



# Taking the Lead, Issue 6

Issue 6. October 2010

Lincolnshire Primary Schools  
Leadership Letter.

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## Leadership Matters...

**Shared Leadership: A shared vision, realistic goals, mutual trust and respect...and a sense of humour!**

Keith Thrower and Amelia Haslehurst, Chapel St. Leonards Primary School

Our unique shared leadership is between an extremely experienced head, taking phased retirement and an aspirational deputy who has embraced this exciting opportunity to become acting head for 2 days per week under the watchful eye of the older head!

This partnership of 'experience and inexperience' has brought huge learning opportunities for both parties which has enormously benefited us professionally, and in terms of whole school development. Our shared leadership is greatly underpinned by our personalities and ability to make the situation work successfully, ensuring flexibility, and tailoring arrangements to suit our own, and the schools' individual needs.

We have worked hard to build an effective professional relationship where identifying and utilising one another's strengths has ensured progress across all areas of school life. Lines of effective communication have been strengthened in response to the challenges that we have faced. We are both up to speed with important information, and the most effective ways to ensure that this information is disseminated to staff, children and parents. This has been essential in ensuring we present a 'united front' at all times to stakeholders, rooted in a strong philosophy and vision, so that everyone knows that they will get the same message from both of us at any given time.

**Consistency is the key!** Having two different personalities as 'senior leaders'

means staff characteristics and levels of experience can be identified, nurtured and accounted for more effectively. There are improved opportunities to secure a strong and increasingly confident staff team with a shared understanding of the direction in which the school is heading.



A shared vision and philosophy ensures that we have confidence in one another's abilities to make the right decision at the right time. Honesty and mutual support enable us to work together to find solutions to problems and to deal with issues effectively and with consistency. On a professional level, each of us is able to challenge the thinking and ideas of the other, which is constructive in ensuring that we are both reflective in our decision making and actions within school.

Both of us feel strongly that we have developed considerably as a result of sharing leadership in our school: learning from one another in a practical way that has enriched our professional lives. We have realised that our philosophy and vision are very much in line, even if our actions aren't always the same!

**Quite simply....'Two heads are better than one!!!!'**

## Considering different Models and Partnerships: How School Business Managers can contribute to School Improvement and the sustainability of rural schools

A cluster of 8 small rural primary schools in the Wolds of Lincolnshire have collaborated to appoint a School Business Manager (SBM) to support the non teaching elements of school management across the schools in the project.

The rationale behind the demonstration project, one in a series run by the National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services, is to consider different models and partnerships, and the role a School Business Manager can play in the sustainability of small rural primary schools. Research shows that although ambition among teachers in rural schools is higher than the national average, country schools still have more difficulty recruiting a head. With the school at the hub of these rural communities, the sustainability of the community itself is at risk if these schools are not maintained, as they may become a less attractive prospect to families with children.

The schools involved each have less than 100 pupils on roll, with approximately 450 pupils in total, with some Head Teachers leading more than one school and the majority having a part time teaching commitment.



Regardless of the size of the school, several statutory tasks need to be carried out such as Health and Safety self assessments, contract negotiation, workforce census and budget returns, which are no less onerous relative to the size or context of the school. This is where the School Business Manager can play a pivotal role in supporting the "Business" element of a school. This is particularly significant in

small schools where many Head Teachers also have a teaching commitment, with all the additional associated workload, in addition to their leadership role. Research has shown that a SBM can save up to a third of Head Teacher time and identify efficiencies of up to 5% of the school's budget share, which can be reinvested.

A School Business Manager is a skilled professional who, as a member of a school's Leadership Team, can make a positive contribution to school improvement, allowing Head Teachers to focus their energies on leading learning and raising standards of achievement.

Recent research has shown that whilst 90% of Secondary Schools have a SBM, only about a third of Primary Schools have access to a SBM's expertise.

For schools wishing to find out more about different models of school organisation and partnerships, the National College is holding a **free training session at its Learning and Conference Centre in Nottingham on Friday 22 October.**

To register go to: [www.nationalcollege.org.uk/modelsandpartnerships](http://www.nationalcollege.org.uk/modelsandpartnerships) and follow the link to training events

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**Comment:**

"This exciting project will take the role of the SBM to a further dimension and I feel it will undoubtedly enhance best value for the 8 sites concerned."

Claire Colebrook, SBM Caistor CE and Methodist Primary School

## Leadership Up-dates from the National College and Lincolnshire

### **Middle leaders: New Leading from the Middle:**

In this programme schools are encouraged to work in clusters (minimum 3 schools, 1 of which must be good or outstanding) and the National College will train facilitators for each cluster to deliver middle leadership support to middle leaders and aspiring middle leaders working in the cluster of schools. The intention is provide high quality training for as many middle leaders as possible and to establish and provide on-going support for 2 trained facilitators in each cluster of schools. The programme is not a one off event but it is intended to be on-going and sustainable. See the National College website for details.

<https://www.nationalcollege.org.uk>

### **Pre NPQH:NPQH Taster:**

18<sup>th</sup> October at Kenwick Park Louth at 4.15-6-15. Please apply through [SAshe@cfbt.com](mailto:SAshe@cfbt.com)

### **Post and Pre NPQH :**

Post NPQH support through National College website leadership library which includes modules on leading schools in different contexts such as leading a small rural Primary, church school leadership, inner city school.

<https://www.nationalcollege.org.uk>

### **Taster for faith school leadership:**

8<sup>th</sup> December at Bishop Grosseteste 6pm to 9pm. Apply to [anne.lumb@southwell.anglican.org](mailto:anne.lumb@southwell.anglican.org)

### **Headteachers:**

**Planning for Reduction of Resources workshop** at Branston Community College on 9<sup>th</sup> November 9.30 to 12.30. These workshops are aimed at supporting Heads in managing shrinking budgets. Apply through the National College. Places are limited but another workshop is planned for November 24<sup>th</sup> in Nottingham.



### **Lincolnshire Up-dates:**

**Step Up For Leadership** has been replaced by Leadership cluster groups. These will meet more locally and offer the same support to middle and senior leaders but in a local school which should be more accessible for all. These will be after school and take place during the week beginning 8th November 2010.

**Stepping into Leadership cohort 2** is now full but please continue making applications through CPD support as we are hoping to offer cohort 3 in the Spring 2011.



### ***Did you know that...?***

*We gain more heads from outside Lincolnshire than we lose.*

*Less Lincolnshire headteachers are now applying for posts outside the county than in the past.*

*Last year 12 of our new headteachers had taken part in one of our leadership programmes.*



### **School Business Managers:**

The National College is offering grants of up to £20,000 for Primary school clusters to work in partnership work with a School Business Manager.

<https://www.nationalcollege.org.uk>

Type 'School Business Management partnership grant 2010112' in the search engine bar.

These are available until March 2011

## Co-Headship—Are two heads better than one?

In co-headship two headteachers share the role of headteacher in a school. There are a number of different models of co-headship in the country. These work across all phases. We have one co-headship already in Lincolnshire—see page 1.

There are currently two more co-headships being set up in Lincolnshire.

**The model...** Hugglescote Community Primary School, in Leicestershire, wished to retain an experienced head for longer, allowing phased retirement and to coach the deputy ready for headship. Colin (who was the headteacher) worked Monday to Wednesday and Julie (who was previously the deputy) worked Wednesday pm to Friday. They retained some flexibility over the days. They talk to each other all the time but also communicate via diary and email.



They retain the responsibilities they had as head and deputy but Julie has taken on some of Colin's responsibilities. They share key areas such as strategic and development planning, SEF, SIP visits, chairing meetings. It has enabled Julie to develop her knowledge and skills. One partner takes ownership and sees the job through to completion.

They build on the strengths of each other to achieve the best for the school. Staff are also very positive: "It is working well, good balance of skills, seem to be communicating well...", "It has been beneficial to the school, particularly the way it has been organised...", "It's been brilliant, we are lucky to have two very talented people to do the job..."

In another school the post was originally advertised as a 1 year secondment as the head was intending to retire at the end of the year.

It worked so well that the head and governors decided to continue for a further year. The co-head had been seconded from her school and her governors could not extend the secondment so the post was advertised again.

The second co-head had recently had a baby and did not wish to be a full time headteacher. She had previously been a deputy head and was considering returning part time. She would not have considered full time headship. She saw this as a wonderful opportunity, resigned her post as deputy and accepted the temporary co-headship.

The 2 co-heads are currently working very well together to successfully drive standards.

Initially, co-headship was a response to a decline in suitable candidates to put themselves forward for headship at the same time as an increased number of headteachers retiring. Many of these were retiring four or five years before reaching full retirement age.

However, it proved much more powerful and has become a first choice for many schools. It is now a key strategy for leadership succession. It allows the to retention of experienced headteachers for a few years longer and also ensures that aspiring headteachers learn from experience which may otherwise have disappeared.

It is seen as an ideal opportunity for would-be headteachers to be sure that headship is the right move for them and to feel confident when they take up a full time headship. It has ensured suitable candidates move into headship and still retain a reasonable work life balance.

Some co-heads have chosen to clearly split their responsibilities, others choose to share areas of responsibility and value the input of the other.

A Good Practice Guide has been put together specifically for Lincolnshire schools. HR have been involved with this and it is recommended that this is read before governors consider using co-headship as a model for their succession planning.

For further information, or for a copy of the good practice guide, please contact Karen Foster.

[kfoster@cfbt.com](mailto:kfoster@cfbt.com)

## Taking the Lead

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Ken Round recently met with the new and acting heads group to share with them ideas for Outdoor Education and Learning Outside the Classroom. He is keen to support schools with Group Leader courses, school based training, staff meetings or telephone advice.

[Ken.round@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:Ken.round@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

### Dates for your Diary.

**Step Up 4 Leadership:** The week beginning 8th November, across Lincolnshire.

**Breakfast Briefings for headteachers:** 08.30–11.30 3rd November, Boston West Golf Club, 4th November, The Petwood Hotel, Woodhall Spa, 11th November The Olde Barn, Marston, 12th November, Bentley Hotel, Lincoln

**New and Acting Heads:** 19th and 20th January 2011 at The Petwood Hotel, Woodhall Spa

**Headteacher Conference:** February 10th and 11th at Belton Woods Hotel, Grantham - Now featuring Tim Brighouse

Do you have any themes to suggest for future newsletters? Do you have any comments you wish to make on previous newsletters?

The theme for our next newsletter is work/life balance. Do you have any simple, handy tips to pass on?

Please email Karen Foster on [kfoster@cfbt.com](mailto:kfoster@cfbt.com)

Welcome to recently appointed headteachers and acting headteachers:

Paul Bargh, Frithville / New York

Hayley Adams, Eagle Primary School

Ian Randall, Bucknall Primary School

Jo Noble, Gainsborough Nursery School

Susan Rayner, Old Leake

Craig Elliot, Navenby C.E. Primary School

Simon Chandler, Linchfield Primary School

Book Recommendation:

**Re-thinking Educational Leadership: From Improvement to Transformation** by John West-Burnham, Continuum International Publishing Group

John West-Burnham writes in his usual readable style. It is a good book to open debate with school leadership teams as the book opens with:

'This book is derived from two deep personal prejudices. First, just as germs eventually evolve to counteract even the most powerful antibiotic, so education systems are becoming immune to school improvement...The second prejudice is that perhaps we have been improving the wrong thing.'

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