students.

What is particularly leaderful about Sarah-Jane's development work is the fact that she has modelled learning and leadership throughout. As a member of the working group, she experimented with her own classroom practice focusing on a particularly challenging class. She shared her successes and failures, warts and all, with her colleagues thus creating the conditions for them to feel safe to share their own experiences. As a result, she was able to develop her colleagues' capacity to lead their own learning and reflect critically on their own practice. Sarah-Jane also harnessed the strategic nous to maximise impact by consulting and collaborating with key members of the senior leadership team. Creating a toolkit of strategies was a smart move as the document was a physical representation of the outcomes of the working group to date which Sarah-Jane was able to promote with senior colleagues to gain leverage to develop her project more widely across the school. This led to Sarah-Jane being invited to lead a whole school In Service Education Training (INSET) workshop focused on disadvantaged learners. The opportunity to further develop her colleagues' capacity to become agents of change was not lost on Sarah-Jane. Rather than leading the workshop herself and being the sage on the stage, she deliberately planned an approach where all members of the working group actively participated and led the learning of their colleagues across the school. The impact of Sarah-Jane's project can be seen at student, teacher and whole school levels, but what is of most significance is the legacy of the project and the foundations laid for ongoing impact on this increasingly complex and neglected group of young people in our society.

CHAPTER 15:

Developing a reading community

Keely McLaughlin and Tracy Gaiteri

Keely is a teacher at Leavesden Green, a primary school in Watford, Hertfordshire and is responsible for the development of reading throughout the school. She was a member of the first cohort of the HertsCam MEd in Leading Teaching Learning when it began in 2015.

Tracy is Headteacher at Wormley Primary School in Broxbourne, Hertfordshire. She graduated from the forerunner of the HertsCam MEd in 2007 and subsequently joined the Teaching Team. She was Keely's MEd supervisor.

Keely's story

My initial analysis of the situation at my school indicated that, although we were making progress with the development of teaching skills, we had overlooked the building of reading behaviours and the developing of a love of reading within our learners. Our learners had the competence to read but lacked the engagement and passion which made reading habitual and enjoyable. In conversations with colleagues they often noted having to 'get children to read' as a challenge they faced. Dated reading schemes were the source for home reading and text was used as a model rather than an inspiration. We needed to develop engagement with reading which might improve attainment across the curriculum (Ivey & Broaddus, 2001) and help to develop self-esteem, imagination and empathy (Cremin, Mottram, Collins, Powell & Safford, 2014). I talked to colleagues about this and it became clear that although they shared my values there was some trepidation about changing existing practice. I considered the implications for working with colleagues to try to make a difference in this area. I wanted to work with them and thought about how I might promote change in ways that would be sustainable.

Initial steps involved clarifying the process of learning to read (Krashen, 1988) and the possible impact that our actions as educators have upon this. My reading helped me to apply a critical eye to the value we place on building motivation and engagement to read (Ryan, 2011). I reflected upon our current practice and in the light of current literature, considered issues such as the impact of ability grouping and pupil choice.

To enable me to design a development project to nurture a love of reading, I consulted widely. This involved sharing my ideas and the rationale behind them and listening to colleagues. Engaging in such professional dialogue impacted positively on my design and enabled me to identify the barriers to the proposed change.

The climate for reading

I talked with children to further explore the current climate for reading. This helped me to prepare a staff development session in which I enabled my

colleagues to discuss factors which inhibit children's love of reading. The following list summarises the main themes that emerged from our discussion:

- the need for quality reading materials
- the inadequacy of home reading
- reading schemes that demotivate readers
- reading sessions which were purely skills based
- the use of ability grouping for reading

Overall the feeling was that children were not enjoying reading which was in part due to how we were approaching reading in school. The biggest point was that those children who choose to read were our most confident and high attaining learners, but it had become clear when talking to these readers that their motivation to read most commonly stemmed from external sources rather than the school. We had focused heavily on age-related expectations and outcomes rather than on the readers and their experience of reading (Miller, Anderson & Miller, 2009). What had become abundantly clear is that we needed to be proactive and do more to encourage reading within school as well as ensuring that our learners made progress with the fundamental skills.

As teachers, we can inadvertently send out hidden messages about reading (Lockwood, 2008) and I realised that in my school, we needed to reflect on these and focus explicitly on raising the profile of reading. We had been missing opportunities to inspire and cultivate a love of reading. For example, we were tending to place reading at the end of the day and only when there was time. Many children had said that they felt 'forced to read' in school and often just pretended to read. Walking around the school I saw little evidence of any effort to promote a love of reading in our physical environment. Colleagues agreed that more could be done but said that, because of the lack of time, class reading was often neglected.

In our staff development session, there seemed to be a disconnect. Whilst there was agreement about the problem, there was a lack of trust in the idea

that there could be other approaches. We readily agreed that our reading records did not truly reflect home reading and did not motivate children to read, but still felt they were necessary. It became clear that I would need to propose new approaches whilst offering reassurance to those who were uncomfortable with change.

Sharing the value of reading for pleasure

I wanted to work alongside my colleagues to find new approaches and needed to take positive steps to lead the way in order to build trust and confidence (Buck, 2016). I read extensively about the issue of reading engagement and shared what I had learned with colleagues. Although I knew I would need to generate the initial ideas, I wanted to leave the process open enough to allow others to help with the development process, allowing them to take ownership of the development of their practice. I saw this as key to maintaining motivation towards developing reading and staying true to the values of non-positional leadership which I valued (Frost, 2012). Consequently, I focused attention on three areas:

- improving the provision for reading in school
- developing home reading
- enhancing the teaching of reading in school

This enabled me to break down the development work and generate action plans for each.

Improving the provision for reading

To raise the level of engagement we would need to change our behaviours towards reading and how we viewed and used texts (Chambers, 2011). A common issue was a lack of knowledge of suitable texts. I met with our Literacy Advisor and explored ways we could broaden the range of texts within our school. As is common in the Early Years Foundation Stage we explored the idea of 'core texts'. This involves each class having a list of texts they experience across the year. The premise here is that the children expand their knowledge of the texts whilst the teachers widen their knowledge of age

appropriate children's literature. Each class had a budget that would allow the purchase of 15-20 books, with the expectation they covered a range of text types and genres. Alongside this was an expectation that, during the year, children need a range of opportunities to explore these. We also gave classes a resource allowance to develop reading in their classroom. Commonly this was developing a 'Book Corner' or 'Reading Space'. This was the first step towards giving reading a place in every classroom and physically showing learners that we value reading.

Developing home reading

Behaviours shown towards reading at home have a significant impact on the viewpoint of young children (Blok, 1999). In discussions with colleagues and children, the words 'pressure' and 'expectation' were common. As teachers, we know that there is a clear link between reading confidence and the frequency and quality of home reading. Central to our system was the Reading Record which an adult would complete each time a child had read. In school, we would check the number of times they had read; praise or sanction would follow. The checking tool resulted in the aforementioned 'pressure' and 'expectation'. No colleague believed that this was helping to develop children's love of reading and many of us questioned its reliability. We decided to replace the Reading Record with 'Reading Scrapbooks' which were used to enable children to share their reading with no set expectation as to how they would do this. Our intention was that this would address the need for ownership of learning and feeling in control (Pritchard, 2008); scrapbooks offered readers the opportunity to lead their own reading and not be confined by expectation.

Enhancing the teaching of reading

To develop the teaching of reading, I decided to focus first on those colleagues I saw as supporters – the 'early adopters' (Rogers, 2003). Having trialled a new planning format with my own class, I shared this with a colleague. We discussed what had worked and I shared with her my concerns going forward and together we planned some sessions for her class. Central to our planning was how we would engage the children.

impact and have become more aware of the challenges of change (Fullan, 2016). A welcome by-product of my project is the breaking down of the negative attitude towards change and the opening-up of new possibilities for what we can achieve as a professional learning community.

Tracy's perspective

Keely's story is illuminating in so many ways. There are important lessons we can draw from it about both learning and leadership.

It is beyond doubt that the ability to read is fundamental to education and to life-long access to cultural goods. It is also true that there has been cause for concern. Standards of literacy are the subject of international measurement and comparison and Britain has not fared well in the PISA exercise. The Department for Education's report about reading was introduced by a current minister, Nick Gibb, who said in the foreword that the statistics make a 'depressing story' (DfE, 2015). Starting in 1997, successive governments have pushed the idea of 'synthetic phonics' since an experiment in Clackmannanshire suggested that it could raise standards. This has always been controversial because good teachers use such a wide variety of techniques including decoding exercises. Ten years on from the first intervention by government, critics, including David Reedy, president of the UK Literacy Association and John Bangs, head of education at the National Union of Teachers, argued that a politicised, top-down approach is flawed (Scott, 2010). However, five years later the government introduced a phonics check which is held in contempt by many good teachers who tend to be looking for new ways to teach rather than more pointless tests. The phonics test is all part of the expectation and pressure that Keely talks about; it leads to so much tokenistic compliance rather than authentic learning. It has been refreshing to see Keely devising a strategy to mobilise parents. Her story illustrates how important it is to tackle a learning problem from every angle: involving parents, improving the learning environment, reviewing our approach to teaching and access to resources. She has also acted on the assumption that the technicalities of reading such as decoding, while essential, are useless unless we address the matter of children's disposition towards reading.

We started the process with discussion about the readers in her class, their behaviours in relation to reading and their preferences. Next, we selected an item from her list of core texts that she felt the children would engage well with and we devised some different activities drawing from the text. Finally, we linked this back to the age-related expectations. This flipped the planning process to make engagement and quality text at the heart with assessment outcomes being the result rather than the starting point. We shared this with other colleagues and identified another teacher who was willing to try this approach. Conscious of the need to create sustainable practice, I knew it was important to not over manage the process and so after planning with each, I organised for them to plan together. I then adopted a monitoring role in which I could collect evidence of breakthrough practice that could be shared to widen the impact (Hargreaves, 1999).

Achievements and outcomes

When I first planned my project, it covered one academic year and at the end of the year I felt that I was only at the beginning of the journey. However, reflecting on the notion of hidden messages, I think that I have enabled us to demonstrate that both the process of reading and the readers themselves are equally valued. We now have core texts in every class which offer readers a range of texts and shared experiences. Across this year I have seen how these can be used as an effective tool to motivate readers and inspire learning. The reading scrapbooks have allowed more flexibility with home reading and have enabled colleagues to become aware of a wider range of opportunities for supporting reading. I have also seen these strengthening the link between home and school. With planning for engagement through quality texts, learners are showing greater engagement in reading sessions and teachers have a clearer awareness of the readers in their class. In summary, as a result of my project we took the first steps in developing a community of readers within our school.

Following this, I knew that I would need to ensure the experience of reading is consistent across the school and not dependent on any single teacher. As the leader of this project, I have felt empowered knowing that I can create

Keely's project exemplifies teacher-led development work and her story offers some helpful insights about leading change. For example, she started with colleagues who were on her wave length which meant that these early adopters (Rogers, 2003) would become advocates for good practice. One of the most significant insights that, as a headteacher, really speaks to me, is that this project and projects like this, while being focused on a specific aspect of education, nevertheless help to grow professional cultures in which change and improvement are more likely to flourish.

CHAPTER 16:

Developing strategies to build GRIT

Zareena Huber and Jo Mylles

When Zareena joined the first cohort of the HertsCam MEd in Leading Teaching and Learning in 2015, she was a teacher and Head of English at Lochinver House School in Potters Bar, Hertfordshire.

Jo is currently Headteacher of Challney High School for Girls in Luton, Bedfordshire, but at the time that Zareena undertook her project, Jo was Deputy Headteacher at Sir John Lawes School in Harpenden, Hertfordshire. Jo graduated from the forerunner of the teacher-led MEd in 2005 and subsequently joined the Teaching Team. She was Zareena's MEd supervisor.

Why GRIT?

The demands placed upon twenty-first century students are different to those that some of us might have experienced in the past. Current employers are showing dissatisfaction with the way schools are preparing young people for the demands of the workplace; some of these criticisms include an inability to be creative, flexible and resilient (Middlewood, Parker & Beere, 2005). There seemed to be scope for the development of a learning approach that requires students to display, amongst other things, GRIT. This would enable them to contribute more effectively as citizens who could continue to learn and would understand that skills can improve with effort (Duckworth, 2016). If young people are to make the most of themselves in a fast-changing world, learning how to learn is vital (Watkins, 2011). Therefore, my project centred on opportunities for the development of good learning habits and positive dispositions by enhancing the learning environment in the English department.

For the project to be successful I needed colleagues' engagement, so they would feel a commitment to the ongoing improvement of their own practice (Preedy & Bennett, 2011). This would encourage professional dialogue, develop leadership capacity and build professional knowledge (Frost, 2013).

Preparatory activities

Understanding the way both students and colleagues learn has always been important to me, becoming more significant as I read widely to inform my thinking and clarify my ideas. This reading included the work of Claxton et al. (2011), Costa & Callick (2008), Watkins (2011), Simister (2007), Frost (2012) and Duckworth (2016); all of whom influenced the direction and leadership of my project.

Proposals for change to established approaches to teaching and learning can be threatening, so it was important to undertake some preparatory work. The project needed to be strategic, focused and deliberate in order to encompass key elements of negotiation, consultation and self-reflection (see Chapter 1). Consultation with colleagues suggested that students need practical opportunities to learn more about different styles of learning and

Zareena's story

An important first step was to reflect on my professional identity. I also considered the nature of schools as organisations and it became clear that the professional culture is key to creating opportunities for meaningful change. I hoped that my development work would contribute to creating a collaborative culture (Hargreaves, 1994) which would lead to the improvement of student learning (Fullan, 2003). I focused on ways for students to become more resilient in their learning since I had observed some student passivity when faced with challenge. I recognised that, in addressing this, changes to teaching and learning would be more effective if colleagues were actively and collectively involved.

Through my reading I explored the idea of the learning oriented learner (Watkins, 2011) and ways to develop resilience. I reflected on the role of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1996) and considered how variations in learning styles might influence pedagogy. In the literature, there seems to be support for the significance of developing learning dispositions for future application and success (Costa & Callick, 2008; Claxton, Chambers, Powell & Lucas, 2011; Watkins, 2011). These discussions led me to focus on the provision of opportunities for students to develop good learning habits (Duckworth, 2016).

I subsequently worked on a project design that would have the best chance of success in my setting. Consultations with colleagues, students and parents helped me to identify the best strategies and raised the profile of the project, garnering more support from other areas of the school community. I developed tools with which I could communicate proposals to help students to build their understanding and persuade them that challenge and difficulty are integral to learning, what Duckworth (2016) refers to as 'grit'. I planned to enable them to develop the skills that would assist them in developing positive dispositions for learning such as: guts, resilience, initiative and tenacity. The acronym GRIT would be used to encapsulate this.

were committed to understanding and promoting learning skills. They were supportive of my development project as they could see that it would benefit their children and the school community. It was crucial therefore that the activities and tools we designed would give students the best opportunity to engage fully with a review of their learning orientation.

The project employed a range of activities including one centred on discussing the dynamics of teamwork in sport and their relevance to GRIT. This led to consideration of how these same criteria could be applied to English sessions. Out of this came the idea of 'Literacy whizzes' who were called upon to support peers in English, just like someone with a particular sporting skill. Students then carefully considered who they would choose to work with in team activities as they considered the learning skills that could be brought to the activity. These experiences led my colleagues and I to consider how to provide our students with more opportunities for this type of skills' application. For example, the Literacy whizz idea was used with the younger students and manifested itself as 'skills super powers' complete with a diagram on their exercise books that revealed their GRIT 'super-power' that they offered in support to their peers who were struggling with that particular GRIT learning habit.

Another important aim of the project was to encourage students to understand the importance of developing transferable learning habits (Costa & Callick, 2008) centred on GRIT. The idea was that learning is crucial to life and that an individual's learning landscape (Watkins, 2011) could become more effective when we recognise the importance of the development of these transferable learning skills. We devised an activity to support this where the Year 8 students researched and wrote about people they admired for their demonstration of GRIT. They wrote letters, detailing why the person had been chosen and asking for feedback on their display of GRIT and its significance. Many of the students received inspirational letters in return and one in particular had an incredible impact. The student wrote to his uncle, a Commanding Officer in the Army, in which he explained why he had been chosen, outlining his admiration for his uncle's GRIT.

the seventeen 'learning muscles' (Claxton et al., 2011). We developed visual aids with which to display these learning muscles. This reinforced our commitment and stimulated everyone's reflection on the nature of learning. As twenty-first century learners, our students had knowledge available to them at the press of a button and so they required support in developing their learning skills beyond that. I wanted to help students to stretch their learning muscles (Claxton et al., 2011), which included developing their ability to ask deeper questions and persist intelligently with difficult tasks.

We developed tools to help students reflect in honest and authentic ways. These included discussing the video 'Learning at Landau' (2014) as a vehicle for exploring the changing face of twenty-first century learning. The video is an insight into how one school is developing their school as a learning community, where learning how to learn is at the heart of what they do.

Developing strategies for the GRIT project

The project was launched to colleagues at a departmental staff development session. Discussions were encouraging as colleagues indicated that they were keen to get involved, suggesting ideas for strategies that would enhance the department's existing teaching and learning practice. To enable the project to become a collective endeavour, I devised tools to support dialogue and collaboration. Discussion activities would promote mutual inspiration, encouragement and greater levels of self-efficacy, invaluable dimensions of knowledge building (Frost, 2013).

In addition to involving colleagues, a working party of parents was established, representing a cross-section of the school community, and a number of sessions arranged. The first comprised a presentation of the project's rationale and an invitation to engage in discussion and contribute to its direction and implementation. It became evident that the parents were committed to the development of their children's self-confidence, as many of them agreed that this was key to learning. This further supported my understanding of the importance of wellbeing and emotional intelligence in this developmental journey. It was becoming clearer that the parents

He asked for his uncle's thoughts on the project, explaining that its intention was to develop life-learning skills. His uncle's reply was exceptional, talking about the importance of GRIT to the life he had led and commented that 'one day [when you're older] I will talk you through a few occasions when GRIT needed to be shown in countless events in Iraq, Kosovo and Afghanistan'. He went on to say that it is important to learn from mistakes and 'develop the self-confidence to believe in yourself' and concluded that 'GRIT will serve you very well in any walk of life and in all environments'.

Another part of the project which was really successful was the award of badges to students who continued to display GRIT. Those who gained the award then became Ambassadors for Learning, learning advocates who would help to embed the learning habits of GRIT both within the English department and beyond. Other strategies and ideas were deployed during the course of the project, including:

- using the GRIT vocabulary in reporting schedules, consultation evenings and student feedback
- greater student choice and decision making in the selection of activities graded for difficulty: Hot, Hotter, Volcanic
- images of people students admire for GRIT
- the development of Personalised Assessment Tracker for each student to monitor their effort grade progress
- development of deliberate practice sessions in form-time to develop GRIT.

Outcomes and next steps

The legacy for the project's future growth is important. I set out to provide opportunities for all involved to respond to change with courage so that they could refine, and re-programme their learning habits to embrace GRIT. The primary reason was that the ability to adapt to change and embrace uncertainty was going to be much in demand in a world that is experiencing such a rapid rate of change (Hammond, 2015). In this way, the project would

continue to develop through the endeavours of colleagues, parents and students. Since I knew I would be leaving the school at the conclusion of my project, their commitment to the development of GRIT would be particularly significant. I decided that a practical way to secure its legacy was to provide the school community with a 'How to' guide on the application and development of GRIT. This guide outlines the project's rationale and narrates its key development. It contains useful links, examples and explanations of choices made and sets out future development opportunities, building knowledge and serving as a model for whole school development.

My development as a leader was partly reliant on being able to inspire others to share my vision through a range of collaborative enterprises, establishing a professional learning community, where those involved felt invested and were ready to believe that my proposals were worthwhile (Willingham, 2009). This transfer of professional knowledge has been one of the project's strengths and, if the fundamental principle of education is to help learning (Robinson & Aronica, 2015) then the GRIT project has exceeded expectations. Students seem more willing to take challenge in their stride and are confident users of the GRIT terminology. This project was limited to one department. However, I hoped that it would become accessible to other parts of school.

The experiences I have had during the project have contributed to my realisation that I have the capacity to lead change and harness the support of the school community. I believe now that I can empower others and increase their leadership capabilities. In this way, unlocking the untapped potential of colleagues has increased the capacity of the school to meet the needs of students and enhance educational achievement (Bangs & Frost, 2012). My project crystallised for me a belief that the culture in which we live, and with which we identify, powerfully shapes every aspect of our being (Duckworth, 2016). In the fast-changing world in which our students find themselves we have a responsibility to equip them as best we can with the learning dispositions that will give them the best chance of success and happiness. The development of students' guts, resilience, initiative and tenacity contribute to this in a powerful way.

Jo's perspective

I really love the way Zareena's project report featured a poem. It was by Langston Hughes (1994) and called 'Mother to son'. Here is an extract:

Well, son, I'll tell you: / Life for me ain't been no crystal stair. / It's had tacks in it, / And splinters, / And boards torn up, / And places with no carpet on the floor – / Bare. / But all the time / I've been a-climbin' on, / And reachin' landin's, / And turnin' corners,...

Zareena used this as a metaphorical device. For example, leadership can be expressed as 'climbin' the stair'. The poem also served as a structuring device for the project report which was an innovative way both to think about the process of development work and the written account of it.

I was also impressed with the fact that Zareena had created a really positive role for parents in the development project, involving them at every stage. This is surprisingly uncommon given that students and their families are arguably the most important stake-holders in the educational enterprise. For us professionals it is often challenging to meet parents and involve them in the development of practice but we should see it as both a right and a duty to be outward facing and to recognise the importance of the responsibility implied by the term, 'in loco parentis'. I think the activity that Zareena talks about above in which students corresponded with people they admired about GRIT is inspirational. The story about a student's correspondence with his uncle demonstrates how there are so many ways in which we can see students' families as a valuable resource rather than just consumers or clients.

Working with Zareena as her supervisor was always an interesting process and left me in no doubt about her passionate commitment to making a difference to her students.

CHAPTER 17:

Developing environments that enable independent learning

Hannah Trickett and Sarah Lightfoot

Hannah was one of the pioneers who joined the first cohort of the teacher-led MEd when it began in September 2015. At the time, she was a teacher at Maple Cross, a primary school in Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire. Part way through her journey through the programme, Hannah was asked to take on the headship of the school temporarily.

Sarah is the current MEd Programme Leader and has been a member of the team since she graduated from the forerunner of the HertsCam MEd in 2003. She was Hannah's MEd supervisor.

towards learning are likely to be reflected in how they teach. Barth (2001) claims he has never experienced a school where the quality of learning is high for adults and low for children. For this reason, I knew that I would need to develop colleagues' approaches to and views about independence in order for this to develop in the children.

My ideas about what independent learning involved were developing. I looked to the 'characteristics of effective learning' outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage documentation (Early Education, 2012) for clarification and this resonated with my growing understanding. I wanted to be able to see our pupils demonstrating a high level of engagement: using their senses to explore the opportunities we planned for them, initiating learning of their own based on their interests or curiosity. I wanted them to be comfortable in taking risks by engaging in new activities or considering alternative ways of thinking. I hoped we could motivate them to be active in their approach to learning by enabling them to maintain a focus on their learning, persist in the face of difficulties and show that they understood that more effort, or a different approach, would help them complete a task or meet a challenge. I wanted them to be able to be creative in their approach to learning and develop their ability to think critically. I wanted to observe learners who could have their own ideas, be able to make links and notice patterns in their experiences, to be able to plan and make decisions and review their strategies to solve problems and reach goals.

I decided to focus on promoting pupils' independence in learning by developing our use of the physical learning environment. My decision was again influenced by the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum guidance (DCSF, 2008) which encourage early years educators to consider the role of an 'enabling environment.' The layout of the classroom, the provision of resources and their accessibility, all contribute to the growth of children's capacity for independent learning. This shift, from behaviour management to the cultivation of independence, was also rooted in a greater understanding of the existing culture at my school. By approaching the same theme through a different focus, I considered this would have a greater impact on teaching and learning as well as the ethos

Hannah's story

My project began before I attended the HertsCam Annual Conference prior to the official start of my MEd. I already had concerns about what I perceived to be fixed views about the capacities of learners in our school. The initial problem was one of pupils' over-dependence and adults' misconceptions about their role within this. The school focused on what was in my view an overly dictatorial behaviour management approach. In the early stages of my participation in the MEd programme I explored this with colleagues. I shared questions about the way we, as educators, engage with children and tried to identify the obstacles to this. I reflected on the extent to which we were a learning community (Watkins, 2005) because of the 'top down' approach that was evident. In an initial analysis of the institutional context, I identified a view held by some colleagues that children's behaviour was a choice and pupils needed to be punished for inappropriate behaviour. Children tended to be viewed as needing to be told what to do. Adults expected children to walk about the school silently in orderly lines, but no one could explain why and or seemed aware of the impact this had upon learning. Pupils were expected to sit perfectly still in classes because it was thought that this is how children learn best.

Through my reading I was able to refine my ideas about children's behaviour which seemed inextricably linked to learning and leadership for both pupils and colleagues (Mitchell & Sackney, 2011). A theme emerging was pupils' independence as learners. In developing both pupils' and colleagues' independence, I understood that both internal and external motivation plays a role. I found the concept of self-efficacy helpful. Described as the belief in one's self to succeed or accomplish tasks (Bandura, 1989a), it sheds light on the link between learning and behaviour. I was reminded of the two forms of motivation we all learnt about during our initial teacher training – the intrinsic, which comes from within – and the extrinsic which depends on control from external sources (Entwhistle, 1987). Children's motivation can reflect directly that of the adults around them (Guskey & Passaro, 1994) and teaching strategies provide opportunities to model and thus cultivate pupils' motivation (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Dembo & Gibson 1985). Colleagues' dispositions

ways in which the learning process is affected by the environment. Some colleagues acknowledged that this was the first time they had ever considered the role the classroom environment played within learning.

Reflecting on the way colleagues set up their classrooms was productive. It became apparent that time was often used ineffectively, with much time being spent on traditional ideas such as birthday displays but little, if any, time given to thinking about why and how these factors impact on learning. This included not just the initial set up and layout of a classroom but the day to day running of the classroom and the use of resources within it.

Another important aspect of the project was to look at expectations and we found that some teachers and LSAs had very low expectations of what children were capable of doing independently. For example, I know from my own experience that three-year-olds can act independently and learn from this; in the early years classroom young children can select paint colours, squeeze paint out of containers, collect trays, water and paper. However, I didn't think it would help simply to tell colleagues this and ask them to act accordingly. Instead we had discussions about when we see learning happening. Using examples written on cards, teachers sorted them into piles indicating what they thought children could and could not do independently. Following this we identified the parts of lessons in which we see learning taking place and those where we do not. Soon, colleagues began to make suggestions such as why collecting resources could be a valuable learning opportunity.

As a consequence of the focus on the cultivation of pupil independence through the development of physical environments I was able to create groups of like-minded colleagues who wanted to develop pupils' independence in their learning. Drawing on the concept of non-positional leadership (Frost, 2014a), I wanted each class teacher and learning support assistant to lead their own development. This would not only address the issue of a lack of independence but also confront the idea that colleagues did not view themselves as exercising leadership.

and professional culture of the school. When it came to designing my development project I intensified the process of consultation to sharpen the focus and further engage colleagues. What I learned was that, although there were no objections to the project within school, there were also not enough invested supporters. I realised that more dialogue was required.

Collaboration and isolation

Initially I intended the project to be collaborative, as I agreed with Fullan's (1991) view that limitations arise when people work in isolation. I planned opportunities for colleagues to discuss and share practice; this was particularly relevant with the Learning Support Assistants that I discuss below. As the project picked up momentum, others began to lead areas of the project. I was trying to lead in the way that is encapsulated in the well-known quotation from the 6th century Chinese philosopher, Lao Tzu.

A leader is best when people barely know he exists, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves.

My preferred approach resonated with that explained by Jo Mylles', a member of the MEd Teaching Team, who described the approach adopted by senior leadership in her school in the following way.

...power wielded by senior leaders and their capacity for influence and leverage, has to be used in working alongside members of staff on their behalf and in support of their work in schools.

(Mylles, 2017: 107)

I came to the view that leaders should walk beside and not be noticed.

At the start of the project I worked with all teaching colleagues to develop year group mini-focus projects. Our first task was to look at a range of classroom layouts and discuss how they support learning. Using the classroom layout as the focus enabled me to develop colleagues' understanding of what pupil independence is. A significant number of seminal educational thinkers – including Malaguzzi, Dewey, Piaget, Bruner and Vygotsky – highlighted

focussing on learning rather than just approving and scrutinising budgets, data and the possibility of our school becoming an academy. These mini-projects, fell under the following headings:

- developing pupils' independent decision-making skills (Decision making posters, Learning HQ, Chatty Maths Ambassadors, School resources shop)
- evolving curriculum opportunities for independence (Welly Walks, Maple Cross Explorers, Boys' handwriting club, new approaches to interventions)
- enhancing the physical structure and layout of the environment (Reading Action group, Pond Project)

Outcomes, impact and next steps

The outcomes of the project were shared with everyone, including the teachers, learning support assistants and governors. I recognise that administrative colleagues have not been involved so far and this is something I looked forward to addressing in the following year. While this may not seem obvious, I view it as vital because office colleagues sometimes interact with pupils quite frequently. For this reason, they are a contributing factor, having significant impact upon the ethos of the school. Posters and tools used by each colleague were used to create interactive displays in the school hall and the staffroom, locations that would enable not only colleagues, but also parents and children to gain greater insight into the developments and understand that adults are learners too. Some of these changes have been subtle and may not even be obvious to parents and carers, but they are starting to understand more about the school's approach to teaching and learning. The school website and blog has been a vital tool for publishing beyond the school community. Through this we have shared updates on individual mini-projects and the project as a whole. This has also been shared through the school newsletter.

The project was, in a short time, highly successful in addressing the need for adults to re-focus on the learning journey. It allowed adults to focus on

Developing effective classroom practice

It was becoming clear to us that the structure of a classroom is very influential. The physical classroom environment is a tangible representation of the type of pedagogy employed by a teacher. A classroom ought to be an environment that is designed with the learners' needs in mind. We needed to see the classroom as a scaffolding device and context for meaningful learning. What was emerging from our discussions was the essential triangle of the learning environment, independence in learning and interactions with adults who design and manage the environment so that it fosters children's independence. I wanted colleagues to understand their role more fully; I wanted to empower them to lead change for themselves.

Some colleagues were beginning to demonstrate a growing appreciation that making meaningful decisions about the classroom layout might create opportunities for the development of pupils' independence. Colleagues started to take ownership of their classrooms in the way that I had hoped. Slowly practice began to change, and some colleagues verbalised examples of independent learning opportunities in their classrooms, including the creation of a 'Learner HQ', which was a resource-based area in Year 2, 'Independent maths question selection', a strategy for Year 5, and pupil-led Welly Walks in the Reception and Nursery class. However, this was not common throughout school and not all colleagues shared my understanding. Nevertheless, I continued to support my colleagues, convinced that pupils will be effective learners if the teachers are effective learners too.

I entitled the projects that we were undertaking as 'Independence Projects' and sometimes as 'Care and Achieve Projects' which reflects the school motto. For example, the learning support assistants focussed on interactions and opportunities and the teachers initially on the physical classroom. The projects complemented each other but were led differently because of the roles and responsibilities of the adults as well as their experience and pedagogy. Colleagues shared their projects and ideas with school governors at the Governing Body in July and at our first annual 'Festival of Learning'. This signalled a significant culture change for the governors who are now

the role that children play in the learning process as well as that of adults and the physical classroom, the 'third educator'. At the conclusion of the project, colleagues were making plans to lead strategies in the following year. One of the significant areas for this was a new pupil-led approach to reading environments and organisation. We were also fortunate in gaining a new school leader committed to the idea that pupils have to lead their own learning. At the end of the year we began to look at how we could develop other areas of the school through mini-projects and I was able to reflect with considerable satisfaction on the way colleagues had been empowered as agents of change.

Sarah's perspective

Hannah's strength is that she began with clear concerns and a vision for what she wanted to achieve. When she conducted her situational analysis, she was able to apply this vision and really look at the gap between her own professional values and the reality that she saw around her. Her discussions with colleagues indicated a major concern with a high level of disruptive behaviour amongst pupils but Hannah was able to see beyond the common deficit views of children. The key to her success with this project was to reframe the problem through persistent and carefully managed dialogue so that the links between poor behaviour, learning and teaching could be excavated. The focus that emerged from this was a very practical project aimed at developing enabling environments, referred to in the Reggio Emilia approach as 'the third educator' (Gandini, 1988; Rinaldi, 2006).

The impact of the project has been significant not least because it started a transformative wave involving teachers and support staff. They collaborated in looking critically at the 'third educator' and taking positive steps to mobilise the different spaces so that they became servants of learning. This process not only improved the pupils' experience of learning and consequently their attitudes towards school and each other, it also created a much stronger sense of being a learning community.

CHAPTER 18:

Evaluating the HertsCam MEd

David Frost, Sheila Ball, Val Hill and Sarah Lightfoot

The sixteen preceding chapters show what has been achieved by those who participated in the first cohort of the HertsCam MEd in Leading Teaching and Learning. For some this may be sufficient testimony. However, in this chapter the editors present an evaluation of the programme based on evidence drawn from the quality assurance process and a case study undertaken as part of a European Union funded, international research project.

Note: much of the material included here also appears in a journal article in the *Journal of the Institute for Pedagogy and Andragogy* (Lightfoot et al., 2018).

Having an explicit statement about our pedagogical principles has enabled the HertsCam MEd Teaching Team to generate tools for self-evaluation and monitoring. These principles reflect our shared professional values which guide the evaluation and development of the programme. From the very beginning of its work with teachers, HertsCam has sought external evaluation from a wide variety of sources to ensure that it reviews, improves and develops its programmes and provides what participants want: academic rigour and practical outcomes in their own professional contexts. The continuous development of the programme is informed by external perspectives such as those of researchers and others who have a responsibility to monitor the quality of the masters programme. The discussion that follows is drawn from these external sources including:

- the Link Tutor who is a member of the School of Education at the University of Hertfordshire who has a key monitoring and moderation role
- the External Examiner who is an academic from a different university appointed to examine a sample of assignments from our programme and comment on the standard of the work and the quality of the assessment process
- an EU funded Research Fellow based at the University of Cambridge Faculty of Education
- researchers working on the international EFFeCT project who produced a case studies of the HertsCam MEd based on documentary analysis and a series of interviews with key members of the Teaching Team (Woods, Roberts and Chivers, 2016)

It is also informed by feedback from the participants themselves, gathered as part of our continuous self-evaluation process and by a record of regular observations and feedback from David Frost who continues to act as an advisor and critical friend to the team.

The following evaluative discussion is structured according to the seven pedagogical principles.

1. The cultivation of moral purpose as a dimension of extended professionalism

The MEd course is taught on the basis of a shared understanding that improving the life chances of the young people in our schools is our central purpose. Enhanced moral purpose is a key dimension of the type of professionalism the course promotes.

(Pedagogical Principles document, September 2017)

We use the term 'moral purpose' in the way that Fullan used it in the early 1990s when he argued that teaching is essentially a moral enterprise and that moral purpose and change agency are 'natural allies' (Fullan 1993a, 1993b). The idea of moral purpose is introduced when each candidate is interviewed for a place on the HertsCam MEd, and it is discussed continuously throughout the course.

Participant evaluations show a high degree of satisfaction in feeling that this moral purpose is being developed and enhanced as an aspect of their professionalism, as the following comment illustrates.

... it allows me breathing space to consider my role and the moral purpose of my profession. Makes me realise that I'm not being self-indulgent when I want to 'stand and stare' and consider what I've just taught and how I can improve. We have busy lives as teachers but the course is teaching me the importance of pausing.

(Participant feedback, January 2016)

Teachers often suffer a sense of being on a treadmill in their daily practice and the resulting stress can de-professionalise them and make them feel they do not have time to engage in more than what is required for 'survival' (Kell, 2018). However, the HertsCam MEd provides protected space for professional reflection and support for the sense that this is an entitlement.

Fullan warned that moral purpose, without the skills of change agency, is likely to result in martyrdom (1993a). This is why it is so important to enable MEd participants to refine their project plans.

2. Enabling the development of professional practice through the design and leadership of development projects

The concept of development work is introduced and revisited throughout the programme. The concept is the antithesis of 'implementation' in that it assumes that such processes necessarily unfold over time and that they involve strategic planning, in order to enable professional reorientation to take place. Typical features include collaborative discussion, review, consultation, trialling, evaluation and joint planning.

(Pedagogical Principles document, September 2017)

The concept of development work set out in at the beginning of this book is critical, and we have to work hard to clarify this and distinguish it from more familiar ideas such as practitioner enquiry and the like. This became considerably easier for us when introducing the idea to the second cohort of the programme because, on the first day of the course, they constituted an audience for the Year 2 participants who made presentations about their development projects. For example, Nicola, a primary school teacher, planned to work with her colleagues to develop the use of a range of different teddy bears each of which represented one of the 'learning powers'. These were to be used to build students' learning capacity by supporting reflection and dialogue (see Chapter 2).

The conceptualisation of development work as a process avoiding the temptation to try to find a quick fix or implement a blanket approach but to reflect, read and engage others in the project is echoed in the EFFECT report which describes participants as:

...having more knowledge about school leadership, being able to develop others, having skills to plan whole school projects... Most projects support whole school development and the school improvement plan. They usually seek to have a direct impact on the quality and outcomes of students' learning.

(EFFECT project case study, December 2016)

When they present their plans to the whole MEd community, a member of the Teaching Team carries out an observation. Below is an extract from one of the observer's written feedback:

Your proposed project work is anchored in your moral purpose. Your desire to question, modify and affect change within your school community is obvious and commendable.

(Observer's feedback to participant, January 2016)

Participants' engagement with Network Events contributes powerfully to the enhancement of morale as noted in the following extract from the EFFECT project case study.

Events are conducted in ways which encourage collaboration that draws participants together with a sense of shared purpose – a collective sense of empowerment that is indicative of deep level collaboration.

(EFFECT project case study, December 2016)

The key role of inspiration was also highlighted in the case study.

Teacher leadership is enacted through teacher-led development work. Here, teachers focus on an issue which matters to them. They collaborate with colleagues to plan and lead change processes, gather and interpret evidence of the impact of what they have done, and share their enhanced understanding with others. In so doing, they inspire colleagues to also work to change things for the better.

(EFFECT project case study, December 2016)

In the case of the HertsCam programme, this sense of collective self-efficacy driven by a shared moral purpose becomes manifest in the form of the leadership of development projects which are designed to make a difference to the life chances of the young people in our school system. This leads on to the second principle.

The over-arching principle of non-positional teacher leadership means that many of our participants lack the authority that may be assumed to flow from a formal leadership position. However, our philosophy assumes that authority of that kind is not the most valuable resource. Far more powerful is the capacity to organise and manage collaborative activities in which colleagues can be drawn into the process of reflection, evaluation, review and innovation on an invitational basis (Purkey & Novak, 1996; Frost, 2012).

3. Scaffolding the development of a learning community in which enhanced social capital allows critical friendship to flourish

The development of the MEd group as a learning community involves building sufficient trust and interpersonal ease to allow for robust discussion in which each member of the group is able to offer challenge and critique. This facility depends on the rapid growth of familiarity and mutual acceptance.

(Pedagogical Principles document, September 2017)

The MEd programme begins with a two-day residential conference in a hotel. Schools have agreed to allow participants to be absent from school for the Friday. The conference begins with an informal meeting over coffee which allows the new Year 1 participants to meet the Year 2 group and members of the Teaching Team. The workshop sessions that follow are intense, but the conference also features social time and meals together. Traditions of social interaction are established and an atmosphere of conviviality is promoted. Friendship and camaraderie are not accidental outcomes, they are part of the plan. Social capital, a major factor in supporting innovation, is explained by David Hargreaves as:

the level of trust between people and the generation of norms of reciprocity (mutual favours) and collaboration... (and)... the networks in which the people are embedded by strong ties.

(Hargreaves, 2001: 490)

In HertsCam, the device for building social capital is community. The EFFECT case study highlights how the pedagogic principles support the growth of community:

...These crystallise the programme aim of creating a cohesive culture and a shared identity, systematically encouraging and facilitating mutual support and providing a framework for working together in creative ways.

(EFFeCT project case study, 2016: 30)

Our Residential Conferences happen three times during the academic year and between these we have a series of what we call 'twilight sessions' – 3 hour workshops taking place at the end of the teaching day (4.30-7.30pm). The surroundings may be quite ordinary – classrooms in a secondary school – but the provision of food and drink enables us to maintain a sense of community as we share a meal and engage in conversation half-way through the session.

Enhanced social capital within a learning community creates the conditions in which participants can offer each other critical friendship (Costa & Kallick, 1993; MacBeath & Jardine, 1998) which involves reciprocal support and challenge.

4. Enabling reflection on experience and thinking, through participation in dialogic activities

The HertsCam MEd is concerned with the development of professional knowledge in which the participants are knowledge creators. Their experience of practice is interrogated through reflection, comparison and analysis, which are scaffolded by the tools applied in the programme sessions and online. Conceptual frameworks and accounts of research derived from the literature are brought into the discussion in order to enhance participants' understanding.

(Pedagogical Principles document, September 2017)

On this programme, participants' professional experience, both accumulated and current, is treated as a precious resource for learning. If our goal is empowerment, it would be counter-productive, and actually insulting, to ignore what participants bring to the room and instead focus on the outcomes of university-based research. Participants' experience is brought into the seminar room through a continuous thread of dialogic workshop activities.

Participants are regularly guided to develop their thinking through dialogue in which they share their experience of teaching and of leading change. They offer each other critical friendship mentioned above, which involves reciprocal support and challenge. Listening, empathy and question-posing are key features of this dialogue (MacBeath, Dempster, Frost, Johnson & Swaffield, 2018). The way the workshops are facilitated is an important variable as illustrated by the following extract from David Frost's observation record.

Every few minutes in this session there is an opportunity for participants to discuss their ideas, their institutional contexts and their practice. This particular discussion is very dynamic and supported by the team members going round and supporting the discussion, responding to questions and offering guidance.

(DF observation feedback, November 2015)

The External Examiner noted how this dialogic approach is extended by participation in the wider HertsCam community.

I noted that there were expectations to present assignment foci and essay structures at the Network Events, which were useful opportunities for feedback.

(External Examiner's feedback, May 2016)

By presenting their ideas at these events and seeking feedback, participants are able to refine and develop their proposals and plans. Such mutual accountability improves rigour and ensures practicality. These benefits are also echoed by the participants:

- *The discussion was useful for my own work at my school.*
- *Developing a professional learning culture – fascinating development programme with some excellent outcomes*
- *Getting everyone together and having the opportunity to talk and discuss things*
- *The workshop was delivered really well and has given me ideas to apply at my own school.*

(Participants' feedback on Network Event, October 15th)

Within workshop sessions, carefully designed tools are used to scaffold one-to-one dialogue and small group discussion focused on participants' concerns, proposals and plans for interventions.

5. Building the capacity for critical reflection and narrative writing in which scholarship illuminates problem solving in professional contexts

In the HertsCam MEd the study of relevant literatures is used in the context of academic writing that is rigorous and critical, but the writing is purposeful in relation to professional problems arising from the individual participant's concerns and strategic action. Each participant's writing begins with their own professional identity and situation and develops along with their unfolding strategic action.

(Pedagogical Principles document, September 2017)

One of the things that participants have to unlearn when they first join the MEd programme is the fallacious idea that the purpose of academic writing is to test what you know or at least what you can recall. On the HertsCam MEd, writing is regarded as an essential element of the learning process. It is the means by which participants make sense of their professional experience and engage in rigorous, critical reflection on both their practice and their thinking.

Providing time and space for critical reflection is a challenge in all educational contexts, so the structure of the MEd actively supports participants in achieving headspace away from a busy professional environment, as noted

by the External Examiner who had visited us during one of the Residential Conferences to talk to participants about their experience of the MEd.

The residentials (conferences) are evidently highly valued... as key spaces to focus on their studies away from the busyness of school life, led by expert tutors and practitioners. The networking and collaboration is facilitated by the teaching being set within a residential.

(External Examiner's informal feedback, February 2016)

These comments resonate with the feedback from the participants themselves after a residential conference. They had been asked to note aspects of the conference that they had found most helpful:

- *time to write was very useful this weekend. Good to get back to MEd thinking and to refocus following the Christmas break.*
- *engaging with the literature, how to dip into and evaluate text*
- *time to work on our project plans/summary work/networking with others*

(Participant feedback, January 2017)

When contributing to MEd sessions, members of the Teaching Team show how scholarship informs their own practice. Jo Mylles, for example, has talked about how reading on the subject of 'servant leadership' (Greenleaf, 2002) was used to inform discussions at Senior Leadership Team meetings. She has also published an account of this scholarly approach to school leadership (Mylles, 2017).

This focus on critical reflection and high standards of academic writing are also seen in the twilight workshop sessions. In their feedback, participants comment on the value of protected time to reflect and read to deepen their thinking and develop what, for some, is a daunting return to academic writing.

Reading around leadership and school structures is helping the fog to clear. My school is in the middle of a massive culture change that is impacting on all members of the school community. It is great to read that this is

inevitable and whilst it happens in every institution the uniqueness of each setting will bring its own particular challenges.

(Participant feedback, January 2016)

Supervisors contribute greatly to the development of participants' writing style and the quality of their work. The success of the drive to help participants develop, reflect upon and use their scholarship in their writing is confirmed in a comment from the Link Tutor's report.

What comes across very clearly in all the assignments is a strong, reflective, professional voice. This is impressive relatively early in the programme; many students struggle to write reflectively, yet in this cohort all students wrote confidently in the first person and the teaching team should be commended on enabling their students to write in this way.

(Link Tutor's moderation feedback, May 17th)

Similarly, the process of writing is supported by clear guidance and tools to encourage both confidence and dialogue between participant and supervisor.

6. Facilitation and support through the use of discursive and conceptual tools that deepen understanding of themes relevant to the development of educational practice

HertsCam MEd taught sessions typically feature reflection and discussion activities in which structure and focus are introduced through the use of tools devised for the specific subject matter. Such tools may be in the form, for example, of a list of categories or perhaps a set of procedural steps.

(Pedagogical Principles document, September 2017)

We use the term 'discursive tools' to refer to artefacts produced by members of the Teaching Team to structure participants' reflection and discussion. Sometimes these may be a list of questions and prompts with spaces to record ideas arising in the discussion. Sometimes the tool may be more

complex and designed to enable a small group to engage in an activity that might be more like a game. The purpose of tools like these is to provide focus and a framework that makes reflection and discussion purposeful within a brief timescale.

The term 'conceptual tools' refers to the frameworks of ideas that help us to make sense of our experience and challenge our assumptions. A typical example would be the categories that Michael Fullan and Andy Hargreaves offered in the early 1990s to help us think about professional cultures – individualised, balkanised and collaborative (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992). Another example would be the concept of 'assessment for learning'. These are conceptual constructions which arise in the literature and can be introduced and explained as tools to help us analyse and explain our experience of practice.

A key document provided to each new MEd participant at the beginning of the course is the Annotated Bibliography. For each of the sixteen topics there is an explanation and a reading list. However, we do not assume that participants will simply discover the conceptual tools they need through their reading. Introducing conceptual tools and facilitating their use is part of the skill that members of the Teaching Team apply in the workshop sessions. The following extract from David Frost's observation record focuses on a workshop led by Jo Mylles, one of the members of the Teaching Team, who was building on the previous session led by Paul Rose, another member of the team.

Jo then takes over and refers us to the idea of professional cultures. She makes detailed reference to the input in the previous session by Paul about the use of tools for analysing school culture... She introduces a new tool for 'examining the culture in your school'. Participants are asked to use the tool to reflect on the professional cultures in their own schools and then share in pairs, then on the table. This is an essential feature of the programme: this opportunity to talk about their institutional realities is precious.

(Observation feedback, November 2015)

The experience of using a wide range of tools quickly rubs off on the participants who begin to design their own for their development work.

You facilitated talk amongst your audience members appealing for their help with creating tools to gauge the impact of your project on teacher competence and confidence.

(Teaching team observation feedback on a Yr 2 presentation, September 2016)

Splitting the audience into two to discuss two specific tools you have planned to use in your project generated a high level of discussion.

(Teaching team observation feedback on a Yr 2 presentation, September 2016)

Being able to create such tools is a key skill in the design and leadership of development work.

7. Building professional knowledge and fostering mutual inspiration through the organisation of networking and opportunities for international engagement

Building professional knowledge through networking involves participants having opportunities to share narrative accounts of their development projects. Knowledge is built when narratives are subject to discussion, which leads to an enriched understanding of particular aspects of practice and the process of change. Alongside the development of technical know-how and insight is the building of collective self-efficacy and enhanced moral purpose.

(Pedagogical Principles document, September 2017)

The HertsCam MEd is at the centre of a wider teacher-led network which brings together MEd participants with others on the TLDW programme – a one year certificated experience – and others who will have participated in HertsCam programmes in the past. For us, networking is a means to build

professional knowledge. We use the term 'knowledge building' to refer to a process which is not merely disseminating information about ways to teach or even ways to exercise leadership; it is a critical process in which participants' narratives are subject to scrutiny. In the ensuing dialogue, colleagues offer comparison with their own practice or experience which leads to a collective understanding and self-efficacy (Frost, 2012b).

MEd participants will typically volunteer to lead a workshop focusing on their project or to display a poster as a stimulus for discussion.

I did a poster presentation and was delighted to see how many colleagues were not only interested but also provided tangible ideas.

(Participants' feedback on Network Event, October 2015)

The importance of this wider network in cementing a sense of professional identity and putting down the roots of longevity is touched on by the EFeCT case study.

Relevant to the depth and sustaining of collaboration is the fact that the programme is embedded in the wider network of HertsCam. This is manifested in specific ways. Wearing's (2011: 31) evaluation observes that participation 'in the MEd gives a sense of belonging to a community in which goals, standards and values are shared'.

(EFeCT project case study, December 2016)

The External Examiner endorsed the impact of the HertsCam network, not as an insular club but as something from which to build personal conviction and take ideas out into wider school and community contexts.

Peer networks were already evident by January as an important element of the programme and students are encouraged to engage with one another in whatever format best suited them (including social media groups).

(External Examiner's report, July 2016)

Since 2008, HertsCam has worked internationally, helping to establish teacher leadership programmes in widely differing circumstances and sometimes where the concept of teacher leadership itself is alien. MEd participants are frequently invited to present their development work at international events across Europe, leading to an enhanced sense of professionalism and agency for all involved (Flores & Santos-Richmond, 2017).

Academic quality

Our partnership with the University of Hertfordshire makes it possible for participants in the HertsCam MEd to be awarded a masters degree, one that is recognised nationally and internationally. However, perhaps of greater importance is the ongoing process of scrutiny which helps us to maintain high standards of scholarship while enabling participants to make a difference to practice in schools. As we have argued above, these two aspects are not mutually exclusive or in any way separate. At the core of our programme is the idea that scholarship, which includes reading, dialogue and critical narrative writing, fuels the leadership of development work. The assignments are therefore designed to enable participants to engage sequentially in: analysing their situation, setting an agenda, exploring the pedagogy inherent in that agenda, devising an intervention in the form of a plan for a development project and, finally, leading and reporting on the leadership of that development project.

The assessment of assignments is through double blind marking involving all members of the Teaching Team. All assignments and assessments are sent to our Link Tutor at the University for moderation. In addition, a sample of assignments is sent to the External Examiner who then reports to each of the Module Examination Boards. This rigorous process ensures that academic standards are not only consistent with our programme aims and the agreed learning outcomes but also are comparable with standards on other masters programmes. At the time of writing we have had seven Module Exam Boards and at each one our assessments have all been validated. The following extract from our Link Tutor's report, highlights the quality of assessment feedback.

FINAL COMMENT — DAVID FROST

In October 2017, our first cohort graduated in a traditional ceremony arranged and managed by HertsCam. The Master of Ceremonies, Ben Creasey, is a teacher whose own development work had been published earlier in that year (Creasey & Frost, 2017). Graduands were presented for their degrees by Val Hill who was the MEd Programme Leader when they began. All of the sixteen participants who comprised this first pioneering group received their degrees on that day. The MEd team is understandably proud of this hundred per cent success rate.

An inspiring speech about the programme was made by Sarah Lightfoot, the current MEd Programme Leader and other members of the team played a variety of parts in the ceremony. We had invited Sal Jarvis, a pro-vice chancellor at the University of Hertfordshire to hand out the degrees and address the gathering. As HertsCam's founder, I made closing remarks in which I called upon policy makers to note the significance of this graduation:

Today, we have before us unassailable evidence that the potential for the transformation of educational provision that is desperately needed across the world actually lies within the teaching profession itself.

The recruitment and retention of teachers is a perennial problem for governments in England with many teachers leaving the profession just a few years after their initial training and induction. There are obvious issues to do with excessive workloads (Syal, 2018), but policy makers need to look deeper and focus on how the policy environment shapes and limits teachers' professionalism. I suggest that a key lesson to be learned from the programme that this book describes is that enabling teachers to take ownership of the connected challenges of professional learning, school improvement and education reform could be a way to address the problem of teacher supply. There is a link here between teachers' morale, wellbeing and effectiveness which we know is of interest to researchers at the OECD since they visited us last year to explore this. The teachers who have participated in the HertsCam masters programme have not only developed their capacity and improved practice in their schools, they have also become even more deeply committed to their continuing membership of the teaching profession.

Written feedback is very strong. It conveys both a sense of authority and a supportive agenda. It has a coaching tone which is wholly appropriate and will support student development well. It also shows a real engagement with the students as individuals.

(UH Link Tutor moderation feedback, February 2016)

Reports from the External Examiner are similarly supportive including the following:

I feel privileged to be involved in some small way with this innovative programme nationally. Everything seems securely in place for it to grow from strength to strength. This is the main message I will report to the University.

(External Examiner's report, February 2016)

As a team, which now includes twelve members, we keep the assessment process under review and discuss the feedback we receive from the University. Occasionally tensions arise when particular aspects of our programme need to be reconciled with established university systems and procedures, but we rely on the quality of the dialogue with our academic partner to enable us to resolve issues.

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Looking beyond these local concerns, we are informed by international organisations such as Unicef, World Bank, the Global Campaign for Education and Unesco, that the global education crisis continues unabated. Unesco announced in February for example that there are now an estimated 63 million 'out-of-school' children (www.unesco.org). Governments around the world are exhorted to put resources into education, professionalise teaching and improve their school systems to address the lack of access to quality education on the part of many millions of children worldwide. These exhortations have been made repeatedly over the years without any improvements in the statistics about the numbers of children with no access to schooling or the numbers of children who, despite being in school, are not in receipt of a good education. Perhaps it is time to look at the idea of teacher activism and to think about ways to enable the emergence of strategies to mobilise the vast reserves of moral purpose and ingenuity that can be found within the teaching profession.

At the time of the publication of this book, the team is continuing to teach the second and third cohorts of this teacher-led masters programme and looking forward to the second graduation ceremony in October 2018. We continue to evaluate the programme and invite researchers and other interested parties to visit and observe the programme in operation. We continue to seek ways to improve our practice and fine tune the programme so that it more closely fulfils its aims. We hope and believe that it truly empowers those who come forward to take up this challenge, and that it extends and enhances their professionalism, enabling them to be authentic agents of change.

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This follows two previous books featuring the HertsCam approach to supporting teacher leadership – *Transforming education through teacher leadership* in 2014 and *Empowering teachers as agents of change: a non-positional approach to teacher leadership* in 2017 – both edited by David Frost and published by LfL at the University of Cambridge Faculty of Education.

TEACHERS AS AGENTS OF CHANGE

A MASTERS PROGRAMME DESIGNED, LED AND TAUGHT BY TEACHERS

This book focuses on a radical new venture in school and teacher development – the HertsCam MEd in Leading Teaching and Learning. This programme is designed, managed and taught by teachers. Members of the editorial team have all played leading roles in the development of the HertsCam MEd programme.



The book presents the design of the programme and includes chapters that showcase the development

work led by the sixteen teachers who comprised the first cohort (2015-17). It concludes with an evaluation of the programme.

To improve the quality of education for all we have to transform the nature of teacher professionalism. This involves enabling teachers, and other education professionals, to take ownership of professional learning, practice development and education reform. Mobilising teachers' sense of moral purpose enhances morale, wellbeing and effectiveness. The teachers who have participated in the HertsCam masters programme have not only developed their personal capacity and improved practice in their schools, but have also become even more deeply committed to their continuing membership of the teaching profession.



HertsCam Network