

Taking the Lead

International visit opportunities for Lincolnshire heads. Interested? Contact Sue Gale or Sue Ashe.

Lincolnshire Primary Schools Leadership Letter. July 2009

Inside this issue:

Leadership Journey	1
Do you need to be a deputy to apply for headship?	2
Induction for Heads	2
Programmes update	2 & 3
New Heads	4

"Why is there an NPQH leaflet in my pigeon hole?"

Looking back, my leadership journey is peppered with moments like these.. moments when somebody other than myself has given me a nudge onto the next stage of my career.

As a 27-year old class teacher, married with two young children, pursuing a route to headship could not have been further from my mind. I thought I was doing well if I managed to plan a week's worth of half decent lessons, remember to make my children's packed lunches and find a pair of matching shoes to wear each day. Hardly future headteacher material. But for good or ill, my boss at the time had recognised a flicker of potential and sent me the leaflet.

Prior to that, I had built a good knowledge of child development by changing the age range I taught each year. I had also led various foundation subjects and then headed up the NLS within school.

Leadership Matters...

We're delighted to present the first issue of 'Taking the Lead', which is aimed at all primary school leaders across the county - headteachers, deputy and assistant heads, whole school leaders in small schools and SLT members. We hope it will help to keep everyone informed about leadership events and opportunities and, since we aim to produce it termly, we'd be pleased to receive your ideas for articles and news.

Succession Planning is still our highest priority, as the 'bulge' of heads in their 50s moves towards retirement, and we're looking to support and encourage our next generation of school leaders. The TES has recently reported that the recession is deterring heads from retiring but, whether or not that's the case, we're delighted that we've been able to appoint or cover all current vacancies for September - in fact this applies to all 37 primary headships advertised this year. So far, so good, but we know there could be difficult times ahead and we need heads and governors to support us in identifying and training our future school leaders. The leadership newsletter is one way to keep in touch. We hope you enjoy it.



**My Leadership Journey ...
to headship of a 'challenging school'
by Katie Barry.
Head of St George's Church of England
Primary School, Gainsborough.**

Whilst I had enjoyed all of these challenges, it had never occurred to me that any of this was good professional development - I just said "Yes" when asked to do anything. So... I said "Yes" to applying for the NPQH (although I may have thought twice if I'd known about the role play!)

Sitting there in the National College a few weeks later, I was already having regrets. In the typical, toe-curlingly awkward ice breaking session we had to give a brief resume of our career and share what pursuits we filled our spare time with. I found

myself sharing a room with twelve mature deputy/acting heads that enjoyed paragliding, wind-surfing, charity work and amateur operatics. They smiled encouragingly when I said, "Hi, I'm Katie, I'm 27, I'm a class teacher, I have two young children who never sleep".

We were given the task of setting out the management structure of a new school. The task itself felt, to me, like the side show. The main event was to see how we interacted with one another - who were the leaders? the followers? the non-committals? the bullies, even?

I felt out of my depth

(I often still do!).

But eventually, I found my voice. In a momentary lull in the heated arguments, I spoke up. I believed I'd had a valid point some hours earlier - but nobody had listened to me. I told them that they were not listening to one another, merely competing to be heard. In my opinion, that's what being a leader is. Listening to others, making informed decisions...and speaking up when necessary. I am my pupils' voice. They need me to speak out for them.

Role-play completed (yey!), I passed my NPQH. The same week as my final assessment I was interviewed for and offered a deputy head position.

(Continued on page 3)

Deputy headship ...essential for Headship?

NO says **Steven Horsley, Head of Welbourn Church of England Primary.**

My leadership experience was not through being a Deputy Headteacher. Instead I became an Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) and took on leadership

roles, in two different schools, that have been incredibly useful in my work as a headteacher.

My work as an AST was a real springboard to headship. I worked closely with more than a dozen headteachers and leadership teams to have an impact on school improvement. I also worked with the School Improvement Service on

projects, including course development, developing creative curriculum models and tutoring and mentoring in the Graduate Teacher Programme. AST work involved



**Steven Horsley,
Head of Welbourn**

developing a wide range of skills, all of which have been highly useful as a Headteacher. Perhaps most important was learning how to develop and move staff

forward through coaching and a certain amount of coaxing! I have used these skills in my own school and in others where I have worked, whether as support or in a substantive post.

For me there is huge reward in building and developing the skills of a team of people to deliver an exciting and

memorable experience for pupils, staff and parents alike.

It all sounds very easy? There were a few things that took a little learning.

Running a budget, leading Governors through change and altering the practice of those who don't want to change were my greatest challenge. How did my AST work support this? Networks and contacts! I know these are words you hear endlessly on the NPQH route - but having a whole host of people willingly at the end of the phone makes the difference between being able to sleep at night and worrying about the little things! Would I recommend following an alternative route to Headship. Yes. Unreservedly. Taking on responsibility and listening to the advice of those who are older and wiser (no offence, Sue and Trevor) no matter what your role, is the grounding for Headship and it doesn't have to be just through being a deputy.

Seek (opportunities) and ye shall find (fulfilment)!

Leadership Programmes

You will probably know of the NCSL's leadership programmes but we'd like to draw your attention to our own Lincolnshire programmes. It's very encouraging to know that we are able to run two new cohorts of Future Leaders, rather than the one planned - thank you for such a fantastic response. 'Heading for Headship' (H4H) our new programme for those with NPQH, is helping and supporting 20 NPQH 'graduates' to build their confidence and understanding in preparing for headship - in fact, 2 have already gained headships. We anticipate

running a second cohort during the next academic year, and would appreciate knowing about more potential participants.

For those senior leaders who don't yet feel ready for NPQH, we'd recommend 'Steps towards Leadership', the programme designed and run with Hay Group, which you'll find in the Course Booklet. We also have 100 places on our NCSL leadership day on October 9th, which promises to be a really good day for aspiring leaders at all levels.

See course booklet for details.

Study Groups

As a result of our leaders surveys we will be offering some informal study discussions from September on topical issues. These will include

- * **Building organisational trust**
- * **Characteristics of executive leadership**
- * **Moving from small school to larger school leadership**

For more details contact Sue Ashe

Being a new head. What support is out there?

Help and guidance for new and acting headteachers has been significantly increased over the past 12 months by the School Improvement Service to supplement the role of SIPs and provide that much-needed pastoral support for colleagues in the early stages of their headship career. Former Lincolnshire headteacher Alan Robertson is now contracted by CfBT to work with more than 30 heads across the county, providing help and guidance on a broad range of topics. Using a blend of mentoring and coaching techniques, Alan is able to respond to headteachers' individual needs through regular visits or e-mail/telephone support. This relatively new role builds on a well-established induction process and seeks to provide a more personal and responsive approach to headteacher development. This new provision also complements the important headteacher counselling role provided by Margaret Harding as well as supporting the new NCSL/NAHT "Professional Partner" scheme, currently being piloted by Lincolnshire. Plans for the near future include: a residential conference, twilight workshops, a new website, a memory stick of important management files and an induction booklet-all with the new headteacher in mind.



**Alan Robertson
Consultant for newly appointed
Headteachers.**

It was here that I made the transition from classroom practitioner to school leader by being given an all-access pass into every area of school management. I made loads of mistakes (I still do) and learned another key leadership skill - sometimes you just have to blag your way through and think on your feet!

Every deputy head faces one question at some point in their career - when will I know it is the right time to step into headship? For me, it came earlier than I had anticipated. I made that decision when I felt I would rather make my own decisions/mistakes than follow somebody else's. Not that I believed I would do things better - I would just do them differently. I applied for one headship and got it. There was no going back...I was a Head!

My Headship: "School in Crisis" then "Notice to Improve".

I soon realised that my school was a "School in Crisis" swiftly followed by it being given a "Notice to Improve" by Ofsted.

There have been times when my confidence has been rock bottom. How could I be strategic when I felt blessed getting to the end of the day without being bitten? How could I lead others when there were days I didn't want to step out of my office? HOW?

By accepting support when it was offered, by giving others the confidence that I was personally struggling to find, by having incredibly difficult conversations that would have been easier to avoid, and by having the commitment to set the bar as high as it needed to be. If something fell below that bar - I had to tackle it. WHY? Because there were 150 little people who needed me to do so.

It's now more than three years later and I'm still here; still making 101 random decisions a day; still blagging it at times; still putting on my lippy and smiling even if I don't really know what I'm doing... But now it is easier. The butterflies in my stomach have just about flown away. I have a staff that I would go to the ends of the earth for. Their commitment to improving the life chances of our children is admirable. The impact of our efforts is now tangible and the school and all those connected with it are thriving. I am immensely proud of what has been achieved and we are now deemed a good school by Ofsted.

So where will my journey take me next? Who knows? I have never had a career path mapped out and have been fortunate, therefore, in the direction it has gone. But what if my first boss had not put that NPQH flyer in my pigeon hole, if I had been made to teach the same year group year after year, and no-one had taken the risk of giving an inexperienced teacher some whole school responsibility, and a senior adviser had not told me I had skills to offer as a SIP? Should we always wait for somebody else to be the trigger to move us onto the next platform? I think not.

As a headteacher, I make every effort to offer my staff high quality professional development opportunities - as they were offered to me. But we are busy people, juggling many, many balls and we may be guilty of not seizing every possible occasion to develop each member of our team. If you see potential in yourself, do not waste it. Our profession needs self-motivated, lifelong learners to lead our schools in the future. Yes, the accountability can be a heavy cloak to wear - but wear it with confidence. Being able to make a difference to so many people; the children, their families, your staff—it is a privilege.

And yes, it is possible to manage this and still be a parent, a partner, a daughter or son, a shopaholic who still goes to the pub every Wednesday evening!

Good luck with your own leadership journey. Katie.

NPQH has Changed

The National Professional Qualification for Headship changed from September 2008. In the former model only 40% of graduates transferred to headship, while the revised one expects all 'trainee headteachers' to be Heads within twelve months of beginning the programme. This has transformed the programme to one for senior leaders with aspirations for imminent headship rather than leaders who wanted a longer spell as deputy, assistant or senior teacher. Application is four times a year, the next one opening on 21st August 2009 for January 2010 start and completion by January of the following year. After acceptance, you can expect a two day assessment and development which further sieves those ready for the programme and, if successful, you will then be allocated a coach from whom you have an entitlement

of seven hours personal coaching during the programme. You will have an introductory day, two further face-to-face days and a placement in another school for a minimum of 5 days and up to 20. Lincolnshire has an increased number of schools registered for this opportunity.

We are keen to support candidates accepted for the programme as well as future applicants, so that we can help in arrangements, placements and 'filling gaps' identified at either initial application or assessment and development days.

And so has Leading from the Middle.

To apply for LftM, candidates now have to be middle managers in schools and be part

SATS HOWLERS

Q: What is the name of the force pushing down on the building blocks?

A: Well it's either friction or non-friction

Q: A 36 and 39 year old join the football club. Show this information on a chart.

A: If that means I have to say where I'd put them...in defence!!

of a collaborative group of 18-24. We know how difficult it is to group together and so Sue Ashe is acting as co-ordinator to group applicants. We have been inundated with interest and all places for the next cohort have been filled. Sue is compiling a reserve list to use for the following cohort application, which is in December.

If you want to discuss NCSL programmes for yourself or your staff, please contact Sue.

Taking the Lead

For further information:
Muriel George 07919167601

John Sandfield 07919168630

Sue Ashe 07500079350

We hope you have enjoyed this first newsletter. Look out for the next one in September.

Comments or items? Please send to SAsh@cfbt.com

Out of the mouths....

OFSTED Inspector talking to 'random' group of children.

'Can you tell me about pupil voice in this school? What about school council?'

Reception child: 'I know about school council...when it snowed, school councilled!'

Dates for your Diaries.

9th July 4.30-6.30: NPQH taster at Holiday Inn, Lincoln

21st August: Application window for NPQH opens.

9th October: Leadership Day for deputies, assistant heads, middle leaders at NCSL

16th October: Course for future leaders interested in Church School leadership.

December: Application window opens for Pathways to Leadership and LftM

25th/26th February 2010: Headteacher Conference at Belton Woods. Places are limited so please book early.

See course booklet for details and application process for all of the above..

STOP PRESS: Post NPQH but not yet in headship? Register on 'Be A Head' (NCSL) for free support programme.

We'd like to offer support, guidance and help to any Lincolnshire current or future primary school leader. Please don't hesitate to contact any of us if we can help in your leadership journey.

Congratulations to newly appointed permanent Headteachers to Lincolnshire Primary Schools.

Jonathan Austin: Friskney Church of England Aided Primary School

Ann Cook: Ropsley Church of England Primary School

Claire Fisher: Heighington Millfield Primary School

James Greenwood: Lincoln Manor Leas Junior School

Hilary Hackney: Lincoln The Sir Francis Hill Community Primary School

Garth Hicks: Bardney Church of England and Methodist Primary School

Helen Hilton: Grantham Little Gonerby Church of England Infant School

David Hodgson: Leasingham St Andrews Church of England Primary School

Carl Jarvis: Lincoln Hartsholme Primary School

Julie Leach: Skellingthorpe The Holt Primary School

Lisa Meacher: Moulton Chapel Primary School

Vicky O'Brien: Spalding Monkshouse Primary School

Are you a New Head?

Apply for **Early Headship Provision** through NCSL by August 1st and be part of the New Vision development training programme as well as having £1300 funding for your development. Apply after this date and you will only get the funding.

See NCSL website for further information.

Jason O'Rourke: Washingborough Foundation Primary School

John Orrey: Coningsby St Michael's Church of England Primary School

Sonya Ripley: Tydd St Mary Church of England

Cathy Roberts: Branston Church of England Infant School

Richard Thomson: Rauceby Church of England Primary School

Rachael Shaw: Branston Junior School

Adrian Sanders: Saltfleetby Church of England/Theddlethorpe Federation of Primary Schools

Richard Stock: Marton Primary School

Tom Verity: Pinchbeck East Church of England Primary School

Senior leaders development group: Now called 'Step Up 4 Leadership' . District co-ordinators will be in touch shortly.