



Look Out 2011
Partnerships for
Learning

Outward Facing
Leadership

Maggie Farrar
June 20th

'If you want to build a ship – don't drum up the people to gather wood, divide the work and give orders. Instead, teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea.'

Antoine de Saint Exupery
The Wisdom of the Sands

England: Policy context

- Reform teacher training – to be more **school based**
- Develop a culture of **ongoing professional development**
- Move to a **streamlined, knowledge based curriculum**
- Development of independent state schools – **greater autonomy and flexibility**
- **Whole system improvement** led by outstanding schools and school leaders
- Fund **a pupil premium** for disadvantaged pupils, using money from reductions in non-education budgets

Every Child Matters / Community Cohesion – no longer Government Policy

Meaning

- more autonomy
- greater responsibility
- a climate of austerity and efficiency
- a more diverse landscape
- an ambitious workforce

Sector led improvement

A self sustaining school system

21st Century challenges

- Reducing variability
- Narrowing the gap
- Enhancing sustainability



A focus on greater improvement

' You can mandate to get the system from awful to adequate but not from adequate to great. To do that you have to unleash potential and creativity. This cannot be centrally mandated but has to be locally enabled.'

Sir Michael Barber
McKinsey International
London Challenge Think Tank

So let's explore

1. Rationale – why take notice ?
2. What's important – key elements of outward facing leadership
3. How should we lead – what makes the difference ?
4. So what – who is any better off and how do we know ?
5. The long game – sustainability

Rationale ; why did we invest and what have we learned National College

- **The improvement cannot be sustained indefinitely** and we are already aware of the plateau effect in Key Stage results
- Improved educational performance has done little to reduce **social and economic inequality**
- **Social factors** are disproportionately significant in their impact on children's achievement
- School improvement leads to **institutional bonding**. A further improvement in standards, achievement and satisfaction will come about through organisations bridging with one another and with other agencies and community groups
- **Community leadership** works to achieve better outcomes in three domains – social justice, well-being and standards
- The development of '**relational trust**' between the school, community and other agencies is a prerequisite of better partnerships leading to better outcomes and sustainable improvement
- Better partnerships and trust in communities are developed through the promotion and practice of **dialogue**
- **Sustainability** comes from an investment in tomorrow's leaders and a commitment to collaboration

Better Together seminar series 2007 - 2010

Rationale – leadership for public value

1. The job of the education organisation is made easier the more effectively it can mobilise resources from the community.
2. Communities have a direct bearing on how well schools can do their job and schools have a direct bearing on the strength of community well being (economic, social and cultural)

Leadership for Public Value
Denis Mongon and Charlie Leadbeater
National College for School Leadership 2009



Backed up by research

Strategies that promote children's health, safety and economic stability all help to provide the necessary conditions for effective and enjoyable learning and raise achievement. Together they give children a feeling of confidence, being valued and part of their school and community and improve their life chances.

Getting the first three right is crucial to ensuring the other outcomes

National Foundation for Education Research

But change is generational and takes time ...

Parents and families

In the primary age range the impact caused by different levels of parental involvement is much bigger than differences associated with variations in the quality of schools. The scale of the impact is evident across all social classes and all ethnic groups.

Desforges, Impact of parental engagement 2003, p4/5

Extended schools and study support : approx 40 hours

An average gain of three and a half grades on pupils' best five GCSE results

An average increase of one A* - C pass

An average improvement in English and mathematics GCSE results of half a grade each.

Better Together - Leadership

Outward facing & partnership focused

People centred – locality

Contextually literate – local solutions – asset based

Socially entrepreneurial : organisation **and** place

Outcome focused

An act as much as a role; from distributed to contributive

Diverse, modernised and extended workforces and changing communities

Social capital and trust



'Social capital appears to have a large impact on educational attainment. On the face of it, and from what we know, the impact of social capital dwarfs that of the factors the Governments and education professionals normally argue about such as financial resources, class sizes and teachers salaries'

Halpern : Social Capital (Cambridge Ed Press)

It's elusive but worth getting to grips with



“States that score high on the Social Capital Index are the same states where Children flourish – social capital, not poverty drives test scores.”

‘Social Capital is second only to poverty in the breath and depth of its effects on children’s lives.’

‘Even communities with many material and cultural advantages do a poor job of educating their kids if the adults in those communities don’t connect with one another’

Putnam, R (2000) Bowling Alone, Simon and Schuster

What does it look and feel like ?

Communities with high social capital have:

A focus on relationship building – people matter

Shared norms and values – this is what we believe and how we do things round here

High level of trust – because we want to continually improve

Interdependence and reciprocity – Ubuntu

Volunteering and community action – the locality is the work place

1. Where can you see these characteristics in your own communities ?
2. What can you help to foster and how ?
3. What does this mean for your leadership - what are you modelling ?

Leadership – The basis of social capital - Trust

Levels of trust are directly related to an organisations capacity to continue to improve

Participation – who gets involved and who doesn't

Giving and receiving of feedback as part of our everyday work

Mutual respect, honesty and humility – are we genuinely interested in others , how much time do we give to the ideas and work of others ?

Genuine questioning and dialogue

Bryk & Schneider – Trust in Schools

Leadership - Relationships, relationships, relationships....

Any educational reform strategy that improves relationships has a chance of succeeding – any that does not is doomed to failure. On the community building side, success is only possible if organisational members and community members develop trust and compassion for each other ie for others different than themselves.

For this agenda, we need to understand the deep meaning of working in and achieving diversity and community building. If we do this we will enable real change and avoid fatal mistakes

Michael Fullan

Leadership – uncompromising Breaking the cycle – poverty and achievement

Believe – expect the best – no excuses – visible personal commitment

Stick-ability & resilience

Focus attention on what matters

Ferocious use of data

Challenge stereotypes

Grow their own, & know their patch

Outward focused

**Socially attuned – families and communities as assets, not
problems to be solved – co created solutions**

White working class achievement project
National College 2009



Leadership – focused

Leadership for public value :

5 core tasks

Manage the core resources of the school to deliver effective teaching, Learning and standards of achievement. **Baseline and legitimacy**

Draw in more resources from the community to supplement and complement those offered by the school

Work directly with the community in community / home settings – with direct investment of resources on targeted areas of need – direct pay off

Schools invest some of its resource in the community - longer term and less direct pay off

The school makes its resources available to the community and vice versa – moving toward co-creation and sustainable solutions

Leadership – tough stuff

Learning to lead through wicked issues ...



Either novel or recalcitrant

Complex and cannot be solved in isolation

Sit outside single hierarchy and across systems – ‘solution’ creates another problem

They often have no stopping rule – thus no definition of success

Have no right or wrong solutions but better or worse developments

Securing the ‘right’ answer is not as important as securing collective consent.

Problems for leadership not management; - role is to ask the appropriate **question** & to engage others through collaboration

Keith Grint – Warwick University

Challenge workshops – one day; one community



What's our compelling issue - *name it*

Where are we and where do we want to be ? – *get real*

What do we know about why we are here and what will happen if we do nothing different ? – *confront the brutal facts*

Who knows the most about this issue: other localities (practice base) , thinkers (knowledge base), stakeholders (experience base) – witness sessions / community walks

What solutions can we create together

Plain language, involve everyone, use data, knowledge and experience

Commit to action

Leadership – the partnership ‘gene’ National College what can go wrong ?

Motive – power & control

Processes – complicated and designed for organisations not localities and

Issues

Competing priorities

Thinly veiled competition

Time – no focus given to building shared commitment and relationships

‘When the water hole shrinks the animals start to look at one another somewhat differently’.

Ben Levin

Leadership – the partnership ‘gene’ National College

Lessons from ‘Sure Start’

Establish an environment that **supports risk and avoids blame**

Establish shared expectation/vision; **a promise to children**

Remain focused on **what really matters**

Avoid a **dependency** culture – build confidence and capacity at all levels

Build real relationships

Speak what needs to be spoken – use **protocols** to give permission

Build on and share what you do **really well** and allow others to bring what they do really well

Find **collaborative advantage** – what’s better about doing this together?

Build in **shared development** – shadowing / mentoring / coaching / using case studies / action learning where real work can be shared and solutions found

Facilitated **‘meetings’ / ‘workshops’ / ‘leadership development seminars’**



Is anyone any better off ?

What are we doing – **number**

How well are we doing it – **satisfaction**

And is anyone any better off - **IMPACT**

What are you trying to achieve and why ?

What will success look like and for whom ?

What are you doing to achieve this ?

What's working and what isn't ?

What success have you had so far and how do you know ?



And

Seek hard messages – the more informed you are the more likely you are to achieve your goal

Do some 'deep dive' reviews – train students as priority reporting team

Welcome scrutiny

Balance short term 'wins' and long term sustainable change

Sustainability

Self improving systems

what are we learning from schools

- Harnessing the energy, the motivation and the moral purpose of the system to do it for itself
- Local solutions – cluster based – partnership oriented
- Characterised by ‘co construction’ – and the building of professional relationships within an between schools

The role of leaders in a self improving system – servant leadership

A value – a conviction that leaders should strive for the success of all organisations and young people they serve not just their own.

A disposition to action – a commitment to work with other organisations to Help them to be successful and to be open to learning from others

A frame of reference – to see one's role as a servant leader here to serve for the greater benefit of children and young people



1. Is this you ?
2. Is this us ?
3. What more needs to happen you to model a truly self sustaining system in your locality ?

What does it all boil down to ?

Influence – leadership is a social process and leaders are focused on influencing others to achieve better outcomes ; followership

Values, ethics and integrity – good leaders are informed by and communicate a strong set of personal and organisational values – moral purpose

Vision and focus , – good leaders have a clear vision for their organisation / team; they work to build shared meaning and common purpose

Engagement – no ‘table’ is big enough ; engagement of families, children and young people : improvement as a shared endeavour ; who is the workforce ?

Grow leaders – committed to distributing leadership and developing people

Deliver – clear on priorities, and decisive

Communicate – story telling and listening

Inordinately **high expectations, great optimism and belief in success**

... during the next two days

Listen out for what you don't agree with

What disturbs you?

See dissent and difference as a great opportunity

Pay attention to the questions you ask – how curious are you willing to be

How much time do you spend talking ... and listening

..... **And finally**

**It is not that I lack the desire to live beside rivers and among hills,
hearing the wind – watching the sun and the rain
But the thought of inequality in life's affairs
offends my sense of rhythm – and disposes me
to expend the passion that normally takes form in song or painting
on matters of public interest
And knowing that all things have their intrinsic nature
I imitate the whale
That perpetually desires to change the currents of the deep
And torn by contradictory thoughts – I drink deep**

Du Fu – Tang Dynasty