

Leading and managing the future school - developing organisational and management structure in secondary schools

by Ken Walsh

This study is based upon findings from interviews on visits to four UK schools

Introduction

"Schools are being transformed on a scale that was unimagined a decade or so ago. Success in further transformation is assured if the scale of the transformation is understood, if strategies for success are shared, if there is a blueprint to guide the effort in different settings, and if the knowledge and skill to perform the task are acquired." (Caldwell 2002)

A rigid hierarchical management structure, reflecting in part the national pay and conditions of the teaching profession, is not the best way to free up creativity in a learning organisation. Schools that are engaged with changing the ways in which students learn have found that the old management models just don't fit. Teachers are part of learning teams and the leadership of those teams sometimes comes from the newest members; sometimes it comes from team members who are not teachers.

Head teachers of schools coming to grips with the needs of the knowledge society are questioning every aspect of their own leadership styles: the ways in which they use ICT; the ways in which they network with like-minded colleagues in the UK and globally; and the ways in which they remain professionally creative as leaders.

This study looks at schools in quite different circumstances where leaders have been involved in radical re-structuring of the organisation to reflect the needs of students as learners. The study examines the ways, in which teams work and are led, and how the schools meet the ongoing need of teachers and support staff for professional development.

The following questions underpin the study:

- How are school leaders coping with risk management?
- How have leaders adapted their staffing and management structures to accommodate changes in teaching and learning?
- How have head teachers tackled training and development issues?
- How do heads communicate the future vision for their school?

- How have heads empowered their staff to design a future school?
- What are the skills needed by school leaders and how are they to be acquired?

What is the future school?

"The most reliable way to anticipate what the future will be like is to observe the trend lines in the present." (Beare, 2001)

In his book, "Creating the Future School", Beare points out that we are already experiencing radical, deep and pervasive changes to schooling because of "new ways of viewing knowledge, new ways of conceiving of planetary systems, new patterns of interaction across the world, new meanings and definitions for the world of work, new approaches to birth control, child bearing and child rearing, and powerful new information technology".

Brian Caldwell (in Davies and Ellison, 1997) refers to Naisbit's concept (1982) of megatrends, "major societal change which is constant in direction, international in scope and enduring in effect". Ten years ago Caldwell (Caldwell and Spinks 1992) proposed that such trends included:

- Increased centralised control of the curriculum and accountability accompanied by greater autonomy in managing schools
- An unparalleled concern for the provision of a quality education for the individual in a system that is responsive to national needs within a global economy
- A dispersion of the educative function with the fast development of information technology
- An emphasis on the new basics of problem solving, creativity and the capacity for lifelong learning
- A high level of connectedness in the curriculum
- The parent and community role in education would be reclaimed

Up until the last ten years the structure of secondary schools in this country and across the developed world had not changed very much since the beginning of the twentieth century. Schools had been characterised as hierarchical, standardised, information sparse, based on knowledge transmission and centralised control. They were also vertically integrated (divided into subject departments) and custodial in nature. This was in contrast with the wider environment which has become increasingly complex, unpredictable, network based, horizontally integrated and increasingly information rich. Tom Bentley (DEMOS, 2000) contrasts the 20th century function of schools, to teach knowledge, with the 21st century need, to teach students how to learn, and pointed out that schools are among the last set of institutions which have managed to resist fundamental organisational change. He pointed out the critical need for a deeper level of response from schools and an acknowledgement of the age in which we live where learning is embedded in all organisations and not just schools.

In order to make the paradigm shift required it is imperative that educational leaders engage in "Futures Thinking" (Davies and Ellison, 1997). Vision 2020 is a network of practising headteachers affiliated to the Technology Colleges Trust, who have been engaged in futures thinking over the past few years and who have been inspired by the work of Brian Caldwell. They have published papers, including "One World, One School" (2000) which set out a vision for future schools which include the following characteristics:

- Schools will be Learning Centres and part of learning networks or communities of between 5 and 20 schools
- The best networks will be part of a global group of world class schools
- The home will be an extension of the learning network and families will choose to belong to several public and private learning networks online
- All students will have individual education plans and, from the age of 14, considerable control of their own learning
- The current structures of the school day and school terms will disappear
- The uses of ICT as both a management tool for the teacher and an essential way in which students learn will be ubiquitous and allow learning to take place anytime, anywhere.
- Universities will remain core institutions in the development of knowledge and all learning communities will be linked directly to at least one
- The local Learning Centre will be a main provider of training to the business community and will actively promote services to local, national and international communities
- The boundaries between types and age ranges of schools will not exist
- Schools will be part private - part state funded
- The adults who work in the Learning Centre will be teachers, para-professionals, business people working part-time and other volunteer adults
- Teachers' professional training will involve the study of neuro-science, cognitive psychology, emotional intelligence and creativity as well as detailed study of teaching and learning styles and thinking skills.

This is a bold picture painted by current practitioners but it has coherence and is based upon an understanding of megatrends and the social and personal needs and learning development needs of young people.

There is an emerging global consensus on society's expectations for schools, which is summed up by Caldwell (2002) as follows:

"All students in every setting should be literate and numerate and should acquire a capacity for lifelong learning, leading to success and satisfaction as good citizens and productive workers in a knowledge society."

Caldwell points to three directions or tracks for change:

- The building of systems of self-managing schools
- An unrelenting focus on learning outcomes for students
- The creation of schools for the knowledge society with ICT as a powerful force for change.

Professor David Hopkins (May 2002) and professor David Hargreaves (June 2002) both believe that deep pedagogical changes will not be driven from the centre. The Innovation Unit, set up by the present Government in summer 2002, will be a catalyst for local, school-based change to be celebrated and disseminated. Hargreaves believes that incremental change is not appropriate to the world in which we live. Deep change relies upon a major shift from existing practices. What we need to do is to enable institutions to build the capacity to make the paradigm shifts that are necessary.

Some schools are already moving fast towards this vision of the future while others are in the early stages. This study looks at four schools, each of which has made considerable strides along the continuum. It looks at why changes have taken place and how leaders have developed their vision and enabled their staff to contribute significantly to making change happen.

The schools

Chafford Hundred Campus, Thurrock, Essex

The Chafford Hundred Campus opened as a brand new Lifelong Learning Centre for the 21st Century in September 2001. It opened with a complete age range primary school pupil and the first year (Year 7) of a secondary school. It had two headteachers, of the primary and secondary schools, and both of them acted as the deputy to the other. A year on and this model is already being changed due to changing personnel. This study, however, refers chiefly to the secondary school as part of the whole learning organisation.

As a newly conceived learning centre Chafford Hundred has the opportunity to make the paradigm shift from the past and move headlong into the future. Many of the requirements to enable this were present: a new completely new housing development: there were no school history or traditions; there is a new leadership team and new staff. There is a new building designed for the learning needs of the 21st Century. The secondary education plans echo many of the criteria for future schools referenced above. Already in the first year of operation the school has started to develop individual learning plans for all students and one to one weekly reviews. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning allowing some to fasttrack. There is an aim to complete Key Stage 3 for many students by the end of Year 8. There is an increased ratio of teaching assistants to teachers. The teachers are encouraged to vary their learning styles and in the second year of operation Year 7 students will have just one main teacher for the majority of the curriculum in their first year of secondary education. Homework and study projects are integrated into the curriculum and there is one-to-one access to laptop computers on a wireless network.

Kings College, Guildford, Surrey

Kings College opened as an 11-18 school in September 2000 in the buildings of a failing school on the edge of a council estate in Guildford. It was the first

privately managed state secondary school in the UK and is managed by 3Es Enterprises Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of Kingshurst City Technology College, Birmingham. 3Es and David Crossley, the new headteacher, have had the opportunity to redesign the school in every way, appoint new staff and transform it into a school of the future. Two years on, David, his staff and students reflect upon the success of the school that is now well regarded by the local community. The school buildings have been effectively re-designed internally to allow for a curriculum delivery that has integrated ICT, and a new Arts Centre is almost ready. The school has recently been granted specialist school status by the DfES.

The teaching day at Kings college begins at 8.30 a.m. and ends at 3pm and lessons are either 100 or 50 minutes in length. There is a continuous school day, with two breaks, one for brunch and one for lunch. The two breaks of 20 minutes and 30 minutes respectively are organised by class, with no more than 180 students taking a break at any one time After 3pm the Learning Centre is open until 6p.m. and many students use this to do their homework. After 3p.m. there are also 40 enrichment activities for students to join. The curriculum delivery is modular with assessment and reporting built in every six weeks. Students learn a lot about self-evaluation and "Curriculum Plus" is when students have independent study time in the Learning Centre. The emerging sixth form curriculum at Kings is based entirely upon the International Baccalaureate and GNVQs.

Kingshurst City Technology College

Kingshurst was the first CTC and opened in 1988 in buildings of a school that was about to close. The aim, by the Conservative Government, was to create more choice and broaden the range of educational opportunities in urban areas. Kingshurst is a tried and tested model of school self-governance as well as public-private sector co-operation. From the start the aim was to be at the forefront of innovation. Another aim was to abolish subject compartmentalisation and develop independent learning skills. These early aims have been enhanced by the development of ICT over the past 14 years. The curriculum, that is still developing and changing, engages students in a wide range of choices, emphasises the importance of the vocational through GNVQs and post-16 education is entirely based upon the International Baccalaureate and GNVQs. The most recent development in Key Stage 3 over the past two years has been the adoption of a personal capabilities curriculum across Design Technology, Science and Maths.

The curriculum delivery across the college is modular, with an extended working day for students and staff which includes a wide range of enrichment opportunities.

The Kingshurst based 3Es Federation is now actively involved in supporting the regeneration of schools based on the Kingshurst approach.

Leigh City Technology College, Dartford, Kent

Leigh CTC opened in 1990 on a split site in the buildings of two former single-sex secondary modern schools. Kent still has the eleven plus and most of the students who attend Leigh have failed to pass this exam. Nevertheless the college has attained a GCSE A*-C pass rate exceeding 70%. The current number of students on roll is 1330 with an expanding number staying on post-16, where over 50% of students follow GNVQ based courses. Since the current Headteacher, Frank Green took over two years ago the college has adopted a modular curriculum delivery model and a six-term year. The school prides itself on preparing students to take part in a modern technological society. The philosophy of the college is one of encouraging independent learning and problem solving working in teams. ICT is embedded in the learning of all students and the college is a base for training students and adults in network engineering and is a Cisco Academy, a Microsoft AATP training centre and an Oracle Academy. The school day is based on four 85-minute lessons and Key Stage 4 students all take a vocational course as entitlement.

Characteristics of leadership for future schools

"The more complex society gets, the more sophisticated leadership must become. Complexity means change, but specifically it means rapidly occurring, unpredictable, non-linear change." (Fullan, 2001)

Fullan proposes that leaders need not only to understand change but they need to have a moral purpose. They must have skills in coherence building and relationship building, in knowledge creation and sharing. Personally they need to have enthusiasm, energy and optimism.

Similarly, Hopkins (May 2002) describes a scenario where we have moved from the 1990s model of change based upon "informed prescription" from the centre to a an emerging period of "informed professionalism". This requires leaders who have the capacity for informed professional judgement. This capacity involves school leaders in:

- possessing a clear moral purpose,
- an understanding of models of learning and the tools for teaching
- the creation and transfer of professional knowledge,
- establishing professional learning communities
- networking

David Hargreaves (June 2002) proposes two possible models for successful leaders of future schools. In the first model the "good" leader has a clear vision of what needs to be done and has the capacity to create a team to deliver the vision while the "great" leader has the capacity to choose the right people to take the school to the leading edge and after finding the right people then deciding exactly what is to be done. The second model is high in both intellectual and social capital, where the leader creates high social capital

through trust and networking inside and outside the school. Both models place student learning at the centre.

Brian Caldwell (1992) proposed four dimensions of leadership for sustainable improvement in schools:

- Strategic Leadership, that involves discerning megatrends, anticipating their impact on education and interpreting them for schools, staff and students by establishing structures and processes to bring the vision to realisation
- Educational Leadership, that refers to a capacity to nurture a learning community and to develop knowledge management amongst the entire staff" (Caldwell 2002)
- Responsive Leadership, that involves leaders responding to the expectations of stakeholders and analysing and acting upon these
- Cultural Leadership, that involves a confidence and a capacity to change the culture of the school as an organisation as part of a wider community

The four headteachers of the schools in this study all possess these characteristics. Two of them are in their third, one in his second and one in her first headship after a long apprenticeships as Assistant Principal in the same school. There is no doubt that their considerable experience has enabled them to develop the skills necessary for their complex jobs. They have a great deal to pass on to other headteachers.

Strategic leadership and futures vision in establishing a new school

Both Chafford Hundred and Kings College are new schools, opening their doors in the twenty-first century. Both have headteachers strong in vision and experienced in creating the necessary structures to realise the vision.

The vision

Alison Banks sees Chafford Hundred as a focused learning centre for the future community of Chafford Hundred. The school is the focus for the identity of that commuter village of young families setting up homes in an area without traditions. Alison's vision is very much about treating children as individuals and of moving away from the content-based to the learning-to-learn based curriculum. Although she feels that it is not possible to plan for more than five years ahead, she has been engaged in futures thinking about what schools will look like in twenty years' time. Before applying for the headship of Chafford Hundred she had a term away from her previous headship to visit schools and to come to her own vision of the future school. She found strong agreement with the project team of the RSA Project "re-defining the Curriculum". This project looked at the central role of the curriculum as an expression of what society thinks education is for and as a driving force for the school. The project concluded that the current curriculum philosophy for the UK will be incapable of meeting the demands of the future, and that it should be replaced by a new competence-led curriculum that would change the ways in which students learn. The Key Stage 3 curriculum at Chafford

Hundred is based upon these findings and Alison's task is to implement the vision with new buildings, new staff, and "new" families.

Alison created a curriculum for Year 7 based upon the ten competencies enshrined in the RSA 21st Century Curriculum (1999). Alison had the experience and confidence to question all aspects of the Key Stage 3 curriculum and its delivery in advance of recent Government statements on the new Key Stage 3 strategy. The RSA model is not subject centred; it is student learning centred. Content is seen primarily as the medium through which students develop competencies. "The framework sets out explicitly what students should be able to do, and understand, when they have worked through it, in terms of the competencies they will need to survive and succeed not in the world of today's adults but in their own future world, which is going to be very different "(RSA 2002). Alison took the Key Stage 3 curriculum and looked for real relationships between the subjects irrespective of where they appeared in the QCA documents. Where she found connections between Year 9 content and that prescribed for Year 7 she had no qualms about moving it "to make sense". She recognises that the requirements of the national Curriculum must be met, but this has not stopped her and her staff from re-designing learning in a way which they are convinced benefits the students at all ability levels.

David Crossley, at Kings College, has a vision of the future school as a learning organisation which will meet the needs of the fast-changing technological age ahead. He is developing a school that caters for the individual in that it will teach flexibility and adaptability and a high level of personal and inter-personal skills. He believes that most school have been designed for a previous age and resemble a factory model delivering a conveyor belt curriculum, moving students at a set pace from one stage to the next. Technology has the power to liberate schools from this model and enable pedagogy to move away from the "teacher as guru" to the teacher as expert and planner of student learning. He is keen to create a virtual school alongside the physical school so that students can learn at a pace suitable to the individual, anytime, anywhere. The modular curriculum being designed at Kings breaks the year-by-year barriers and encourages the development of lifelong learning skills.

Implementing the vision in a new school: structures and processes

Chafford Hundred Campus started out with a unique leadership team of five women: two headteachers, two assistant headteachers and a business manager. Of the five only one, Alison Banks, the head of the secondary school, had had significant leadership experience. Alison has the dominant vision of an experienced and successful headteacher of two award-winning secondary schools, a view that is shared by all those interviewed for this study. This is not to denigrate the considerable achievement of Catherine Finn in setting up an all-age primary school right from day one of their first year. Catherine has decided to leave Chafford Hundred at the end of Year One and

a consultation has begun to use the new regulations which come in force in 2003 to unite the two schools under one federated governing body.

To achieve her vision Alison created:

- a flat staffing structure, with no separation of pastoral and academic, no house, year or departmental structure, maximising preparation time for individual teachers
- 1:1 personal tutoring, from 8.30 until 9 a.m. before lessons, providing each student with a weekly review. This is carried out by the teacher-tutor and the teaching assistant with groups of four students on each of four days of the week
- a high ratio of support staff and teaching assistants, afforded by the flatter management structure
- the principle of a learning plan for every student, recognising individual and additional needs
- flexible timetabling, with varied groupings and timings appropriate for different curriculum areas
- ICT independence, with all students having laptops on a wireless network

The next stage of the development when the students move up to Year 8 and a new cohort of Year 7 students start, will be the school's learning Intranet, with individual and differentiated pathways. This is a joint project with the private sector and one or two other interested schools. Besides providing a 24-hour access learning environment the new Intranet will provide a sound integrated platform for all aspects of school management and administration. The student's individual Learning Log will be stored every day and keyword searches will enable the student, the teacher and the parent to have a completely up-to-date analysis of individual student progress. Alison Banks comments:

"Cynics say that teachers are being made redundant by the technology. In fact, this technology enables teachers to plan for their pupils, but on an individual, rather than a whole class, basis. The Foresight 2000 Report talked about "Re-engineering the learning process to focus on individual learners needs and wants". Until now the sheer workload involved in that for the teacher has prevented it happening and while the notion of an individual learning plan for every child is laudable, it has seemed unachievable. The Chafford Hundred Campus Intranet will make it possible - and revolutionise the way pupils learn."

Like Alison, in his plans for leadership at Kings College, David Crossley designed a flat management structure, with no deputy and five "equal" assistant principals. All other responsibility posts are reviewed on an annual basis and re-invented as appropriate to the development needs of the college and in response to the talents of individuals. David sees one of his primary roles as a developer of the individual expertise of his staff. The communication of the vision and "living the ethos" in everything he and the leadership team do is a very definite and well thought out strategy. David inherited small year groups of students from the previous school who were

confused and disillusioned by its failure. It was important to involve them all in the changed ethos from the start.

To achieve his vision for the new school, David made some significant changes that he has since built upon:

- No hierarchies in management
- A continuous school day
- No bells and longer lessons
- Re-designed classrooms as flexible learning spaces
- A modular curriculum
- ICT integrated across the curriculum
- The creation of a learning intranet
- Introduction of the International Baccalaureate at post-16
- "Curriculum Plus" time for independent learning
- A buddy system where pairs of teachers support each other with discipline

Braith Harris, the Learning Centre Co-ordinator at Kings College, and is a very experienced teacher who was on the staff at the previous failing school, sums up the way David Crossley transformed Kings into a future school:

"The ethos of the College has addressed some very important issues about how to raise the aspirations of students by looking at the individual child and by giving that child a sense of what he or she can achieve. In fact, the ethos is to give the child a sense that he or she can achieve more than they might have thought, to open horizons to them, to equip them to work and have pleasurable leisure time in the changing world."

Strategic leadership and futures vision; structures for maintaining innovation in an established school

The vision

Frank Green has been Head of Leigh CTC for five years and Ann Jones is in her first year as Head of Kingshurst CTC. Both have the task of maintaining the impetus of change with established staffs. Both have clear visions of the Future School.

Frank Green sees technological change and the social changes associated with it as the two drivers for schools of the future. Technological change has historically been the main driver for educational change and this will drive further changes for the future. Economic forces across the globe have led to a perceived requirement to maximise access to education and to raise standards. **For Green the phrase "Future School" captures the vision that is created by the impact of technological change on our current system to what it is going to evolve into in the future.** The vision of the school of the future is constantly changing with the technology. As with Crossley, Green believes that the twentieth century school was based on the factory concept and has been outdated for some time already. His contention is that "the job of educators is to give students not just the knowledge they need to live as

adults but also the skills to manage themselves through life as independent learners".

Leigh CTC is a school where futures thinking is encouraged. The development plan has a ten years' visioning statement, a strategic intent for the next five years, and a detailed implementation plan for the next three.

Ann Jones was an Assistant Principal at Kingshurst, before becoming Principal early in 2002. For some time she has been used to "*living and breathing innovation*". She recognises a fear in Government that the central reforms of the past ten years have not really worked in terms of preparing young people for the future. Her vision of the future school is one where the students are taught how to use freedoms and to take responsibility to make informed choices about their individual futures, and where independent lifelong learning skills are central to the curriculum delivery. The development of personal capabilities is explicit, along the lines of the RSA 21st Century Curriculum. Breaking down subject barriers, the vocational curriculum and the International Baccalaureate all have been expressions of Kingshurst's futures thinking. Futures thinking, however, requires a constant reviewing of all practices. Ann knows that unless this happens Kingshurst will cease to be a leader and will suffer the fate of other schools, like Countesthorpe College, Leicestershire that in their own time were regarded as *avant garde*. The fate of such schools has been well documented; they were either too out of touch with the ongoing social trends and/or they were the victims of lack of support and **succession planning** that all the four headteachers see as crucial.

Structures to implement the vision

Frank Green took over a City Technology College quite a time after its first flush of success. He had already established a school of the future, a brand new Science and Technology School in Lincoln. He brought with him the confidence of success, but also the flexibility to work with an established staff. When he arrived there was thirst for change. His task was to communicate the vision and then to show how to get there. He had the advantage of having complete control of the budget and the support of governors to make change happen.

Although Leigh has a more conventional hierarchical management structure than the other three schools in the study leadership of change is encouraged throughout the College:

"There is an ethos of adventure; we are encouraged to try things. We have a number of young staff who drive things forward." (Pat de Winton, Head of English)

The big change that Green introduced in his first year as Principal was the modular curriculum and the six-term year, a process that he had refined in two previous schools. As with all the other heads in this study, Green insists demonstrates the clear learning gains for individual students in this kind of organisation. Students taking their assessment profiles round to staff to

discuss their next set of targets initiate the six weekly assessments. Annual reports have been scrapped and so have parents' evenings, that have been replaced by parent-teacher days when work is set and students and their parents come in to talk with the tutor after module one and with selected subject teachers after module three, at any time during the day up to 7p.m. There are no bells, even on a large split site; and there are four 85-minute lessons. Next year there will be a classroom technician for every two departments and a change to vertical "family" tutor groups to go along with the idea that students should be on individual education plans, not necessarily associated with year cohorts.

At Kingshurst the philosophy of designing an education for each individual is supported by a flat management structure of Principal and five assistant principals, where like Kings College, each AP is responsible for managing a year group. Tutors have a lot of responsibility and autonomy. There are no heads of department or faculty as these positions were viewed from the start as potential barriers to change. Each subject has co-ordinators for each year. Cross-college projects have co-ordinators for the length of the project. Teachers have cross-college responsibilities and "*have the space to think and breath*" (Ann Jones)

"The College staff have flexibility and willingness to change. The ethos permeates everything. The cross-curricular project leads the teachers and the students to come up with great ideas."(Jeannette Starkey, Maths teacher).

Another thing that Kings College and Kingshurst have in common is a lack of excessive paperwork. In both schools there are very clear school-wide plans, but at both there is less reliance on the need for departmental handbooks etc than in some schools. "*Here everything is verbal and there are not masses of paper.*" Jeannette Starkey).

As with the other schools there are longer lessons, no school bells and a modular curriculum.

Educational leadership: nurturing the learning community

"The RSA believes that real transformation can only be secured if we are clear what it is students need to learn." (RSA, 1999)

All four schools in this study have started to re-design the learning experiences of their students at all key stages based upon an understanding of multiple intelligences and how children learn. The ultimate goal of all the schools is for students to have individual education plans and learning pathways that are suitable for the achievement of their potential as lifelong learners. For this to happen the whole school has to see itself as a learning organisation where creative questioning of the status quo is the norm for both staff and students. The principals lead the way for all others in the school as lead learners.

David Crossley has established the excitement of a learning community at Kings College. The change of emphasis from teaching a subject curriculum to a learning centred college came overnight once the school was re-opened in September 2000:

*"In the past the students were a passive and uncommitted audience. Now if you say to a child, "You are able to achieve level 6, they are keen to know how to do it. **They have been turned on to learning.**" (Braith Harris)*

The learning ethos at Kings means that teachers are always encouraging students to raise their aspirations. All staff throughout the day reinforce the quiet, businesslike ethos. *"Teacher and student are on the same side."* (BH)

The opportunities for students to use computers skilfully every day to research and access information for all subjects and the teachers' skills in using their laptops and the electronic whiteboards etc all help to place learning at the core of the daily experience:

"Students are confident in the use of ICT across the curriculum. ICT tasks can be set for students by teachers in any subject and an excellent result expected. The teacher's role has changed to that of facilitator and preparer of learning. Students can e-mail questions to any teacher in and away from school. There is far more sharing than in a traditional school." (Katie Gould, Languages Co-ordinator)

The staff at Kings are working to develop an interactive Intranet for the entire curriculum. In this ongoing work they are using a format from Digital Brain which provides them with easy to use templates to put their lessons and homework online.

This initiative is paralleled at Chafford Hundred where all Year 7 students started their experience of secondary education with one-one access via wireless laptops.

At Chafford Hundred Alison Banks, like the other leaders in this study makes it a priority to communicate a passion for learning to her staff and students. They see a culture of enquiry as central to the school of the future with teachers as co-learners in what she calls "The Intelligent School". Essential to their success is the conscious celebration of achievement seen in displays around the school, in publications, in public relations, in meetings, in corridors, online and in the classroom.

The teachers in the learning community have every opportunity to be involved in **action research**; they feel that what they are doing is important and at the cutting-edge. At Kingshurst Jeannette Starkey (Maths) and Amanda Herds (Science) are two young teachers leading important learning developments. After taking significant roles in the work on developing cross curricular RSA personal capabilities project in Year 7, they were given the responsibility to work with Sheffield Hallam University and several local primary schools in expanding the project back into Key Stage 2.

Coaching staff in the belief that they can take risks requires confident leadership. Building time into the week for professional development for all

staff is key to the success of any innovation. At Chafford Hundred the money saved by not having Heads of Department allows there to be a Teaching Assistant working in every subject area and alongside tutors; and no teacher has more than a 0.8 teaching load. At both CTCs the staff have contracts until 5pm and training and meetings are written into their week. At Leigh there is a maximum of one cover lesson per month as classes of absent staff are supervised by a team of teacher assistants. In all these schools most training and staff development is delivered in house. One evening a week is set aside for training and development with a programme that includes aspects of futures thinking and learning development.

All the schools put great emphasis on inducting new staff into the schools ethos, and in the two established schools there is a separate conference for newly appointed staff before the start of the school year. The two or three day conferences for all staff, teaching and support staff from every aspect of the school's work, are of great importance at the beginning of the school year. The CTCs have the advantage of having ten training days per year written into contracts.

All staff of schools of the future need time for creative reflection and renewal.

Responsive leadership: creating and maintaining the culture

"The litmus test of leadership is whether it mobilises people's commitment to putting energy into actions designed to improve things" (Fullan, 2001)

It might be thought that Alison Banks and David Crossley had the ideal situation for designing a future school in that they were both opening new schools. Alison, in particular, had the advantage of new buildings in a new community. However, besides having virtually no planning time with her staff, apart from a term with the core team, the recruitment crisis in teaching led to a very low number of applicants for the first teaching posts.

Joan Godfrey was one of the first appointees, as Languages Teacher. Her view at the end of her first year's experience in being part of a school of the future was:

"We threw the baby and the bathwater out and now we are deciding what to put back".

Joan had had a number of years' experience in traditional schools. Working at Chafford Hundred came as an invigorating shock: "I felt like I had been pushed off the edge of a cliff and asked to fly".

She nevertheless enjoyed the experience of creativity working with Alison. She described her state before working at Chafford as being like an Egyptian mummy encased in Plaster of Paris by the accepted traditions and constraints that govern the ways that most teachers are expected to behave. When Alison encouraged her to question everything that schools do from having

bells to dividing the week into subject lessons, she felt that the Plaster of Paris was being chipped away and she was able to see beyond the usually accepted constraints.

The way that Chafford works is that the ethos is lived by all the actions of the staff in everything they do and say around the school. Great responsibility is placed on individuals:

"I have the opportunity to take risks and I am confident I won't let the children down."

It is this quality of constantly questioning, challenging and re-assuring staff that is essential for the leadership of the future school.

Graeme Hawkett, one of the Assistant Principals at Kings College, had come from a traditional, hierarchical school. His experience of working with David Crossley has been similar to that of Joan Godfrey with Alison Banks. The first thing that happened was to *"throw away the rule book"*.

Joan Godfrey was convinced of the importance of confident leadership and clear moral purpose:

"Good leaders have to have the ability to be able to watch somebody else and to understand what it's like to be them. The old Native American phrase is, **"To be able to walk in someone else's moccasins."**

Smita Bora, the Assistant Head of the secondary school at Chafford Hundred had experienced a steep learning curve since moving to be a member of the management team at Chafford from a large Inner London comprehensive. Like Catherine Finn, she also was moving on, after just one year, to take up an Inner London deputy headship. She recognised the need for leadership team members to be flexible but firm in living the vision:

"Staff still expect traditional structures; we have to be prepared to stand up for the vision and keep the new structures."

In establishing the school of the future there are many expectations nationally and locally to maintain an ethos suitable for the past:

"Parents as well as some teachers want to go back to a traditional model. It demands massively strong conviction from the leader".

Both Alison Banks and Smita Bora talked about sustainability and the need for succession planning:

"If Alison left tomorrow the traditional structure would be brought in."

Alison Banks spoke warmly about her previous school, where she had established a very large and very strong Community School. There, after seven years she was able to hand over to one of her deputies and the development continues.

Succession planning is not the strong point in the English system, but with the growth of leadership teams and team training, it could be the key to real continuity and established innovation. So much we have done in schools has relied upon short-termism and stop-start change, instead of accepting that change is a way of life and the management of change in institutions requires a consistent and consistently inventive approach. This means flatter, less hierarchical structures where leadership from across the experience range can be recognised and incorporated, and where there is a real policy for creativity and renewal.

All the headteachers in this study recognise the need to allow teachers to take risks. They are optimistic about the recent recognition in Government of the need for informed professionalism. They are looking forward to less central prescription, but they are concerned that in the past twenty years many teachers and headteachers have lost some of the ability to have confidence in their own thoughts and ideas. The too lengthy period of informed prescription has actually reduced the capabilities of the teaching profession to respond to change creatively. Teachers now expect change to be required of them, but change that is centrally prescribed, governed by the rule book and by constant assessment of content and a narrow range of skills:

"We need to put the dynamism back into teaching! Keeping the status quo is a higher risk strategy; if you're not changing you're fossilising." (Alison Banks)

Alison's conviction is based upon a strong vision of a learning community with the individual student at its centre and branching out into lifelong learning for the whole community outside the school.

There is a heavy burden upon all four study school leaders individually to make the school succeed. They have developed the skills to have the confidence to rely upon the courage of her convictions. Alison Bank's views on what school leaders need for taking their schools into the future are:

- Talent spotting
- Courage
- Enthusiasm
- Acceptance that there will be errors
- Encouraging ideas from others
- Being open to ideas from pupils and from young staff
- Trusting others to run with ideas

Sometimes leading change can be a lonely job. The headteachers here do not underestimate the importance of networking and learning from the experiences of others both inside and outside the world of education:

"There needs to be cross fertilisation between professions and opportunities to get outside schools. I think I earned more about leadership by being deputy leader of a Council than I ever learned from an educational management course. Thinking creatively and laterally is important" (AB)

All the heads have been involved in visits abroad to look at schools and talk with school leaders in across the world. Frank Green has inspected schools in the Far East and David Crossley was Head of a new school in Brunei. Having

a global perspective is another important attribute for leaders of future schools as it not only enables leaders to realise that educational decision-making has many parallels across the world but also that it is essential in our world - electronic communication and mobility for students to have a much clearer notion of world cultures and global citizenship.

Conclusion

The skills needed for leadership and management of a future school may be summed up as follows:

- A coaching style of leadership to develop the capacity and commitment of staff and students to solve problems
- Having the ability to communicate a clear vision authoritatively and the capability to lead staff in a democratic and affiliative style
- Having the courage to understand that change is a process and not an event and to understand that continuous professional development and training for all involved in that process are vital to embedding change
- Having the tenacity to stick with the overall vision but also the flexibility to be responsive to national and local expectations and criticism. Future schools all have some elements of the past. They may not have bells but they do have uniforms!
- Having the ability to change the culture. This is perhaps the most difficult skill, but a paradigm shift in the educational culture is essential if we are to prepare young people for the world in which they already inhabit. This takes time and it never ends. Changing the culture is about developing relationships inside and outside the school, with students, with parents and with the local and business communities. It is also about building knowledge and striving for coherence in the learning organisation of the school.
- Remembering that there is no checklist for the future school, but networking with other educational leaders will give teachers and headteachers the confidence to move their schools in the direction they know is right.

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