International Teacher Leadership project
Team Conference

Rachev Hotel Residence, Arbanasi
Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria
27th-29th October 2011

Portrait of the meeting



The meeting was hosted by OSI Sofia and funded by the Centre for Education Policy, Belgrade.

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Conference participants

Contributing organisations and individuals		
Country	**Organisations**	**Individuals**
Albania	Open Society Foundation for Albania; Pedagogy Department, University of Tirana.	Inajete Kasimati, Rozeta Hoxhallari
Bulgaria	Open Society Institute, Sofia	Ilko Jordanov, Mariana Georgieva, Boyan Zahariev, Petya Kabakchieva
Bosnia and Herzegovina	proMENTE social research, Sarajevo	Ivona Celebicic, Alma Kadic
Greece	University of Pelopennese; 3rd Directorate of Secondary Education of Athens; Education Research Centre of Greece.	George Bagakis, Kiki Demertzi, Katerina Skia
Kosovo	Kosovo Education Centre, Pristina	Jehona Xhaferi, Melinda Mula
Macedonia	Foundation for Educational and Cultural Initiatives; Bureau for Development of Education of Republic of Macedonia, Skopje	Suzana Kirandziska, Majda Josevska, Kristina Lelovac
Moldova	Pro Didactica Education Centre, Chisinau	Viorica Postica, Rima Bezede
Montenegro	Pedagogical Center of Montenegro, Podgorica	Milica Vukcevic
Romania	Central Education 2000+;	Sorin Coman, Mona Chiriac
Serbia	Center for Interactive Pedagogy (CIP), Belgrade Centre for Education Policy, Belgrade	Jelena Vranjesevic, Milica Grahovac
Turkey	Sabanci University, Istanbul; Maltepe District of Istanbul	Aytac Gogus
UK	Barnwell School, Stevenage; Birchwood High School, Bishop's Stortford; Sir John Lawes School, Harpenden; University of Hertfordshire; Leadership for Learning: the Cambridge Network at the University of Cambridge Faculty of Education.	David Frost, Paul Barnett, Jo Mylles, Vivien Wearing, Val Hill, James Underwood, Caroline Creaby

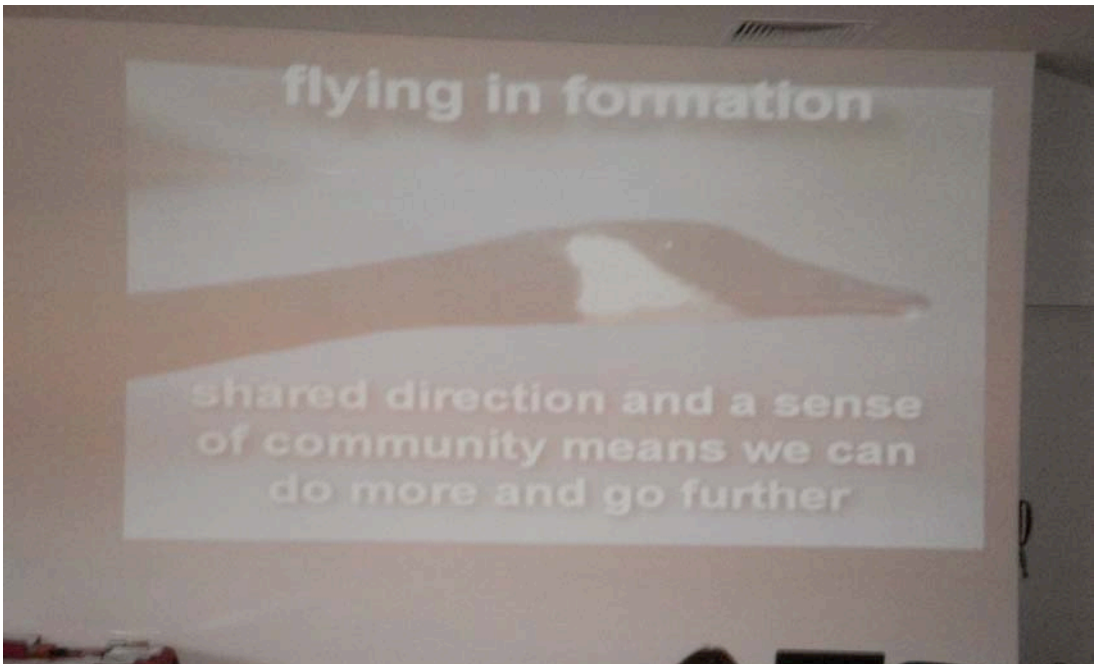
Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the Bulgarian team for organising and hosting this conference and the social and cultural activities that accompanied it.

The International Teacher Leadership (ITL) project was launched by the Leadership for Learning group at the University of Cambridge Faculty of Education in 2008. Subsequently, its continued existence is due to the generous support of the Education Support Programme of Open Society Foundations (ESP/OSF). We wish to acknowledge both the collaboration and considerable financial support from ESP/ OSF which has been provided largely through liaison with Gordana Miljevic, former Senior Program Manager at ESP/OSF, currently with the Centre for Education Policy in Belgrade.

In 2010-11, project activities have been supported by an OSF grant administered by the 'Foundation for Educational and Cultural Initiatives: Step-by-Step, Macedonia' directed by Suzana Kirandziska.

Although most of the expenses of the meeting have been met by the OSI funding, it is acknowledged that some team members have received additional support from their own organisations (see Participants' list).



Conference venue

The conference was held at the Rachev Hotel Residence situated in the village of Arbanasi.



Extract from the web site

Arbanasi is in central northern Bulgaria, set on a high plateau between the large town of Veliko Tarnovo and Gorna Oryahovitsa. It is known for its rich history and large number of historical monuments, such as 17th and 18th century churches and examples of Bulgarian National Revival architecture, which have turned it into a popular tourist destination.

Veliko Tarnova is the cultural centre of the north of Bulgaria. It is the biggest municipality in the area of Velikotarnovska. The countryside is varied with plains, hills and mountains and the city is placed in the hillside of the river Yantra surrounded by the hills of Athos, Trapezitsa, Tsarevets and Lily. The climate is moderate continental, with hot summers and cold winters. The annual average temperature is around 11^{o} C.

The hills, meadows, mountains, caves, forests and several species, have contributed to the occupation of these places by man from the antiquity to the present day. The first settlement dates back from 4300 years B.C.

www.velikoturnovo.info/

The Conference Team

Conference hosts / organisers



Boyan Zahariev
Petya Kabakchieva
Ilko Jordanov
Mariana Georgieva



Workshop facilitators : Val Hill and Jo Mylles

Programme continuity: Paul Barnett

Admin support and management (Cambridge): Lyndsay Upex and Viv Wearing

Research team: Caroline Creaby, Majda Josevska and James Underwood



Outline Programme

Thursday 27th October

2.00 Welcoming remarks: Prof. Petya Kabakchieva, Sofia University

2.20 Introduction to the team and the programme – David Frost, University of Cambridge

2.30 Session 1: The project report

4.00 Tea / coffee

4.30 Session 2: Supporting teacher leadership.

7.30 Light show and dinner in Veliko Tarnovo

Friday 28th October

9.00 Session 3: Teacher networking

10.45 Coffee / tea

11.15 Session 4: Schools and school principals

12.45 Lunch

1.45 Session 5: Building capacity and going to scale

3.15 Tea / coffee

3.45 Session 6: Advocating for change

5.15 Cultural visit to Veliko Tarnovo including dinner

Saturday 29th October

8.00 Session 7: Future collaboration, next steps and evaluation

9.30 Conference close

Pre conference visit to Lyaskovets

In the morning of 27th October a small party visited the high school in the nearby town of Lyaskovets, famous for the production of sparkling wine.

The visit included observation in classrooms, discussions with teachers and the school principal.





Conference: Day 1

Welcome

Prof. Petya Kabakchieva welcomed everyone to the team conference and thanked them for travelling to Bulgaria for the meeting. Petya went on to make some profound remarks. One was about the significance of teacher leadership in changing schools. She said that 'changing schools' is really 'changing the world' and that our work in supporting this is an 'ambitious and dangerous' endeavour. Her remarks were inspiring.





Ilko Jordanov thanked all those involved in helping to organise the event and his colleagues in the Bulgarian team. David Frost echoed these sentiments and thanked Gordana Miljevic and the Open Society Institute (OSI) for making the meeting possible.

Introductions

David introduced the Cambridge team. Sheila Ball and Amanda Roberts were unable to attend the conference but sent messages to everyone. Iris and Ljubica from Croatia were also unable to join the conference and sent their apologies.

The research team introduced themselves and explained that they would be participating in the conference by making notes, observation, discussion and interview.



- James was interested in learning about how teachers network together and share knowledge and how this can be done across different cultures.

- Caroline was interested in teacher identity, how the ITL project affects teachers' perceptions and how it affects their attitudes and schools in general.

- Madja was interested in similar research, exploring the identity of teachers particularly in the Balkans, how teachers perceive themselves and what an important job teaching is.

The research will help the project and make sure that things are captured. They asked people to leave comments, questions and ideas about themes they are working on using post-it notes.

David reflected on what had been learnt from the team meeting a year ago in Mavrovo. Items highlighted were advocacy, shared ideas, tools being used, sense of belonging, stories, how it is important to include new people. He explained that the Cambridge team had looked at all the team reports in order to produce the draft project report.


The International Teacher Leadership (South East Europe) Project

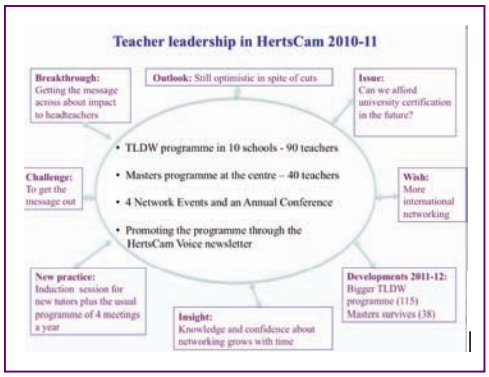
Team Meeting

Portrait of the meeting

The project report

David introduced the question of whether our activities are represented in the report and the strength of the claims and recommendations we are making.

Val and Jo led a market place activity to enable participants learn more about the progress of other countries using their power point display on teacher leadership in their country (see example below). One person remained at the country table and other members moved round to discuss progress and issues.





Participants returned to their country tables and David moved the discussion forward to talk about the report. He is taking full responsibility for the report but is representing ITL members and he asks for their input on the questions raised above.

In the feedback points included:

- It is really hard to persuade the Headteacher to be involved. Keeping the head informed is important to sustainability.

- There needs to be more on the section on cultural challenges and it should not be presented in a negative way. Teacher leadership is supported despite the challenges.

- Recognising how big a challenge it is in a sense celebrates even more how much has been achieved. We know it is a very big breakthrough because of the challenging situations.

- In some schools the Headteacher changes frequently and then the trust has to be rebuilt.

- In some cases the project was linked to something that had already been developed and this is good. What would happen if it wasn't linked to an existing project?

- Some schools are not interested; they think they do not need it and are reluctant to have visitors.

- Good work has been done by different types of partnership.

- There is an issue of accreditation by the Ministries of Education, how to make it more part of the system, certificates etc.

- There needs to be recognition of the work that all of these organisations have done. We have to be fair and try to find certification, creative ways to recognise – try to secure acknowledgement and recognition eg this organisation has participated in the project.

- In the last few years there has been a kind of distrust, this is a political issue centred around conflicting statements made by other NGO's.

- The report gives an opportunity to show that there is much value in enabling NGO's to take this on and initiate work with schools.

- There is evidence of enormous impact on teachers, their self-knowledge, professional development etc. What about school development and students' perception?

- To address this it is important that the report is accompanied by a collection of stories. Teachers show evidence of what has made a difference.

- It remains a difficulty to create strong teams of teachers. They still work as 'I' not as 'we'. Collaboration is more evident in other countries.

- We want to see individual teachers making collaboration happen

- Discussion on the portfolios was successful; putting the portfolios together was an activity that supports reflection. A breakthrough in people sharing their portfolios to reveal evidence.

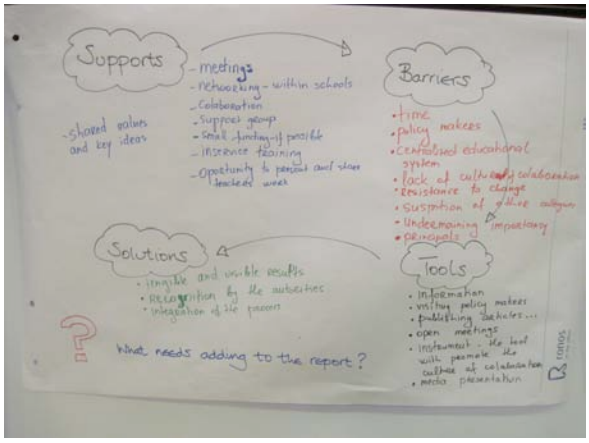
- The report is an opportunity to appreciate the work of teachers and make this as clear as possible - no polishing and softening. We have to present a project which promotes and elicits thinking and motivates people to do something. Getting the cultural setting sharp is important.

Supporting teacher leadership



Paul Barnett asked us to consider models of learning and shows this image as a poor example of having little impact – *'You can't cram knowledge in, you need to create opportunities to learn'*.

Paul introduced the next activity by organising participants into mixed country teams so that experiences can be shared. Val and Jo asked teams to consider key features of our method, the tools we use and the challenges we face. How is teacher leadership supported? What are the barriers? What tools are used and how are they adapted? What are the solutions? This activity gives an opportunity to make links by discussing the barriers and solutions in different countries.





These points emerged from the activity:

Supports	Barriers
Shared values and key ideas	Time /Dissemination takes time and effort
Network events and conferences	Policy makers / Centralized system
Team meetings	Lack of cultural collaboration/
School visits	School cultures / Resistance to change
Newsletter, e-platform web site	Suspicion of other colleague
Sharing portfolios (critical)	Undermining the importance of principals
Collaboration	Dispersed groups
Support group	No cooperation between teachers
Certification/recognition	Lack of professional identity
Government /Ministry of Education	Teacher leadership identity
Relationships/trust	Lack of concepts
Well-structured workshops	Vision for teacher leadership development
Opportunity to present and share work	Research skills need to be learnt

Solutions	Tools
Tangible and visible results Strong advocacy plan Identifying stakeholders in MoE, Ed Inst Sharing good practice, showing examples Visiting policy makers Publishing articles Open meetings Instruments to promote culture of collaboration Media presentation	School culture/context (needs to be tailored) Portfolios Language Resources Books – some more accessible than others

Shopping list activity

Jo Mylles led the last activity. She asked participants to put together a 'shopping list' of strategies and work with colleagues to find ideas for their country group.

Shopping
Eggs
Chocolate
Rakia

Discussion that followed:

- In one school they use on-line support to help develop the group. The school website stores documents used in sessions.
- How much theory is there for teachers? Are teachers' stories lacking theory? Teachers knowledge can be enriched. We need to strengthen strategies to enhance knowledge. Networking and critical feedback helps.
- What do teachers perceive to be within their professional role?
- Teachers need to be encouraged to evaluate their practice, open up and be creative.

Drawing the session towards a close David asked members to update their action plan sheets.

Paul grabbed our attention by putting up a slide, which on first reading appeared to be a negative statement, but on closer scrutiny became a motivating thought to end the session.



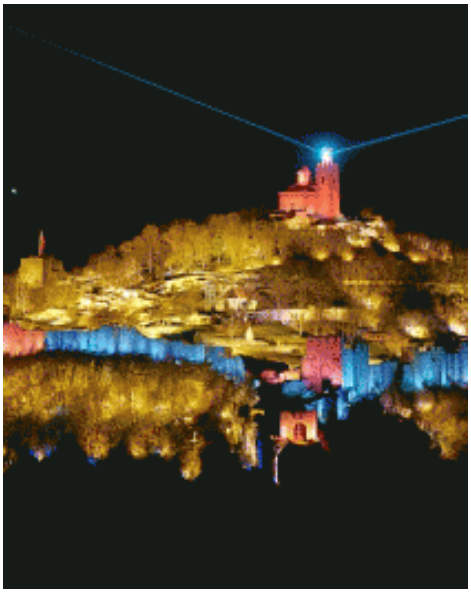
He achieved the aim of focusing out thoughts on the positive *'Opportunity is now here'*.

Ilko invited everyone to join in with the arrangements for the evening's entertainment and dinner.

Dinner in Veliko Tarnovo

We all went off in mini buses to Veliko Tarnovo and watched the Tsarevgrad Turnov – sound and light show which depicts the history of the area through the power of music and spectacular illumination.

Following this we enjoyed a splendid meal in a local restaurant.





In the restaurant we were joined by the principal of the Lyaskovets high school and the director of education for the municipality.





Day 2: Friday 28th October

Starting with an energiser

Paul started the session with an activity to lift our spirits and put us in the mood for thinking. We sang this song in Mavrovo last year and it reminded us of how far we have come since our last meeting. Singing helped us all to start the morning with positive feelings and this was just one of the many techniques that Paul used throughout the day to raise our energy levels.

You are my sunshine, my only sunshine

You make me happy when skies are grey

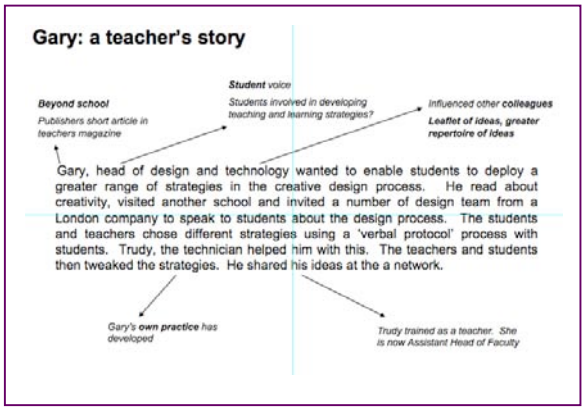
You'll never know dear,

How much I love you

Please don't take my sunshine away

What we have learnt about how teachers build knowledge?

Val and Jo presented two vignettes to show how teacher leadership had made a difference in their schools. They invited members to think about a story in their own context and then explain the story to someone in another country using the following prompts.



- What did the teachers want to make a difference to?
- What was the impact? (pupils, indivdual, practice, colleagues, within school and beyond).
- How was it embedded in the school?

To start this activity Alma Kadic and Ivona Celebicic from Bosnia and Herzegovina gave shared the story of a teacher's project in their country *'Developing strategies for the creation of reading habits'*. This story showed impact on working with parents, pupil reading and cooperation within the school and beyond. The teacher closed the story with *'I just initiated something for my children and they continued to lead me'*.

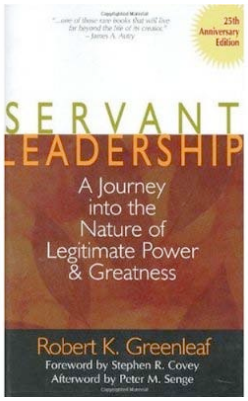


Each country group then worked on writing a story and the stories were collected in.

David made some comments about the value of teachers' stories and ways in which we might publish or disseminate them. He talked about the concept of servant leadership by referring to the 25th anniversary edition of Robert Greenleaf's book.

He also quoted Michael Apple as saying that:

"Academics should be secretaries and scribes for teachers working in increasingly intense working conditions."



David's points and proposals:

- The stories are to celebrate what teachers have done.
- It is important to select stories that give the best illustration of teacher leadership.
- The Teacher Leadership journal is a good source of examples of stories that are published.
- It is proposed that a Special Issue of the Teacher Leadership Journal is dedicated to ITL.
- No articles but just stories, 800 words.
- We would include one story from each country (15) and an editorial.
- More stories could be available to download electronically (2 more stories from each country)

We discussed David's input in small groups.

Points in the plenary discussion

- The hard copy option is popular.
- Each story should have a small summary about the context of the education system in that country.
- It does not matter if stories are original or similar to others.
- ITL funds remaining in Cambridge can be used to publish a special issue of the TL journal in English.
- The on-line version could be translated

Schools and school principals

The focus of this session was to explore the link between principal leadership and teacher leadership and how we can help to build professional learning communities. Paul showed this slide to help people to think about how principal's can develop professional culture in their school.



The accompanying goose flying formation video was used as an example of the benefits to be gained from a shared sense of direction and community.

www.youtube.com The Goose: RUN The Power of Team

This quotation from a UK headteacher illustrated the point.

> *We need to work together, and you all need to be leaders yourselves sometimes. I can be the goose flying out there ahead, but sometimes I need to drop back and you need to be out at the front.*
>
> (a UK Headteacher)

David reminded us of the meeting held with a group of headteachers in the UK last year (full report is on CamTools). This aimed to help achieve a shared understanding of the challenges and possibilities of:

- creating the conditions for teacher leadership,
- building school cultures which enable this
- changing teachers' perceptions of their professional identity.

The following slide was shown to clarify the role of principals in building professional learning communities:



Engaging school principals' support for teacher leadership



In the next activity led by Val and Jo, country teams were asked to make a list of the ways they have engaged the support of school principals for building teacher leadership. To learn from each other's experiences they were asked to draw up 5 top tips and then share their new strategies with colleagues they had not already spoken to. They wrote down one tip they had learnt on a post-it note and put it on a flipchart. National teams then worked on deciding their next steps in engaging support in their own context.

These are the ideas that were shared:

- Organise promotion events for other schools in the municipality
- Principals invite other school principals to final network event
- Involve schools who have hosted other projects
- Include school principals as mentors of TL team
- School principals' training event (teacher leadership for school principals)
- Contact the Principals' Society and give a presentation about the ITL programme
- Invite new principals to networking events
- Invite principals to participate in the ITL school groups
- Prepare an acknowledgement plate/certificate for the school
- Presentation of ITL project in school – explaining the aims of the project
- Presence of principals at network event at other schools
- Invite important people to the school to talk to the principal and teachers
- Use words carefully so that principals feel included
- The influence of the Governor of Ministry of Education can be important.
- Principals organising promotional events about TL activities in their communities
- Bring together principals from neighbouring schools
- Informal meetings between different schools
- Present the project to principals you know from other contexts

- Regular network events (different, innovative)
- Involvement of local educational authorities
- Invite principals to every meeting with the support team
- Ensure presence of educational authority in the area at initial recruiting meetings. This gives teachers the feeling of certification of the process they are about to embark on.
- Present TL regularly; municipal / principal meetings
- Talk to a resistant or new principal about some of the main problems and also present some of the values and tools of TL project. Use evidence from existing projects.
- Change some of the words to suit the cultural context
- Ask/persuade the headteacher to have TL on the school leadership long term agenda so that participants are invited to share their projects with the senior team regularly
- Have a contract with the school and give them a certificate (acknowledgement)

Recognising teacher leadership through certification

David led discussion about recognising the value of teacher leadership by issuing certificates.



Milica Vukcevic showed an example of a certificate used in Montenegro. Teachers receive points for their work. Someone in the government has a rule about number of sessions which are 2 hours and 15 mins. The Ministry has to have proof of certification. They have organised events and ceremonial awards.

Ilko Jordanov talked of two types of certificates used in Bulgaria. One is for school principals of schools involved and they are awarded at a seminar. The second type is for teachers who have successfully completed portfolios. Teachers make a presentation of their portfolio work and are then awarded a certificate. The awarding body is the NGO. The ceremony is used to get feedback on the programme.

George Bagakis talked about the certificate in Greece. The awarding body is the University of Penelopesse. This is similar to Bulgaria but teachers get different types of certificates depending on the work they have done. Currently there are 41 teachers and 29 of these finished their portfolio and were given written feedback. Before teachers are

given feedback an activity is takes place to see the quality of portfolios. There are seven/eight tables with portfolios on and people pass and discuss them with one another. This was thought to be very positive for teachers.

Suzana Kirandziska spoke about the Certificates awarded by the Government in Macedonia. There is collaboration with the Foundation and ITL. On the back of the certificates it indicates what the teachers have achieved. Certificates are given to Directors of Schools, School Coordinators, teachers who participated in the project, Directors of Foundation, teachers who were educated, teachers involved in project. It is important that it is signed by the Government and OSI Foundation. At a network event each school shows their portfolios and gives a presentation; they receive a certificate from the Director of Education. Feedback from colleagues is just as important as from the authority.

Lunch



We were provided with a wonderful lunch. This provided a great opportunity for networking, planning and side meetings.

Building capacity and going to scale

After lunch the session focused on how we are developing our programmes of support for teacher leadership and how we can build capacity for an expanded programme in the future.

Paul started the session with a video clip which helped us to reflect on change and working together.

www.youtube.com Stand By Me / Playing for Change: Peace through Music

No matter who you are
No matter where you go in your life
At some point you are going to need
somebody to stand by you.



We considered how we should act in order to 'grow our own leaders' in our national contexts in order to develop capacity.

These ideas were shared:

- Is there someone who can do the work as their job?
- Is there someone who has a salary to take on teacher leadership role.

Teacher Leadership Handbook

David led a discussion and agreed the content of the proposed handbook shown in this slide. The Handbook is in progress, 14 pages, explanation and tools to be downloaded on the web. It is designed for people who:

- have not done this before and a way to entice them into it.
- have heard about teacher leadership but not sure how to get started.
- want to create support for teacher leadership.

Handbook - Contents

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Appendix: List of tools	

It was suggested that 'Guidebook' sounds better. It could refer to specific pages in the report with cross reference and hyper links. The cultural context is important.



Teacher leadership principles

Val and Jo gave out the 'Principles for practice' and participants were asked to discuss and to give feedback and suggest and add any other principles that could be included.

Principles for practice

Principle 1: A partnership between schools and external agencies
Such agencies might include university departments of education, government agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Principle 2: Mutual support through membership of a group and a network
Support groups can be established within single schools or within clusters of schools and these can be linked through networks.

Principle 3: Collaboration with school principals
Dialogue with school principals can help to build support for teacher leadership

Principle 4: Opportunities for open discussion
Teachers need to be enabled to think critically about values, practice and innovation.

Principle 5: A project-based methodology
Teacher leadership is enacted through the initiation and leadership of development projects.

Principle 6: Enabling teachers to identify personal development priorities
This releases passion, concern and moral purpose.

Principle 7: Tools to scaffold personal reflection, planning and action
Well-designed tools scaffold, exemplify and illustrate teacher leadership.

Principle 8: Facilitating access to relevant literature
This enhances the knowledge arising from teacher's development work.

Principle 9: The provision of guidance on leadership strategies
Expert guidance and mutual exploration strengthens leadership capacity.

Principle 10: The provision of guidance on the collection and use of evidence
Systematic enquiry is a democratic and collegial leadership strategy.

Principle 11: Mobilisation of organisational support and orchestration
School principals can support teachers' development work and ensure coherence in the school.

Principle 12: The provision of a framework to help teachers document their work
A structured portfolio enables teachers to plan, record and reflect upon their development work and can be used as evidence for certification and the like.

Principle 13: The provision of opportunities for networking beyond the school
Teachers derive mutual support and inspiration when they network with other teachers. Moral purpose is cultivated throughout the system.

Principle 14: Recognition through certification
Teachers' leadership of innovation can be recognised through certification provide by universities or partners of other respected organisations.

Principle 15: Professional knowledge arises from accounts of teacher leadership
Teachers can build professional knowledge through collaborative and critical discussion and exchange of ideas.

Before breaking for afternoon tea Paul asked participants to write down some questions they would like to ask David on post-its. They could be personal or about the ITL project.

Tea

Afternoon tea gave everyone a change to relax and discuss event informally.



Advocating for change

What we can do to influence policy makers, officials and practitioners?

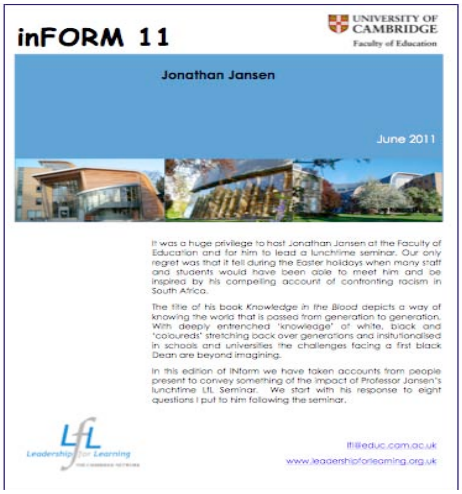
David showed a slide which identified the following proposed publications:

- The main report (60 pages)
- Executive Summary of the report (4 pages?)
- Facilitators' Handbook (16 pages)
- Project summary (inForm bulletin)
- Press release (one page)

The next activity focused on considering the content of the press release and participants were asked to discuss in their country team. What would make an eye catching story-line? The following points emerged from the discussion:

- Depends on context and culture. Some contexts would work in the UK, however, not necessarily in other countries.
- Teachers leading change tackling challenges/encourage or facing challenges
- Bringing out the best of teachers
- Concepts can mean different things to different people
- The future of school depends on teachers
- Changing schools today changes the future for teachers
- Connected to an event, examples of countries to be included, a real case
- We need different press releases for different contexts

David gave showed a slide which showed an example of the LfL Inform bulletin. He said that he was working on a special issues of this focusing on the ITL project.


inFORM 11

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Faculty of Education

Jonathan Jansen

June 2011

It was a huge privilege to host Jonathan Jansen at the Faculty of Education and for him to lead a lunchtime seminar. Our only regret was that it fell during the Easter holidays when many staff and students would have been able to meet him and be inspired by his compelling account of confronting racism in South Africa.

The title of his book Knowledge in the Blood depicts a way of knowing the world that is passed from generation to generation. With deeply entrenched 'knowledge' of white, black and 'coloureds' stretching back over generations and institutionalised in schools and universities the challenges facing a first black Dean are beyond imagining.

In this edition of INform we have taken accounts from people present to convey something of the impact of Professor Jansen's lunchtime LfL Seminar. We start with his response to eight questions I put to him following the seminar.

LfL Leadership for Learning

lfl@educ.cam.ac.uk
www.leadershipforlearning.org.uk

Report back from the research team



The researchers, James, Caroline and Madja, gave some feedback on their observations on the ITL meeting. They expressed this in the form of questions:

James:

How have teachers shared experiences of teacher leadership with others?

- How does this move from mutual celebration to critical debate and discussion?
- Where teacher networking has been effective in building knowledge, how has this been effectively supported or scaffolded?
- Is sharing knowledge with colleagues from other cultures (nations) different from sharing knowledge with colleagues from one's own culture?

Caroline:

- Are changes in teacher identity obvious to you? If so how are they evident?
- Do you think involvement in the ITL project has affected their attitude to their job and their school more generally, beyond their own project?
- Have you faced challenges in supporting teachers to develop their leadership capabilities? Such challenges could arise from: teachers' perceptions of the role of a teacher, the prevailing culture in schools, challenges you may have faced personally in advising and supporting teachers
- To what extent does the ITL project effectively support you to support teachers?

Majda:

What is teachers' primary motivation to work as teachers?

To what extent is the teaching profession respected and valued in your country?

How do the teachers' perceive the status of their profession?

How involved are the teachers in the decision making about their practice and their schools?

How do teachers vary in the way they see the breadth of their roles?

From your perspective, what are key characteristics of a professional teacher?

What external factors contribute to the quality of a teacher?

What is the future for ITL?

(The pit activity)

Paul had devised this format as a different way of enabling David to address a range of issues about the future of the project.

In this activity, called 'the pit', David was seated in the centre of the room with everyone seated in a circle around the room. Paul facilitates this *question and answer* activity and colleagues ask David some of the questions they had written earlier. The task helps the group understand more about David, his vision for ITL and the future of the project.

These are some of the exchanges:

When you are not thinking about the ITL project, what are you doing?
If not thinking about ITL project, then I am thinking about HertsCam Network. I would like to stay focused on teacher leadership for rest of my career.

What would you like to do after the ITL project?
I cannot imagine 'after the ITL project'. It is something that has to develop and I will continue to support it as much as possible.

What are the changes you have seen in yourself since starting ITL?
Along with growth of the project I have grown in confidence because I learn from the group and feel satisfied with my own work. Because of the support from this group I speak more robustly in meetings and I am more relaxed.

Do you think you can do this programme for student leadership?
There is parallel work in LfL – Amanda and I have an article coming out on this soon:

> Frost, D. and Roberts, A. (2011) Student leadership, pedagogic partnership and democracy, *Leading and Managing Journal* 17 (2) 66-84

Student voice and student leadership fits well with teacher leadership.

Teacher leadership is about teachers but what about democracy beyond school?
Our work focuses on changing the nature about how schools work. We learn tolerance and respect by going to schools and try to build an educational process that is democratic.

There is a problem with 'slow coaches' so do you think a project like ITL can help people like these?

The existence of teacher leadership in school has helped people become more awakened. When I was talking to the Governor of the Maltepe district a teacher approached us and said that he had been planning to retire but when he heard all about the ITL project and inspiring teacher leadership, he reconsidered his position. This 'born again' syndrome has occurred many times.

Could we have a whole international teacher leadership team conference or day in the future?
It would be a huge task and cost a lot of money. It would be good to make connections via the internet. Maybe something on a given day, we can make connection by the internet and do things at the same time in different parts of the world to make the link.

What is your metaphor for your life?
A runaway train, very exciting. I don't know what is going to happen next …

What compromise will you not acccept with the ITL project?
I don't like the idea of a government deciding that teacher leadership activities are compulsory – you can advise, give permission, create conditions that will lead people to want to do it but…

When will you be coming to Albania?
Some visits I have done alone and some with other colleagues. I appreciate that it is helpful to teachers that they meet with the person they have heard about and who started the project. However, I would like to see a much wider range of people visiting. I would like to entice some more of the teachers from HertsCam to join me on visits. I would like to see members of the ITL team visiting each other. There are restrictions on finances to take into account and it will be a challenge in the future for critical friend visits and funding.

How should we work with government agencies?
We need to engage in advocacy. Be prepared for serious negotiations, have the confidence to express, freedom to initiate. We have to share our enthusiasm. Try to engage a wider audience and don't be bullied. It is important to build capacity by bringing other people into the group to sustain the project and support direction and growth.





Next steps

We discussed next steps which David agreed to type up overnight. They included:

- Activities to launch the report
- Adapt the Cambridge press release and use it
- Lobbying /advocacy activities
- Developing different publications
- Translate and represent the inForm Bulletin about the ITL project
- Find ways to create capacity on a shoe string – funding/financial
- Negotiate with partners/potential partners to create capacity – bringing people in
- Work on bids for funding – research and development – using evidence of impact
- Produce academic outputs – visibility and lots of audiences

Participants went away to prepare three action points to share at Saturday's breakfast session.

Paul left us with this thought

'Act as though what you do makes a difference. It does'.

(William James)

Ilko explained the arrangements for the evening.

An evening in Veliko Tarnova

Some members of the group enjoyed a walking tour of Veliko Tarnovo. The rest joined this group later and were taken directly by mini bus to a restaurant in Veliko Tarnova.

The meal was prefaced by a wine tasting activity which enabled us to experience the best of Bulgarian wine presented by experts. For some, the wine was chased down by sips of the best of Bulgarian Rakia.

The meal was wonderful and was followed by singing and dancing. The band was a only a duo but they knew all the traditional tunes and their music filled the room.

The Skopje contingent sing
a mournful ballad





A small but wonderful band

Marianna teaches us a very complicated
Bulgarian folk dance





Day 3 - Saturday 29th October

The final session was an early working breakfast since we had flights to catch.

Next steps

David had produced a 2 page list of next steps – for Cambridge and for everyone. This is reproduced below:

Next steps – agreed at the close of the meeting

This document attempts to capture the actions points we identified and agreed upon during the conference. This is an ambitious list of course but will serve as a useful guide. It is divided into the things that the Cambridge team will do and the things that all team members will do.

Cambridge will:

- finish the report and send it out to all of us for a final check by the end of the first week of November
- create an Executive Summary of the report
- create a press release, send it to everyone and put it on the University web site
- produce an ITL-focused inFORM bulletin and send the text of this to everyone
- finish the Facilitators' Guidebook and arrange translation into all relevant languages (eg ask Ivana to translate into Croatian)
- create a document that recognises / acknowledges the participation in the project of all organisations and individuals (a kind of certificate) and express the desire for future collaboration
- stage a seminar in Cambridge on 10th November to launch the report (everyone is invited)
- update the project summary document and circulate as soon as possible
- draw up the Contents list for the special issue of the Teacher Leadership journal and edit the stories identified during the conference
- develop the use of the Teacher Leadership web page (part of the Leadership for Learning web site) for sharing materials such as the report, the new Facilitators' Guidebook and other related reports and resources
- produce a paper which documents what the 'research team' learned from their observations in the conference and circulate it to all as soon as possible
- produce a 'Portrait of the Meeting' document like the one we did for the Mavrovo conference

Everybody will:

- try to arrange events or activities to launch the report
- adapt the press release to their local context and use it either to publicise the publication of the report or a local event. Perhaps using a real case as a hook.
- engage in lobbying and advocacy activities, contacting people who have influence, sending summaries of the project and the press release, asking for meetings to discuss teacher leadership.
- try to develop different publications (like the Moldovan one and the Turkish one)
- translate the text of the inForm Bulletin about the ITL project and re-present it in an appropriate form locally, similarly the Executive Summary
- participate in conferences, both national and international, in order to present the ITL approach
- find ways to create capacity 'on a shoe string' – with very little financial resource – looking for example to people who already have salaried employment but could embrace the facilitation of teacher leadership as part of their work.
- negotiate with partners / potential partners to create capacity
- approach the ministry of education to explore the possibility of achieving accreditation for the teacher leadership programme and recognition of the value of the ITL project certificate in terms of points in the career / professional development system
- try to arrange meetings with school principals to explore bringing new schools into the project
- try to identify potential sources of funding for related research and development projects including from local ministries of education, the EU (eg cohesion funds)
- try to produce academic outputs – articles and conference papers – which could be independent or collaborations between various team members including David
- explore the possibility of using web sites and related technology to share the report and other materials

In general we will continue to operate as a network, exchanging ideas, providing mutual support, visiting each other where this is possible. We will explore ways to fund a further meeting, one year from now.

We discussed the above document and David agreed to send a fuller version of this to everyone within a few days.



Action in each country

Paul asked each country to present their three action points to share with the whole group.

Moldova – To finish the programme, engage in fund raising, make an ITL presentation for a meeting with Ministry of Education to collaborate together.

Serbia – Think about making a presentation, a more sustainable, plan for accreditation by agencies of Ministry of Education, and train and support those who will be tutors.

Macedonia – New materials, develop online communication and promotion, advocate a programme to the Ministry of Education.

Turkey – Develop the programme and work with 8 teachers from 9 different schools

Montenegro – Planning to have meeting with Ministry of Education and Bureau to make the programme professional development of teachers

Kosovo – Continue to support teachers, find out about projects that are implemented in the organisation that might be linked, set up procedures for applying for the programme.

Greece – Contact students and those supporting the project and ask if they are willing to continue, ask other countries about the model started at the University, organise a conference attracting audiences which will encourage others to be involved in project. There is vocational funding for proposals relating to school projects, there are vocational funds.

Bulgaria – Magazine to be published, try to find out about funds. Strategy to continue and discuss change with Ministry of Education for teacher development. Grasp opportunities at conferences and persuade school principals to use their budgets for teacher development.

Romania – Attract one more school, translate the report and show it to the Ministry of Education to tell them it is worth supporting.

Moldova – It is important to continue. Planning to contact the Ministry of Education, and develop fund raising.

Albania – Translate material, expand project to two new schools, one which is in a remote area. Training and support of teachers and encourage motivation, publish teachers' stories in a magazine, teacher leadership networks.

David will draw up a full 'next steps' document and send it to everyone as soon as possible after the conference.

An evaluation activity

Paul presented a slideshow presentation of the photos from the conference set to the music 'Stand by me'. Jo and Val used a novel activity for the evaluation/feedback on the conference. They gave out a worksheet in the shape of a hand and asked everyone to write five ideas/things about the conference and include in the middle of the hand a message on

'What you've gained from the Conference'





Fingertip points shared:

- Idea – a contract with schools
- The cultural affinity within the Balkan countries
- Ideas for the sustainability and the continuation of the project
- Impressed by the progress of many countries
- Some ideas of how to cope with challenges
- New ideas on how to involve principles
- A sense that we belong to a network
- A confidence that we are on the right way.
- It is important to disseminate the teacher leadership information
- The possibility of ways to continue teacher leadership to create an action plan
- A common vision about teacher leadership culture
- Finding out about ideas for the next year
- I'm always more motivated to continue after these meetings
- A deeper understanding of the Balkan region
- An understanding of the social/cultural/political issues faced
- Insight into what a sensitive concept teacher leadership is
- Benefiting from the professional teamwork of the UK team
- School principals' leadership contributes to ITL

- Goose flock principle at every level - local, national and international
- New friendships / experience of Bulgaria
- About different cultures and about networking
- To put more effort into maintaining networking
- Thinking about the ITL journal with teachers' stories
- Sense of growth / strength of community / sense of growth/ trust in team
- Details of the Facilitators' Guidebook
- Helped me to get some new plans
- Building network / expanding programme / using core groups.
- My challenges are similar to every European teacher
- To believe the power of teachers is changing
- I have possibilities to learn more about the respect and responsibilities of our work.

Messages shared in the palm of the hand

- To help our teachers be successful - they need to know that 'Opportunity is now here'.
- We try to see big picture of the future of ITL presented in 15 countries all together.
- 'A belief that we can make a difference'. We remember this point in this meeting.
- Thank you very much!
- Looking forward to seeing you all next year!
- Hope we succeed to have next ITL meeting
- Thank you for the wonderful organisation and experience we shared
- It would be great to have it longer
- Stand by me, ITL, goose flock, united we are stronger
- To have the addresses of all the participating schools, so that they can communicate and try to organise and submit projects
- It is very important to continue..good luck! Very useful experience.
- It would be helpful to know more of the agenda and context before the meeting
- I have a lot of self-confidence and a sense of belonging
- Go on… more and more teacher leadership Fale mi udrit. Thank you.
- Wonderful days spent together, a lot has been learnt, wonderful experience
- Ilko and Marianna have made all of this happen for us.

Finally….

David made some brief concluding remarks. He thanked Gordana, OSI and CEPS for making this conference possible. He thanked everyone present for their participation and effort in making the conference such a success. He gave special thanks to those members of the Cambridge team who are full time teachers; they had given their time and creativity to the task. It is a testament to the idea of teacher leadership to see such skilled and committed teachers playing leading roles in facilitating international discourse. David reiterated the point that, if we want to promote and extend teacher leadership, we have to be able to recognise the talent of people around us and provide the opportunities for them to extend their roles. Enabling such people to be involved in the project will help it to grow.

Final thanks were expressed to Ilko and Marianna for organising the conference and to Milica Grahovac from CEPS for organising flights and other helpful tasks.

