

# Learning networks: publications directory



**Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this publication: Kate Bond, David Hall, Kirsten Hill, Ann Kilcher and Gene Payne.

Edited by Melissa Murphy

# Contents

Welcome to *Learning networks: publications directory*. These resources were developed with practitioners during the four years of the National College for School Leadership's (NCSL) Networked Learning Communities programme, to support all forms of collaborative learning within and between schools.

The sections of the directory mirror the stages of network development. Within each section we have selected the best of our networked learning resources and provided think pieces, research reports, development tools and accounts of practice for you to choose from.

## How to order

An electronic version of *Learning networks: publications directory* is available at <http://networkedlearning.ncsl.org.uk>. This version allows you to download directly copies of all publications featured. Some publications are available in hard copy; details about how to order these are shown on the website.

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## Guide to symbols

Think piece



Account of practice



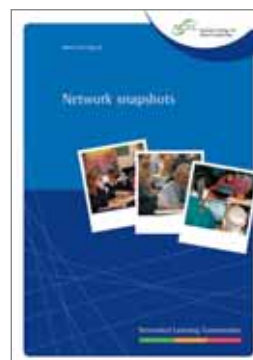
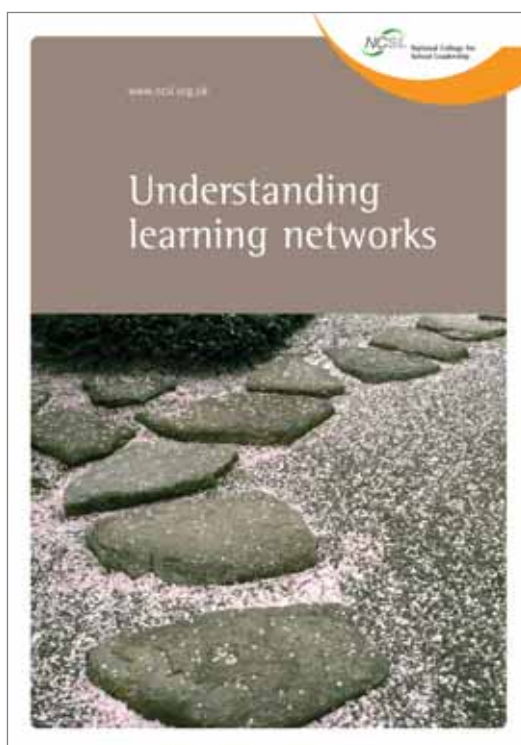
Research



Development tool



# Introduction to networked learning



## Networks



This think piece is a useful introduction to the benefits of networks as an alternative form of professional development and a catalyst for school improvement.

## Collaborative Leadership Learning Toolkit



This CD-Rom is a collection of development tools designed to help develop and evaluate learning networks. Useful to leaders at all stages of network development.

## Network snapshots DVD



This DVD contains 15 montages of network activity and is designed as an interactive learning resource. It is aimed at network leaders and facilitators, and local authority staff. Some of the themes covered include: Assessment for Learning; professional development; teacher enquiry; pupil learning; pupils as researchers; inter-school visitations; and leadership for learning.

## Understanding learning networks



This publication explores the grounding theoretical principles of NCSL's Networked Learning Communities programme. The paper also distils the programme's learning into 12 building blocks which can assist in our understanding of successful school learning networks and what they look like in practice.

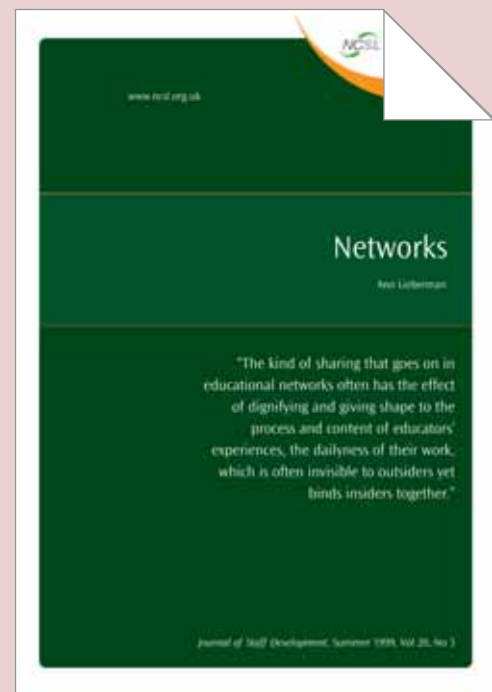
## International perspectives on networked learning



A collection of think pieces from international authors aims to inform and pose challenging questions of developing learning networks. The seven think pieces are divided into four themes: networks as a force for change; networked leadership; network structures and processes; and collaboration and community. Useful for anyone interested in exploring recent thinking about effective networks.

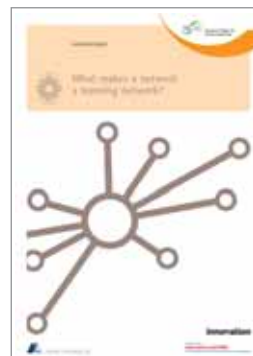
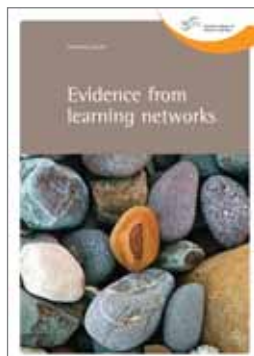
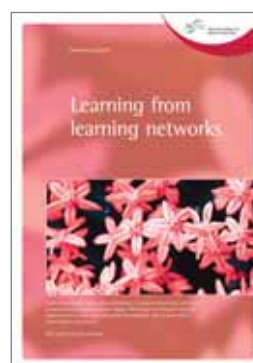
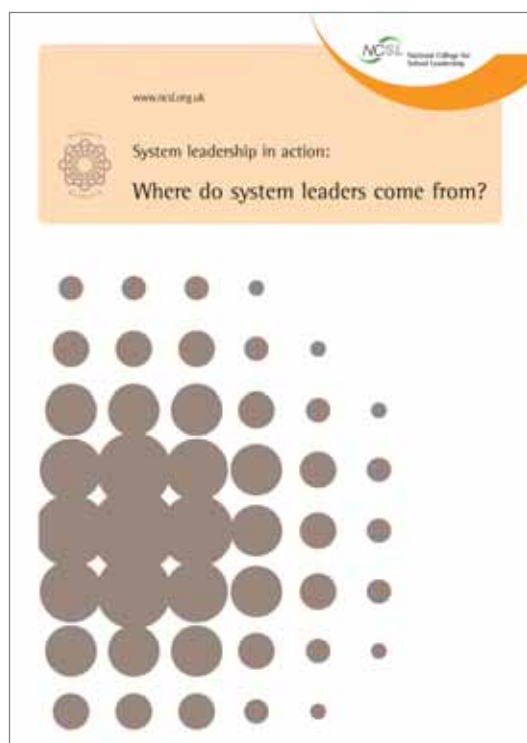
## Extract...

In the think piece *Networks* key characteristics and challenges of networks are explored.



- Networks should have a strong sense of commitment, a sense of shared purpose, a mixture of information sharing and psychological support, an effective facilitator, voluntary participation and equal treatment.
- Networks need a purpose and direction, they develop when a group of people see a compelling need to bring people together.
- Building collaboration and commitment in a network is central to its success. Bringing people together with the idea that their voices and participation matter helps build trust.
- Network activities combine listening to experts and peers. They give voice to people who become both consumers and generators of knowledge, in a group that represents them and larger visions for the profession.
- Leading networks is about brokering resources and people, creating 'public spaces' for people to learn and work together and building structures that encourage collaboration.
- Networks have to negotiate a set of tensions to become sustainable. These are: funding; meaningful purposes and compelling activities; inside knowledge and outside knowledge; centralisation/decentralisation; and inclusivity/exclusivity of membership.

# Introduction to networked learning



## Where do system leaders come from?



This think piece, written by Ann Lieberman of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, traces the development of new patterns of leadership in school networks.

## Evidence from learning networks



Some key messages and statistical information of interest to school and network leaders, policy-makers and others interested in the evidence on learning networks.

## Learning about learning networks



This booklet provides a useful overview of the processes and principles of networked learning. It also outlines the learning models (the three fields of knowledge and the six levels of learning) that have shaped networked learning communities.

## What makes a network a learning network?



This report outlines key messages for network leaders from phase two of the external evaluation of NCSL's Networked Learning Communities programme in 2005.

## Learning from learning networks

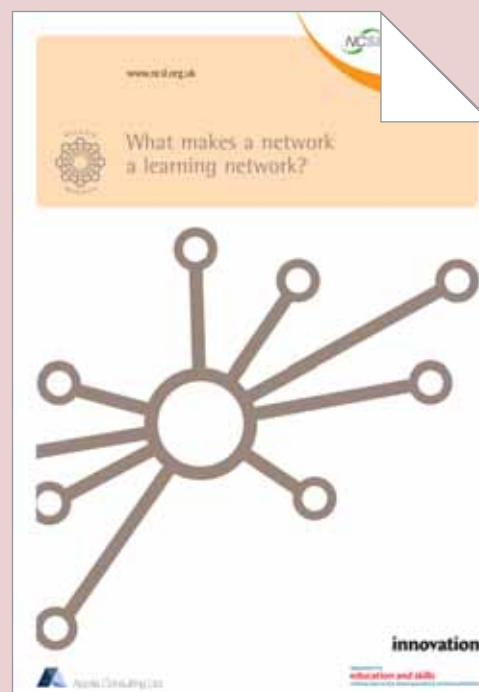


This short booklet contains key messages about learning networks emerging from NCSL's Networked Learning Communities programme.



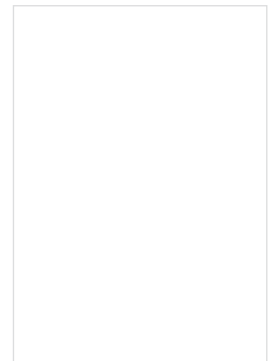
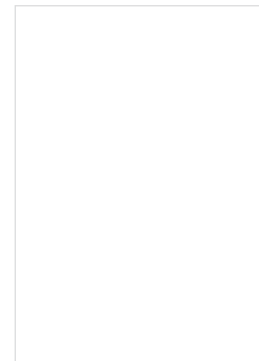
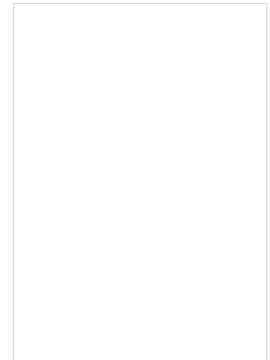
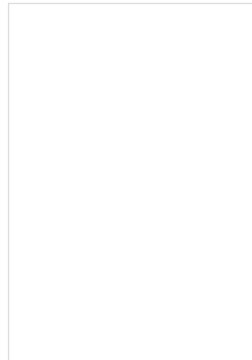
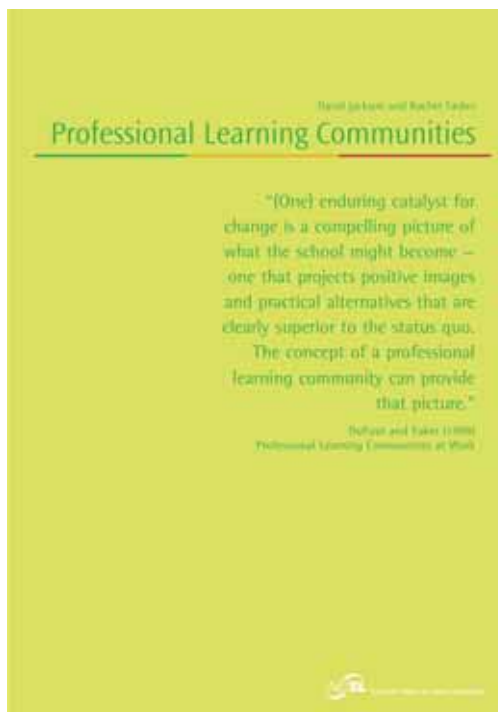
## Extract...

In *What makes a network a learning network?* seven key features of networks are identified and explored.



- **Purpose and focus** – establishing purpose and focus moves a network towards clear actions. The process of identifying a focus can involve making changes to existing practice, legitimating the change process, making the status quo more difficult to protect or offering opportunities for joint attention to issues relevant to all schools in the network.
- **Relationships** – learning relationships contribute to the establishment, development and maintenance of the professional culture. Strong group cohesion is based on trust, mutual accountability and an agreed-upon sharing of power.
- **Collaboration** – practitioners working together provides opportunities to develop their own practice and share beyond their schools. Network leaders need to consider establishing cross-school groups to challenge traditional practices and to generate new ways of doing things.
- **Enquiry** – this is fundamental in networks that focus on learning. Collaborative enquiry involves thinking about, reflecting on and challenging individual and group experiences to enhance understanding of practice.
- **Leadership** – leaders in networks develop the vision and focus, provide support, monitor development, disseminate information and buffer challenges. How will you liberate the leadership potential across your network for the benefit of all schools and children?
- **Accountability** – holding schools accountable for their performance depends on having people with the knowledge, skills and judgement to make the changes that will improve student performance.
- **Building capacity and support** – network initiatives require planned strategies for building capacity for change within and between schools. Network leaders need to ensure that their network capitalises on the diversity to challenge ideas and encourage innovation.

# Creating and supporting learning networks



## Professional Learning Communities



This think piece explores the concept of the professional learning community and what it looks like in practice. A professional learning community is defined by shared values and a collective sense of purpose. Its learning is fuelled by collaborative enquiry, teamwork and the study of evidence. Leadership is distributed and there is collective responsibility for pupil achievement. This piece is a useful introduction to those new to the idea of learning networks as it explores six shared characteristics found in professional learning communities as suggested by research evidence from successful practice.

## The network-o-gram task



This development tool enables you to map out and build an overview of your network, in order to ask questions about who participates in it and how these participants are connected. Use it to explain your network to others, to reflect on your progress and where you need to go next.

## What are we learning about...?

### Establishing a network of schools



Ideal for new heads joining a school-to-school network or wanting to lead their school effectively in a network. We explore why networks are important and what is distinctive about collaborative working. We also look at how establishing a network of schools involves:

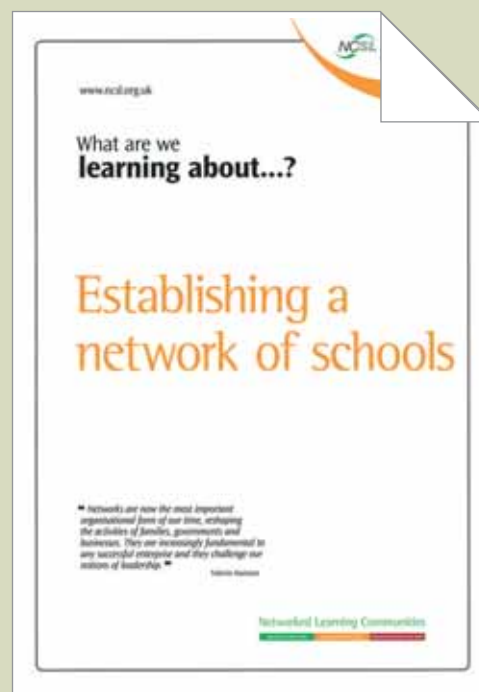
- the process of building a network – its design, form and structure
- a focus on pupil learning at the heart of network activity
- the creation of new opportunities for adult learning
- planning, facilitation and dedicated leadership and management
- thinking about determining success and measuring impact

*This resource pack contains ten publications.*



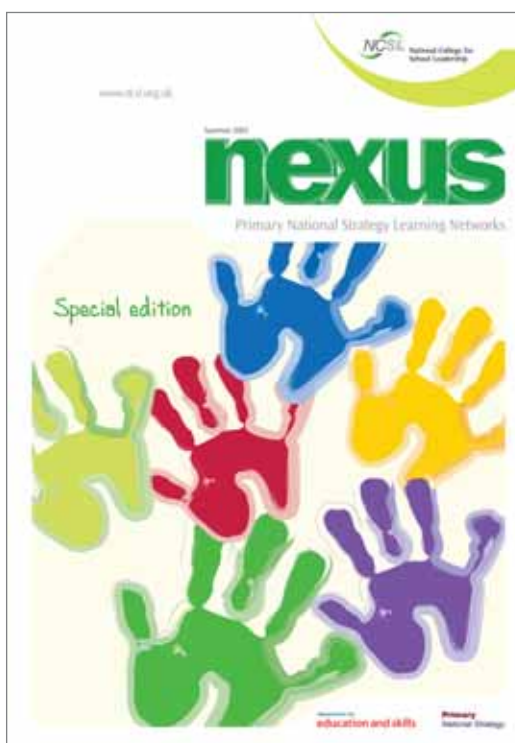
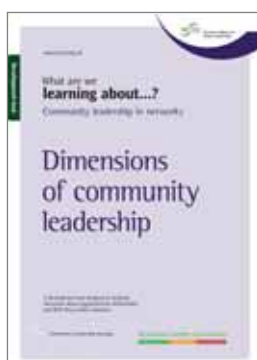
## Extract...

In *What are we learning about...? Establishing a network of schools* we explore the key characteristics of effective networks.



- Effective networks are designed around a compelling idea or aspirational purpose.
- Your collaboration should be designed around adding value to pupils' learning that would not be possible if you worked in isolation.
- It is through teachers and other adults doing things differently in classrooms that pupils' learning is positively affected.
- Successful networks plan for time, opportunities and resources that adults will need to work collaboratively.
- Networks generate the capacity to create new opportunities for adult learning, allowing practice to cross the boundaries of individual schools.
- Successful networks acknowledge that leadership may not come from the places it has traditionally been found.
- Planning for distributed leadership means giving key staff in each school clear roles and providing them with appropriate support structures.
- A timetable for the early development of your collaboration and identification of key milestones are important in the management of your school network.
- Headteachers can promote collaborative learning by visiting other schools and generating accounts of practice for all staff to discuss.
- Headteachers can take on the evaluation role for the network and generate evidence of impact.

# Creating and supporting learning networks



## What are we learning about...?

### The first 200 days in a school network



This account of practice illustrates the experience of 6 different networks during their first 200 days. The account examines the networks experiences in achieving the four elements of effective networks: designing around a compelling purpose and appropriate form and structure; establishing and maintaining a focus upon pupil learning; creating new opportunities for adult learning; ongoing planning and dedicated leadership and management.

Taken from *What are we learning about...? Establishing a network of schools*

## Diamond 9



The Diamond 9 is a development tool which will enable you to lead with vision, direction and to develop shared priorities.

## What are we learning about...?

### Dimensions of community leadership



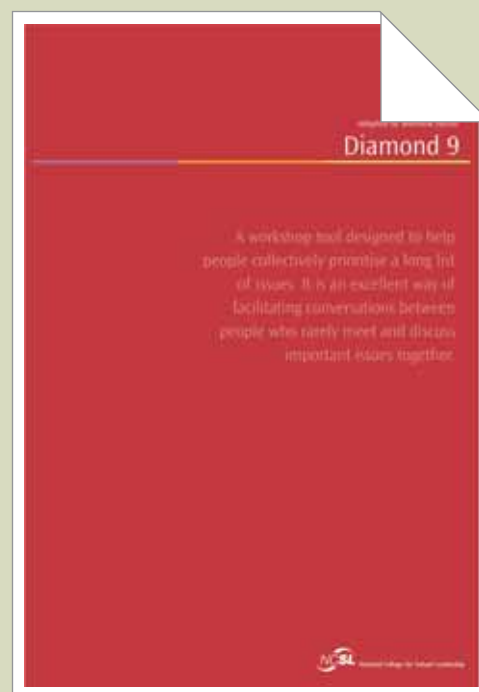
This development tool is a useful game for developing multi-agency partnerships as part of the *Every Child Matters* agenda. It helps leaders to understand the relationship their school network has with the wider community and where they would like to be. It is designed to be used with a wide range of participants.

Taken from *What are we learning about...? Community leadership in networks*

## Nexus special edition magazine – Primary Learning Networks

Nexus magazine was originally created to celebrate and share the work of NCSL's Networked Learning Communities programme, but has broadened its scope to share practice about learning networks beyond the programme. We have created this special edition by collating and revising the most appropriate Nexus articles for anyone involved with Primary Learning Networks.

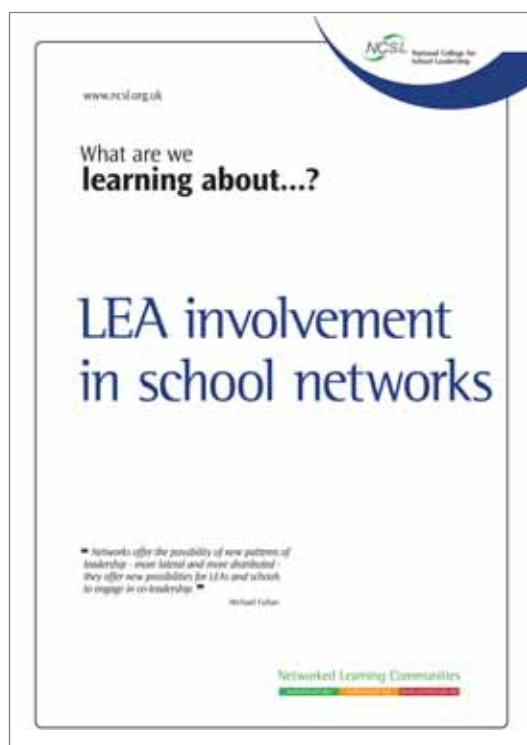
## Extract...



The process for using *Diamond 9* is as follows.

- Ask staff individually to read the long list of items or issues and privately reflect on their importance.
- They should individually sort their chosen 9 issues into a diamond pattern according to order of importance.
- The most important item is placed in the apex of the diamond. The least important of the 9 is placed at the bottom of the diamond. Items in each row are of equal importance.
- Divide staff into groups of 3–5 people who don't normally work closely together. Ask members of each group to share the patterns they have individually generated and explain to one another the reasons for their selection. Can they now combine their individual selections and agree a Diamond 9 list on behalf of their small group?
- Each small group of staff should present their group's selection to the rest of the staff and explain briefly how they arrived at this selection. The workshop facilitator should test each group's decision making by asking them to explain why they prioritised one item over another.
- The whole group now attempts to identify any common choices that most of the smaller groups selected or rejected. They collectively agree the one item that is most important.

# Sustaining a network



## What are we learning about...? LEA involvement in school networks

This think piece examines the role of local authorities in supporting learning networks and the benefits they can bring. It is useful to school leaders who want to maximise the benefits from their local authority. We have identified five brokerage roles through which a local authority can add the greatest value to school networks: brokering network membership; brokering network relationships; brokering partnerships beyond the network; brokering the network's access to resources; and brokering knowledge-exchange within and beyond networks. Each brokerage role involves using effective activities to develop school partnerships and is explored within the publication.

Taken from *What are we learning about...? LEA involvement in school networks*



## What are we learning about...? Leading together to build social capital

This think piece discusses the need for educational leaders to grow social capital in order to increase student achievement. It argues for a shift away from a focus on school improvement to a focus on creating and sustaining effective educational communities.

Taken from *What are we learning about...? Community leadership in networks*

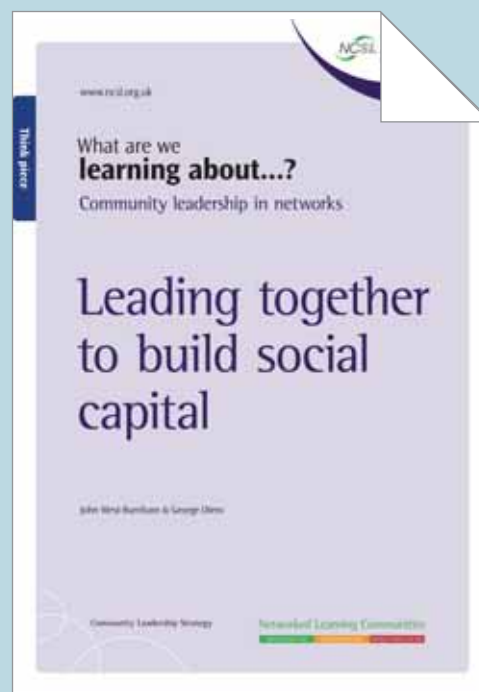
## What are we learning about...? Leadership and sustainability

In this think piece, Michael Fullan challenges local authorities involved in school networks to develop strategies, training opportunities and learning experiences that will develop "system thinkers in action". The piece also addresses the key question of why local authorities should support networks of schools.

Taken from *What are we learning about...? LEA involvement in school networks*

## Extract...

In *What are we learning about...? Leading together to build social capital* strategies for building social capital are explored.



Finding better ways to bridge community and school is the essence of the school leader's role. Schools are living human systems and survive and develop by integrating differences. One way of achieving this is by transforming their relationships with the community. Two powerful strategies for doing this are building relational trust and promoting and practising dialogue.

Four signs for identifying relational trust in schools:

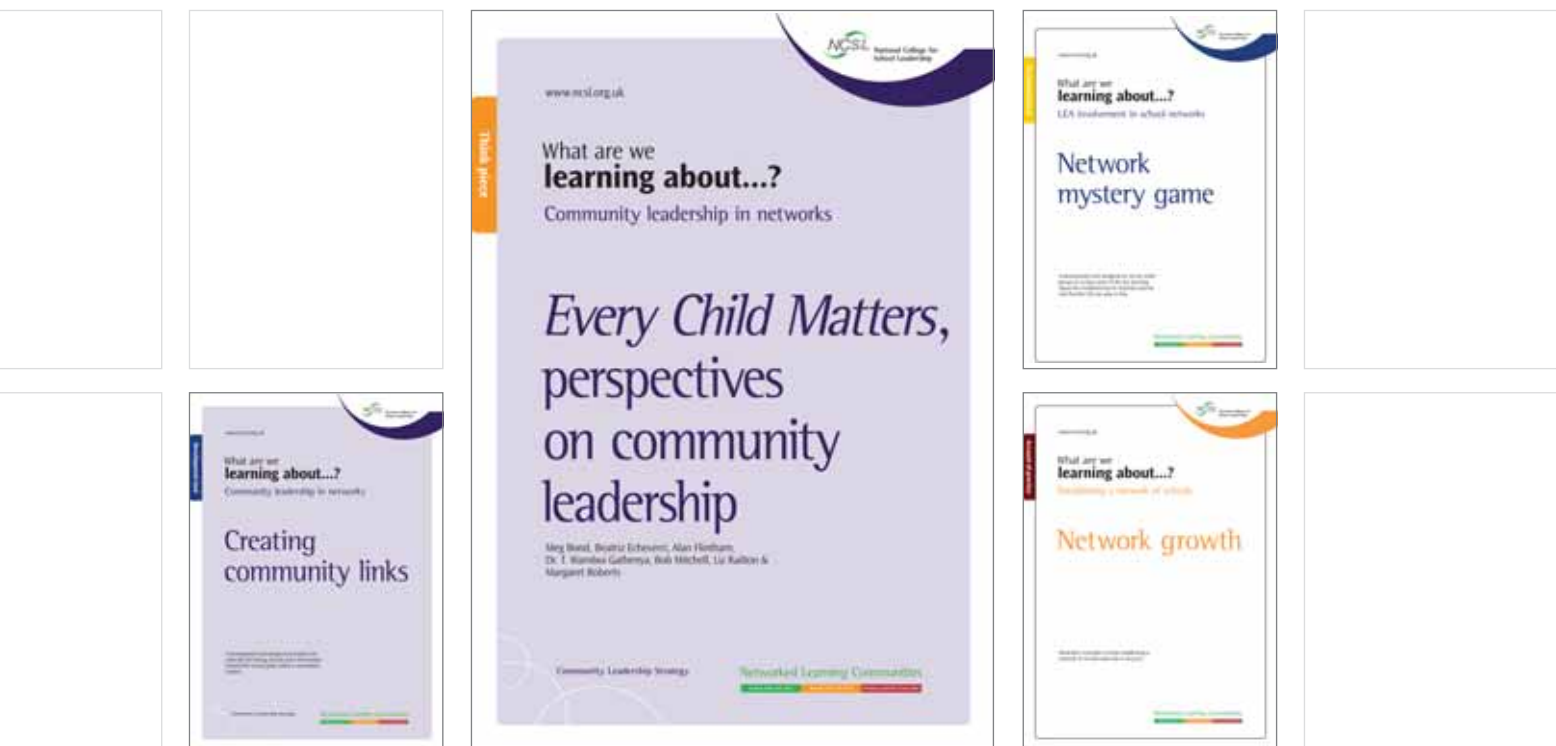
- 1 Respect – do we acknowledge one another's dignity and ideas?
- 2 Competence – do we believe in each other's ability to fulfil our responsibilities?
- 3 Personal regard – do we care about each other enough to go the extra mile?
- 4 Integrity – do we trust each other to put children's needs first even in the face of tough decisions?

Interactions in schools can be characterised as being governed by three types of conversation. Understanding these conversations can help us improve the quality and content of our relationships.

Three types of conversation:

- 1 Instructional conversation – most commonly seen in the classroom. This dialogue is about acquiring a skill, extra knowledge or guidance that is external to ourselves.
- 2 Learning conversation – closer to a conversation where our mutual growth is the end result. The relationship and the task get equal attention.
- 3 Community conversation – a vehicle for people to express and share the diverse views that they hold, to negotiate and reaffirm directions and vision and to develop social capital. This type of conversation depends on the art of dialogue the most.

# Sustaining a network



## What are we learning about...? Creating community links



This development tool is designed to explore why schools and communities should be linked within a network. It has been found to be particularly useful when used by schools and networks to agree on their values before starting community leadership activities.

Taken from *What are we learning about...? Community leadership in networks*

## What are we learning about...? *Every Child Matters* – perspectives on community leadership



A variety of both educational and non-educational leaders outline their perspectives on meeting the challenges presented in the *Every Child Matters* agenda.

Taken from *What are we learning about...? Community leadership in networks*

## What are we learning about...? Network mystery game



A development tool designed to be used by small groups to surface the learning about the role of local authorities and pupils in the establishment of networks.

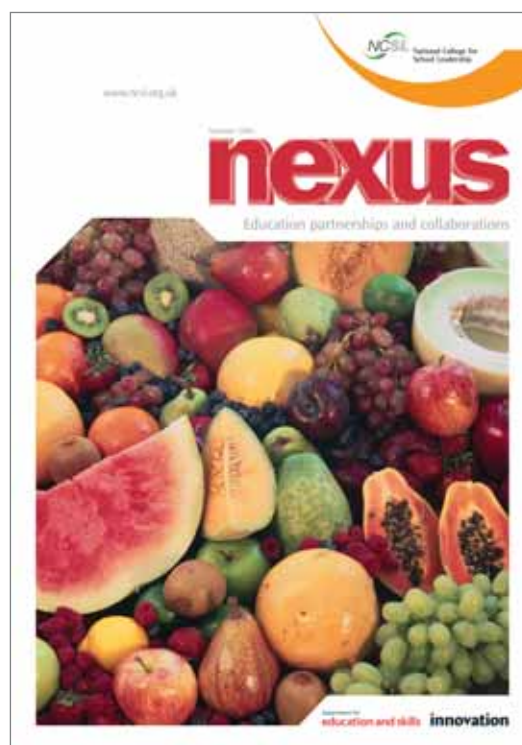
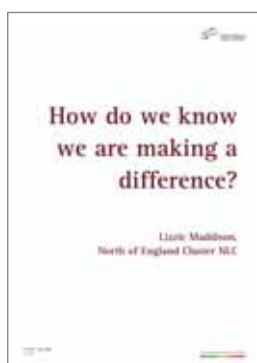
Taken from *What are we learning about...? LEA involvement in school networks*

## What are we learning about...? Network growth



This account of practice looks at how networks in NCSL's Networked Learning Communities programme have grown and changed over time. It will be of interest to those wishing to consider some of the factors that impact on the structure and progression of a school network.

Taken from *What are we learning about...? Establishing a network of schools*



### How do we know we are making a difference?



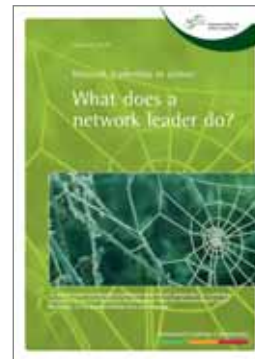
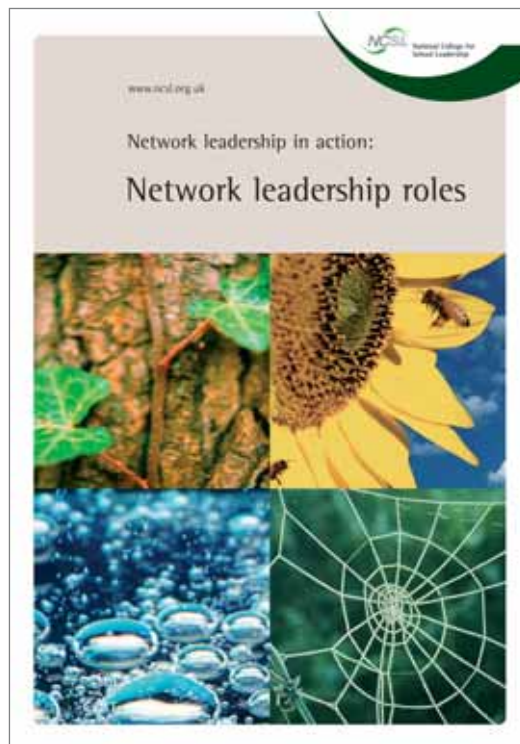
This research associate report was written by a network practitioner, Lizzie Maddison, during a period of secondment to NCSL's Networked Learning Communities programme in 2003-2004. The aim of the enquiry was to explore the successful strategies used by networked learning communities to sustain their collaboration beyond their initial three year plan. This publication reports on the work of four networks in the north of England.

### Nexus magazine, education partnerships and collaborations edition

This magazine looks at a range of school partnerships and different forms of collaboration. It also looks at various school networks including networked learning communities, Primary Learning Networks, federations, Leading Edge Partnerships, Specialist schools and Excellence in Cities.



# Leading a network



## What are we learning about...? Community leadership in networks



This publication shows you how to lead community involvement in networks. We consider how the national policy agenda to ensure *Every Child Matters* is beginning to be acted out in local networked contexts. Through exploring different perspectives of community leadership we consider the tensions, opportunities and challenges involved in moving from homogeneous school-based networks to more diverse heterogeneous community-based networks. We also look at how community leadership in networks involves:

- sharing leadership with a focus on 'bridging' rather than 'bonding' relationships, processes and actions
- collaborative working which builds social capital and coheres around a shared focus which is child-centred
- joint planning and dialogue which promotes active participation in decision-making-for-action by all
- designing local strategies for long term system-wide change

*This resource pack contains twelve publications*

## Network leadership in action: Network leadership roles



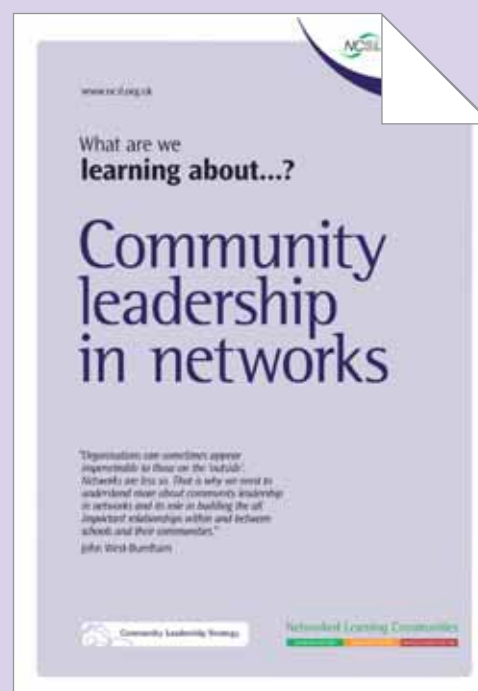
One of the distinctive features of successful networks is dedicated facilitation and leadership. These development tools describe the work of network leaders and others in leadership and support roles in school networks. They identify key roles, reflective questions, possible starting points and examples from practice. The publication explores the following leadership roles:

- What does a critical friend do?
- What does a Local Authority broker do?
- What does a network leader do?
- What does a network activist do?

*Click on a thumbnail to download a title*

## Extract...

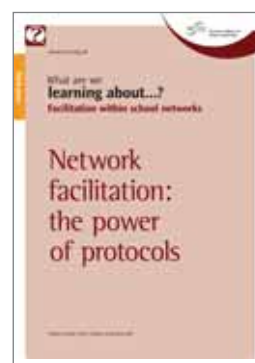
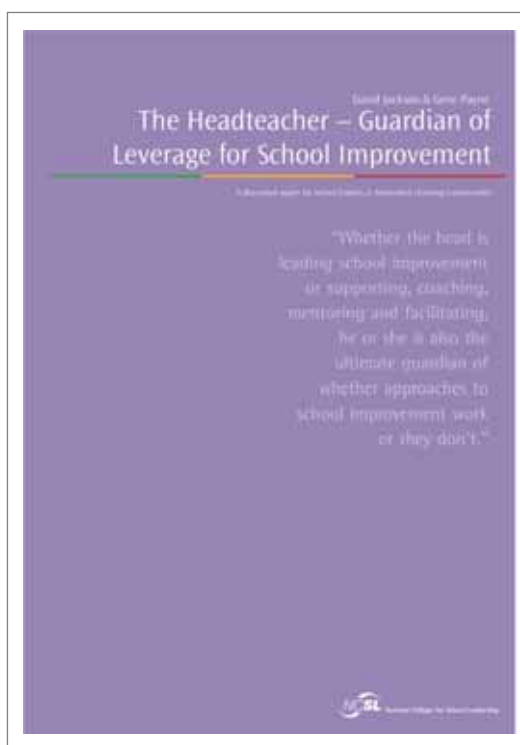
These points were taken from *What are we learning about...? Community leadership in networks*.



### Leading your school's involvement in the community

- Share leadership by focusing on 'bridging' rather than 'bonding' relationships.
- Bridging leaders are characterised by a focus on student leadership, families, leading a range of people and growing leaders from a range of contexts.
- Who we are is a stronger point of connection than what we do. We need to get out from behind our professional roles.
- Celebrate the small wins. Nothing builds success like success.
- Work collaboratively around a shared child-centred focus.
- Joint planning and dialogue promotes active participation in decision-making by all.
- Develop and distribute leadership which allows people to say "I'll do that" and know that they have the responsibility, authority and support to get it done.
- Start with people, relationships and trust, not systems and structures, which allows for developing aspirations and moves to action.
- Look for 'learnable moments' that demonstrate leadership. Constantly ask: "What are we learning from this?", "What is this telling us?", "What are the hidden messages?"
- Model the giving and receiving of feedback at every opportunity and remain genuinely open to the critical appraisal of others.

# Leading a network



## What are we learning about...? Facilitating learning networks



This development tool consists of two activities designed to support the effective facilitation of learning networks and to explore some of the key dimensions of the facilitation of school networks.

Taken from *What are we learning about...? Establishing a network of schools*

## System leadership in action... System leaders in profile



This publication explores what system leadership looks like in practice by providing accounts of the practice of 13 leaders in system-wide roles.

## The Headteacher – Guardian of Leverage for School Improvement



This discussion paper for school leaders in networks explores the theme of headteachers being the ultimate guardians of changes to school improvement. It also explores the expansion of leadership capacity within networks and how this can affect the headteacher's role.

## What are we learning about...? Network facilitation: the power of protocols



This think piece recognises that networks have only limited opportunities for learning together face-to-face. It argues that to maximise these opportunities the use of protocols can create a structured approach to learning. The publication provides some illustrative examples of the use of protocols and sets out some essential features to assist those looking to introduce protocols to organise learning in school networks.

Taken from *What are we learning about...? Facilitation within school networks*

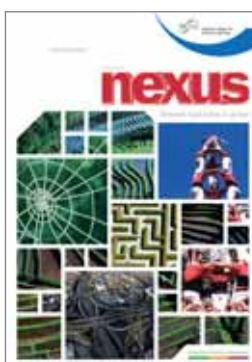
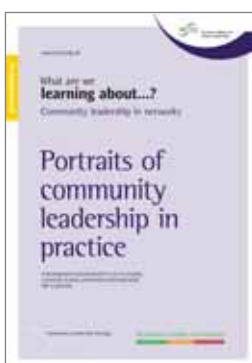
## What are we learning about...? Finding the path to further progress... Mathematics in Primary Strategy Learning Networks



This think piece explores the issues teachers currently face in achieving further attainment increases in mathematics. It addresses how a path to further progress may be found through the creation of learning networks which give teachers access to both subject and pedagogical expertise.

Taken from *What are we learning about...? 'Making mathematics count' in school networks*

Click on a thumbnail to download a title



### What are we learning about...? Who leads?



This development tool is designed to enable colleagues to identify whether their practice in developing community involvement also develops community leadership. It has been used successfully within a networked setting to help participants determine how they involve members of the wider community in leadership activities. It is appropriate for all adults within any organisation or network wishing to engage with the wider community.

Taken from *What are we learning about...? Community leadership in networks*

### What are we learning about...? Portraits of community leadership in practice



This development tool has been used successfully with NCSL's Community Leadership Network to help participants gain a greater understanding of what leadership practice looks like in their communities. The activity invites involvement from a wide variety of participants at all levels in the community and network.

Taken from *What are we learning about...? Community leadership in networks*

### Nexus magazine, leadership and networked leadership editions

These Nexus magazines focus on how school leaders in networks are working together to change the lives of pupils. They explore how school networks are improving the educational system for all, focusing on the relationship between networks and system leadership.

*Click on a thumbnail to download a title*

### What are we learning about...? Developing a central network facilitation team

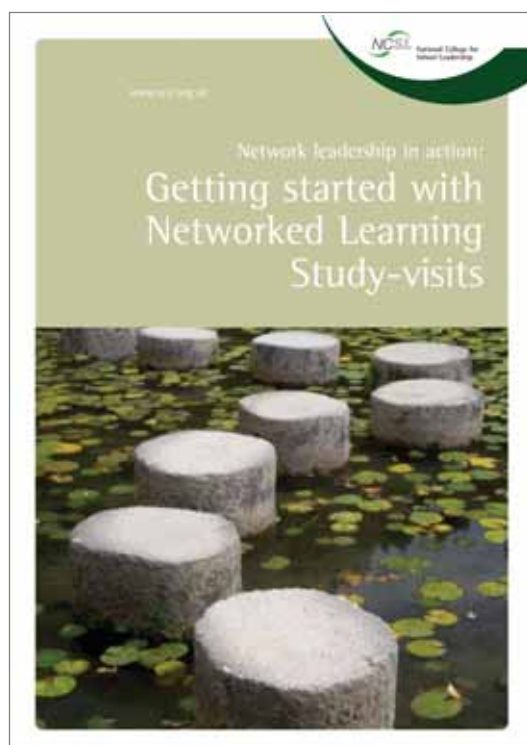


This account of practice provides a practical illustration of the significant elements we have found to be evident when developing effective facilitation in networked learning communities. Considering these dimensions of facilitation will ensure that future development of a network is built from the best of what is known from current thinking and practice.

Taken from *What are we learning about...? Facilitation within school networks*



# Learning within a network



*Network leadership in action...*  
Getting started with Networked  
Research Lesson Study

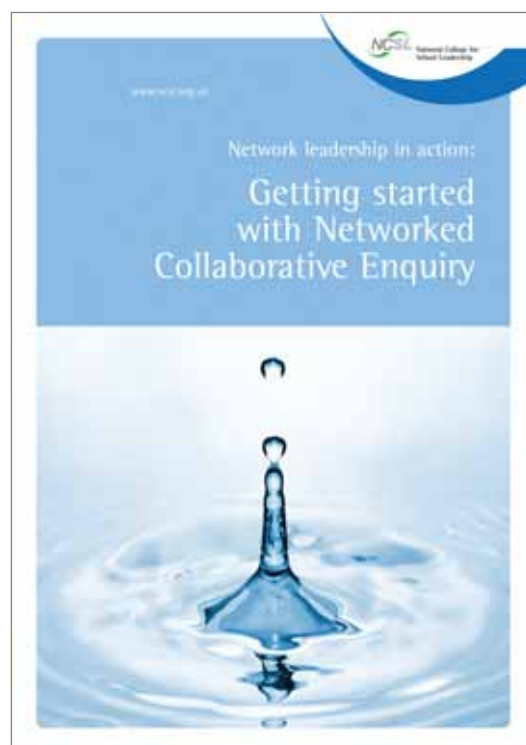
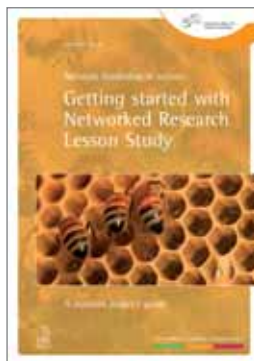


This publication provides a network leader's guide to getting started with Networked Research Lesson Study. It includes guidance on planning for and undertaking research lessons in networks, snapshots of practice and development tools and templates. It is also accompanied by a DVD.

*Network leadership in action...*  
Getting started with Networked  
Learning Study-visits



This development tool provides everything a network leader needs to get started with Networked Learning Study-visits. The first booklet explains the methodology and process. The second booklet contains tools and templates adapted and developed in school networks to support the study-visit process.



*Network leadership in action...*  
Getting started with Networked  
Collaborative Enquiry



This publication provides three practical tools designed to provide school and network leaders with all they need to start with collaborative enquiry. The first booklet sets out the context and different approaches to carrying out collaborative enquiry. The second booklet contains snapshots of practice from networks engaged in collaborative enquiry, and the third booklet contains enquiry tools and templates developed in school networks. This resource pack is also accompanied by a DVD.

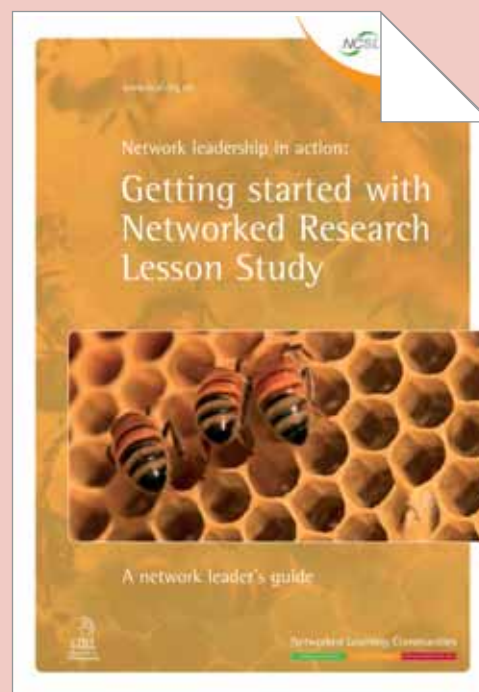
**Partnership and participation  
in teacher research**



This think piece explores the issues involved when using teacher researchers as part of a process linking professional development, school improvement and networked learning.

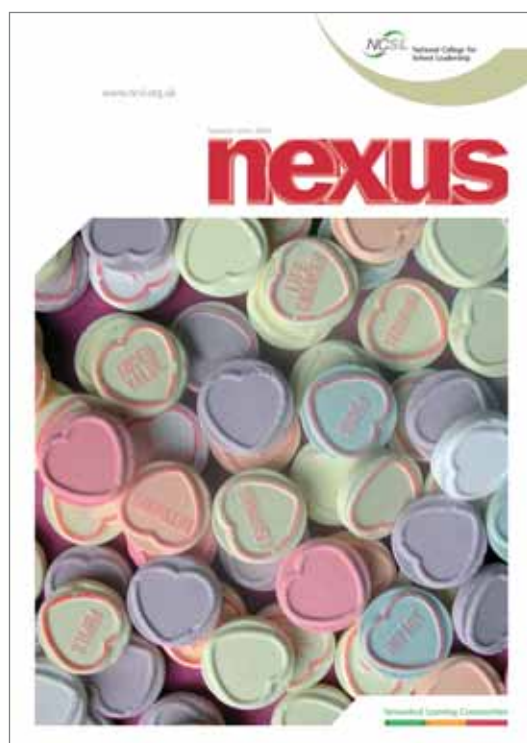
## Extract...

In *Network leadership in action: Getting started with Networked Research Lesson Study* we explore a step-by-step guide to undertaking this form of collaborative enquiry. Networked Research Lesson Study helps slow lessons down. You can improve, innovate and transfer practice more effectively.



- 1 Analyse your data and identify your focus.
- 2 Identify your lesson study group – two, three or more people with dedicated time and support. Set ground rules for assessed risk-taking and joint ownership of the research lessons, where the learning is expected from and what goes wrong as well as right.
- 3 Connect with, and draw on, what is already known about your focus before you start your work.
- 4 Identify three case pupils (or multiples of three when you are experienced in research lesson study).
- 5 Jointly plan a research lesson based on the needs of the case pupils.
- 6 Joint observation and data capture.
- 7 Joint analysis and recording. Being explicit about what you have learned.
- 8 Find ways of helping others learn from what you have learned.

# Learning within a network



## Nexus magazine, pupil learning edition

This issue of Nexus focuses on the impact school networks are having on learning. It explores how school networks can add value to pupil learning in ways that that would not be possible by the same schools working alone. It also explores how school networks can provide a more diverse range of learning solutions than individual schools.



## What are we learning about..?

### Two routes to an improvement solution...



This development tool is designed to support collaborative planning and working in school networks with a focus on numeracy, or amongst networks of mathematics teachers. It explores the use of appreciative enquiry and action research as two powerful routes to finding solutions to the issues which affect teachers and students as they work together to improve learning in mathematics.

Taken from *What are we learning about...? 'Making mathematics count' in school networks*



## Writing research and enquiry summaries



This practical booklet, produced by NCSL and CUREE, provides guidelines which support the development of informative research summaries that are attractive to and useable by teachers in networks..





### What are we learning about...? Moving towards a subject learning community...



This account explores what effective network practice for improving teaching and learning in mathematics looks like. The account is generated from the work of practitioners involved in establishing a mathematics learning network. It aims to reflect the best of what is known of networked learning in action.

Taken from *What are we learning about...? 'Making mathematics count' in school networks*

### Towards Ubuntu A learning journey to Cape Town



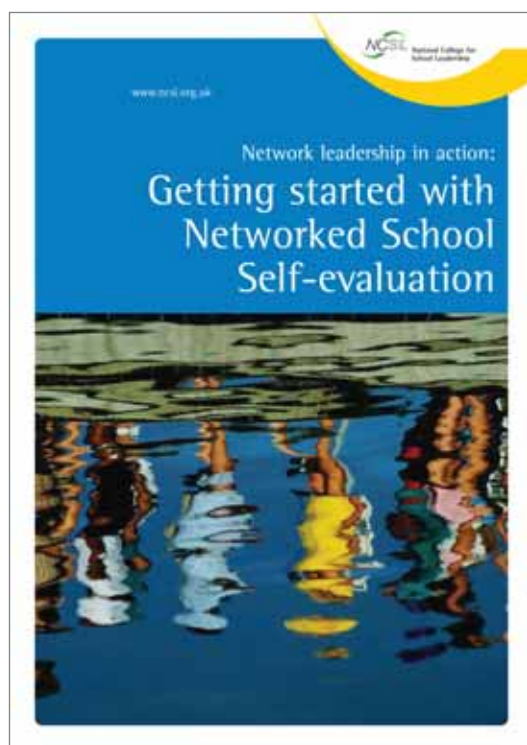
This account of practice documents the learning journey to Cape Town undertaken by headteachers and NCSL facilitators in an international study-visit. This publication may be useful for networks considering an exchange visit or who are interested in processes which maximise transferable learning.

### Knowledge management and action research



This think piece explores the issues and role of knowledge management in action research. This publication will be useful for generating discussion and ideas about collaborative enquiry in networks.

# Network self-evaluation tools



## Network leadership in action: Getting started with Networked School Self-evaluation

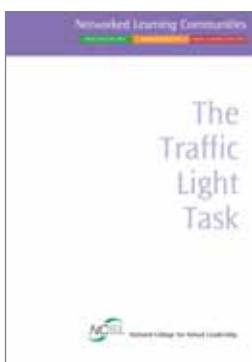


This publication outlines the benefits of taking a collaborative approach to school self-evaluation and provides practical examples of how three particular methods have been used successfully in networked contexts.

## Levels of learning activity



This tool is designed to generate discussion and data about teaching and learning in every school in a network. The activity is designed to be completed in pairs followed by group discussion. The tool is based on the six levels of learning used in NCSL's Networked Learning Communities programme: pupil learning; adult learning; leadership learning; school-wide learning; school-to-school learning; and network-to-network learning.



## The Traffic Light Task



This tool helps networks evaluate where they are in relation to their original mission statement or objectives. This tool evaluates progress against six levels of learning: pupil learning; adult learning; leadership learning; school-wide learning; school-to-school learning; and network-to-network learning.

## Self-evaluation matrix tool



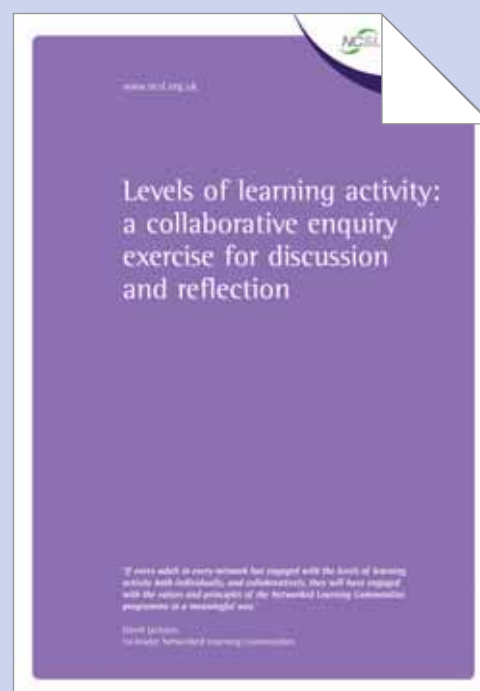
Becta and NCSL have collaborated to produce a series of self-evaluation tools. The section 'Leading Networks' contains two tools:

- 1 Evaluating Learning in Networks
- 2 Evaluating Network Leadership

Access the matrix by visiting the self-evaluation page on <http://networkedlearning.ncsl.org.uk>

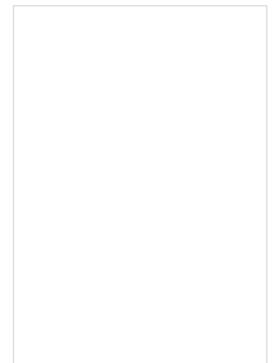
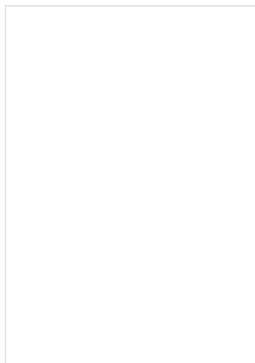
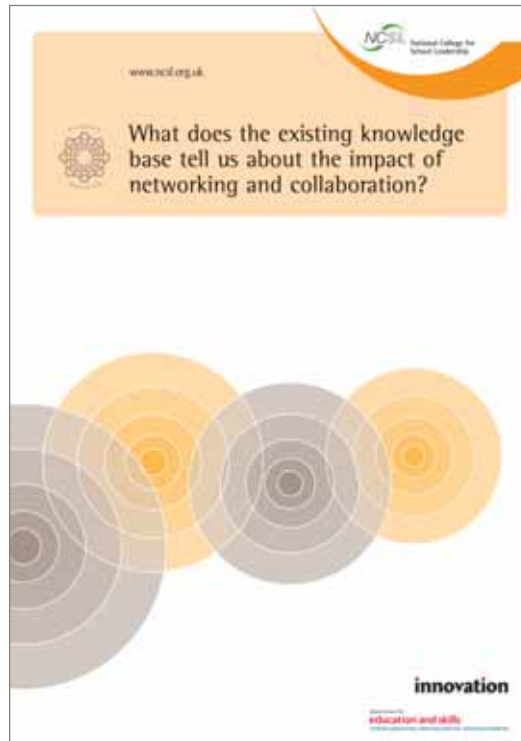
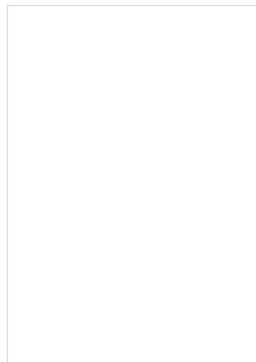
## Extract...

The *Levels of learning activity* is based on six 'levels of learning' and is helpful for baselining and progress mapping your network's development.



1. **Pupil learning** – around a shared pedagogic focus. Raising levels of pupil achievement is a primary aim and motivation for all schools involved in networks. Every network sets its own, locally relevant, classroom learning focus which is placed at the heart of their activity as a network. Networks can use evidence and enquiry-based methods to improve classroom practice.
2. **Adult learning** – in professional learning communities. The best teachers are also students, learning with and alongside their pupils. Networks allow teachers to experiment and innovate in the classroom, to shape teaching practice and policy together. Networks go beyond traditional CPD initiatives by valuing practitioner enquiry and collaborative approaches to adult learning.
3. **Leadership learning** – at all levels and including collaborative headteacher learning. Networks tap into the leadership potential of all teachers. Leadership of networked learning communities is shared within and between networked schools via two co-leaders, who may or may not be 'traditional' leaders. A commitment to providing a wide range of leadership opportunities within and between networks allows new kinds of leadership to develop.
4. **School-wide learning** – involving progressive school re-design around learning principles. Networks can support the development of schools as professional learning communities. Schools working within networks are becoming learning organisations. They are setting their own agenda for change in response to local needs and are generating capacity for continuous innovation and adaptation.
5. **School-to-school learning** – between schools as communities of practice. Networked schools are enthusiastic to learn from and with each other. They know they will create and share more knowledge working together than in isolation. All kinds of schools are involved and this diversity is supporting the development of dynamic new learning partnerships.
6. **Network-to-network learning** – modelling the development of a learning system. As networks develop local, context-specific solutions to the problems they face, the learning can be spread between networks, contributing knowledge and understanding across the whole education system.

# Impact of networks



What does **network practice** tell us about the impact of networking and collaboration?



This publication is a summary of the 2005 annual enquiry into NCSL's Networked Learning Communities programme. The summary aims to help policy makers and network leaders draw on the current knowledge of what works in practice in school learning networks. The summary is organised around seven key features of the impact of networking and collaboration identified through analysis of qualitative and quantitative data.

The impact of networks on pupils, practitioners, organisations and the communities they serve



This summary contains key messages from a systematic review of literature undertaken by NCSL and CUREE. The review involved the filtering of over 4,500 titles and abstracts and 383 full studies. Articles were selected on the basis of the quality of evidence they contained in response to the following question: "What is the impact on pupils of networks that include at least three schools?"

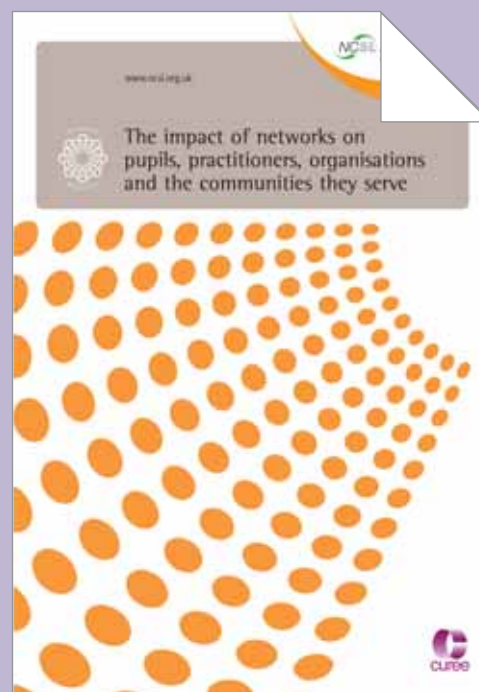
What does **the existing knowledge base** tell us about the impact of networking and collaboration?



This summary is taken from NCSL's Networked Learning Communities programme's preliminary review into the existing knowledge base on networking and collaboration. Data analysis identified six key themes which the review summary explores.

# Extract...

In the summary *The impact of networks on pupils, practitioners, organisations and the communities they serve* data analysis identified five key themes around which the review is organised.



1. **Impact** – The review found that networks can be effective vehicles for improving teaching, learning and attainment for specific target groups. The review reports evidence of the impact of networks on both teachers, pupils and schools. Many studies also reported impact on other participants such as parents, HEI staff and community workers.
2. **Transfer of knowledge and skills** – Of the 14 networks in the review, 12 involved structured programmes of CPD. Involving a range of people in network activities was important in achieving a spread of participation, and for the most part this took the form of collaborative CPD.
3. **Goals and target groups** – It was clear from the evidence in this review that more effective networks had more specific goals than less effective networks. They also tended to target specific groups of pupils such as socially excluded, minority or underachieving pupils. It is difficult to see how some of these goals could have been achieved without networks.
4. **Partners** – All the networks involved school-to-school partnerships and most featured school-HEI partnerships. Networks also involved schools working with families and external organisations such as businesses, museums and libraries. The range of partners involved in the networks highlighted the effectiveness of working collaboratively across agencies and sectors to tackle issues.
5. **Network features** – Common network features that were included in the systematic review included specific focuses – the majority of the networks were structured around a set of clearly defined aims. Size, scale and geographical spread appeared to bear little relation to their effectiveness. The review also found that the majority of the networks had been running for two years or more, reinforcing the common sense link between duration and network effectiveness.

# Index

## What are we learning about...? series



### • *What are we learning about...? LEA involvement in school networks*

We outline some of the different roles which LEAs perform and look at concrete examples of what that looks like in practice. We explore the concept of brokerage as a way of describing what LEAs do to support networks of schools.

- D** LEA involvement in school networks
- D** Improving schools through networks
- D** Leadership and sustainability
- D** LEAs brokering school networks – Redbridge LEA
- D** LEAs brokering school networks – Cornwall LEA
- D** LEAs brokering school networks – Sandwell LEA
- D** LEAs brokering school networks – Lancashire LEA
- D** Network mystery game
- D** From networks of schools to a networked system



### • *What are we learning about...? Establishing a network of schools*

We outline the key elements we have found to be evident when establishing a network of schools. We explore why networks are important and what is distinctive about collaborative working.

- D** Establishing a network of schools
- D** Developing a network perspective
- D** Forging a networked learning community
- D** The first 200 days in a school network
- D** Network growth
- D** Developing a network learning focus
- D** The levels of learning activity
- D** Facilitating learning networks
- D** Evaluating the work of networks
- D** Building leadership capacity for a networked landscape



### • *What are we learning about...? Community leadership in networks*

We look at the importance of building community leadership in networks. We consider how the national policy agenda to ensure *Every Child Matters* (2003) is beginning to be acted out in local networked contexts. Through exploring different perspectives of community leadership we consider the tensions, opportunities and challenges involved in moving from homogeneous school-based networks to more diverse heterogeneous community-based networks.

- D** Community leadership in networks
- D** Leading together to build social capital
- D** Every Child Matters perspectives on community leadership
- D** Building community leadership
- D** Regeneration through community leadership
- D** Working towards community leadership
- D** Engaging parents through networks
- D** Creating community links
- D** Who leads ?



- D** Dimensions of community leadership
- D** Perspectives of leadership and participation
- D** Portraits of community leadership in practice



• **What are we learning about...? 'Making mathematics count' in school networks**

We outline what we have found to be the characteristics of effective school learning networks and describe what they look like in practice. We also look at how, through this practice, networks of teachers are helping to address key issues associated with effective teaching and learning in mathematics.

- D** User guide
- D** Making mathematics count in school networks
- D** Finding the path to further progress
- D** Learning with insiders: complex professional development
- D** Turning the tide back towards mathematics
- D** Moving towards a subject learning community
- D** A virtual design for networked learning in mathematics
- D** Developing a networked thinking maths group
- D** Closing the gap in mathematic attainment
- D** Two routes to an improvement solution
- D** Trial and transfer – improving practice through Research Lessons
- D** Multiplying the learning through collaborative enquiry



• **What are we learning about...? Facilitation within school networks**

We outline what we have found to be the characteristics of effective facilitation within school learning networks and describe what they look like in practice.

- D** Links guide
- D** User guide
- D** Facilitation within school networks
- D** The art of network facilitation
- D** Network facilitation – the power of protocols
- D** Activating the learning space in networks
- D** Building capacity for network facilitation
- D** Developing a central network facilitation team
- D** Facilitating the transfer of practice in networks
- D** Facilitation in action
- D** Facilitating collaborative learning in networks
- D** Energising enquiry in networks
- D** Facilitating network knowledge exchange



• **What are we learning about...? Sustaining a network of schools**

We outline what we have found to be some of the characteristics of effective networks and describe what they look like when focused upon sustaining a school network. The key features of network design for sustainability which inform this series are:

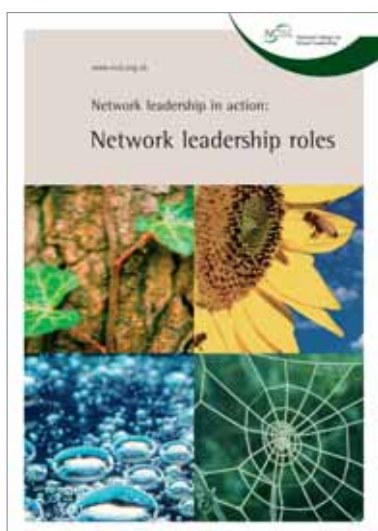
- building capacity for network development
- building capacity for adaptive change
- building capacity for network leadership
- building capacity to connect with, respond to and influence the wider system



# Index

## Network leadership in action series

This collection provides practical tools for effective network leadership and enquiry. Titles include: Network leadership roles; Getting started with Networked Research Lesson Study; Getting started with Networked Learning Study-visits; Getting started with Networked Collaborative Enquiry and Getting started with Networked School Self-evaluation.



### • Network leadership roles

One of the distinctive features of successful networks is dedicated facilitation and leadership. These development tools describe the work of network leaders and others in leadership and support roles in school networks. They identify key roles, reflective questions, possible starting points and examples from practice. The publication explores the following leadership roles:



- D** What does a critical friend do?
- D** What does a network leader do?



- D** What does a Local Authority broker do?
- D** What does a network activist do?



### • Getting started with Networked Research Lesson Study

The resources in this publication provide a network leader's guide to getting started with Networked Research Lesson Study. These include; guidance on planning for and undertaking Research Lessons in networks, snapshots of practice, development tools and templates, accompanied by a DVD.

- D** Booklet 1: Getting started with Networked Research Lesson Study
- D** Booklet 2: Networked Research Lesson Study in practice
- D** Booklet 3: Networked Research Lesson Study tools and templates



### • Getting started with Networked Learning Study-visits

This development tool provides everything a network leader needs to get started with Networked Learning Study-visits. The first booklet explains the methodology and process. The second booklet contains tools and templates adapted and developed in school networks to support the study-visit process. The third booklet presents accounts of study-visits in practice.

- D** Booklet 1: Getting started with Networked Learning Study-visits
- D** Booklet 2: Networked Learning Study-visit tools and templates



### • Getting started with Networked School Self-evaluation

This publication outlines the benefits of taking a collaborative approach to school self-evaluation and provides practical examples of how three particular methods have been used successfully in networked contexts. *Contains three booklets. Available August 2006.*



### • Getting started with Sharing leadership

This publication explores the theme of sharing leadership in schools and networks and reflects the presentations, discussions and observations of participants in NCSL's 'Leading practice' seminars. The three booklets provide a selection of vignettes, narratives and development tools designed to help school leaders work together to better understand what the theory of shared leadership looks like in practice.

- D** Booklet 1: Sharing leadership
- D** Booklet 2: Sharing leadership in practice
- D** Booklet 3: Sharing leadership tools and templates



### • Getting started with Networked Collaborative Enquiry

This publication provides three practical tools designed to provide school and network leaders with all they need to start with collaborative enquiry. The first booklet sets out the context and different approaches to carrying out collaborative enquiry. The second booklet contains snapshots of practice from networks engaged in collaborative enquiry. The third booklet contains enquiry tools and templates developed in school networks. This publication is accompanied by a DVD.

- D** Booklet 1: Getting started with Networked Collaborative Enquiry
- D** Booklet 2: Networked Collaborative Enquiry in practice
- D** Booklet 3: Networked Collaborative Enquiry tools and templates

# Index

## Network Research series

The Network Research series of publications brings together the latest knowledge about learning networks. These accessible summaries draw on perspectives from theory, policy and practice to present key messages from network research.

### Network theory and practice



#### **D** Networks

Ann Lieberman

#### **D** From aptitude to effort: a new foundation in our schools

Lauren B Resnik

#### **D** The promise of partnership for promoting reform

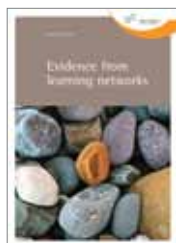
Anna Ershler Richert, Pamela Stoddard & Michael Kass

#### • How do school-to-school networks work?

Alison Stott, Michael Jopling & Ann Kilcher

#### • Pupils' experiences of learning in networked learning communities

Non Worral, Chris Noden & Charles Desforges



#### **D** Evidence from learning networks

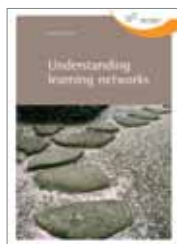
Victoria Crowe with Chris Noden & Alison Stott

#### **D** Understanding learning networks

Karen Carter with Fred Paterson

#### **D** Cracking the concrete

David Jackson in conversation with Madeline Church



### Teacher researcher reports



#### **D** Perspectives on practitioner research

Marion Dadds

#### **D** Students as researchers

Jane McGregor

#### **D** Knowledge management and action research

Mark Hadfield

#### **D** Partnership and participation in teacher research

David Leat



## Research associate reports



- D** **How do we know we are making a difference?**  
Lizzie Maddison
- D** **Working smarter together: the development of an enquiry team across 12 schools**  
Trish Franey

## NCSL's NLC programme: enquiry reports



- D** **Network building**  
The leadership of adult learning in networks
- D** **What does network practice tell us about the impact of networking and collaboration?**

## NCSL's NLC programme: external evaluation reports



- D** **International perspectives on networked learning**
- D** **What makes a network a learning network?**

## The existing knowledge base on networks: literature reviews



- D** **The impact of networking and collaboration: the existing knowledge base** Full report
- D** **What does the existing knowledge base tell us about the impact of networking and collaboration?** Summary  
*Undertaken by NCSL's Networked Learning Group*



- D** **The impact of networks on pupils, practitioners, organisations and the communities they serve** Summary and full report available  
*Undertaken by CUREE and NCSL's Networked Learning Group*

## Professional development



### **D** On teaching and learning

Charles Desforges

### **D** Professional Learning Communities

David Jackson & Rachel Tasker

- Leading coaching in school networks
- Leading collaborative enquiry in school networks
- D** Leading continuing professional development in school networks: adding value, securing impact
- Professional Learning Communities: source materials for school leaders and other leaders of professional learning

**D** User guide: getting started and thinking about your journey

**D** Contents

**D** Routemap

**D** Summary

**D** Creating and sustaining an effective professional learning community

**D** Setting professional learning communities in an international context

**D** Broadening the learning community: key messages

**D** Exploring the idea of professional learning communities

**D** Investigating the culture of your professional learning community

**D** Comparing your preferred future and reality

**D** Deciding where you are as a professional learning community

**D** Planning your professional learning community

**D** Developing your professional learning community

**D** Bringing about change: starting out, developing and sustaining

**D** Reflecting on the progress of your professional learning community

**D** Assessing the impact of your professional learning community

**D** Source materials presentation

### **D** Learning about ICT in learning networks

- Tracing the footprints of practice

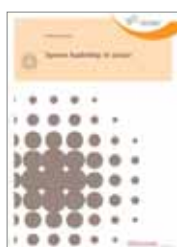
Jane McGregor, Michael Fielding & Carol Robinson

## HEI partnerships



### **D** Learning about HEI partnerships in learning networks

## Leadership



**D Networked Learning Communities: Capacity Building, Networking and Leadership for Learning**

David Hopkins & David Jackson

**D Leadership Development**

Michael Fullan, Ann Kilcher & Ron Walker

**D Building Capacity**

David Jackson

**D The Headteacher – Guardian of Leverage for School Improvement**

David Jackson & Gene Payne

• **System leadership in action**

**D Booklet 1: Where do system leaders come from?**

**D Booklet 2: What does a system leader do?**

**D Booklet 3: Networks as a proving ground for system leaders**

**D Booklet 4: System leaders in profile**

• **Leadership in networks: patterns and practices**

Michael Jopling & David Crandall with Louise Stoll

**D What is leadership capacity?**

Alma Harris & Linda Lambert

## Local authorities



• **Spreading innovation across local authorities: networking and collaboration**

**D Spreading innovation, Testing systemic solutions**

**D Spreading innovation, Creating a national network**

**D Spreading innovation, Realising the potential of school-based networks**

**D Spreading innovation, Tools of the trade**

**D Local authority in a network-based system.**

Valerie Hannon & David Jackson



# Index

## Nexus magazine series

Nexus magazine combines thought-provoking articles and examples of networked learning in action. Each issue explores a theme and Nexus is aimed at anyone with an interest in the practice of school networks.



### Nexus issue 1, Leadership, winter 2004

D

The launch issue of Nexus contains a selection of think pieces and accounts about the complexities, challenges and opportunities of working and learning together in collaborative ways.



### Nexus issue 2, Pupil voice, spring 2004

D

Pupil voice in networks is the focus of this edition of Nexus. It includes articles which share the voices of pupils in networks and illustrates how young people and adults can work together to create new forms of knowledge and understanding.



### Nexus issue 3, Pupil learning, summer 2004

D

This issue of Nexus focuses on the impact school networks are having on learning. It explores how school networks can add value to pupil learning in ways that would not be possible by the same schools working alone. It also explores how school networks can provide a more diverse range of learning solutions than individual schools.

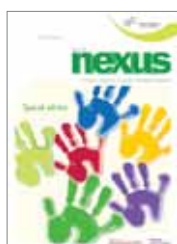


### Nexus issue 4, Leadership theme, winter 2005

D

This edition of Nexus explores a number of key ideas about leadership which have emerged from the work of NCSL's Networked Learning Communities programme. It also draws on the knowledge from the practices of leadership in other school networks. The articles draw upon network knowledge, network narratives and our learning internationally. They collectively explore three different themes:

- 1 distributed leadership
- 2 learning-centred leadership
- 3 leadership for moral purpose



### Nexus special edition, Primary Learning Networks, spring 2005

D

Nexus magazine was originally created to celebrate and share the work of NLCs, but later broadened its scope to share practice about all learning networks. We created this special edition by collating and revising the most appropriate Nexus articles specifically for anyone involved with Primary Learning Networks.

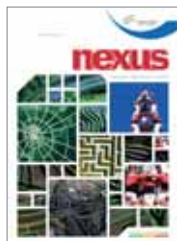




### Nexus issue 5, Education partnerships and collaborations, summer 2005

D

This issue, developed in partnership with the DfES Innovation Unit, focuses on different network types – drawing on the range of initiatives which characterise the current education system.



### Nexus issue 6, Network leadership in action, autumn 2005

D

This edition of Nexus magazine focuses on how school leaders in networks are working together to change the lives of pupils. It explores how school networks are improving the educational system for all, specifically focusing on the relationship between networks and system leadership.



### Nexus special edition, Leadership network, spring 2006

D

This edition of Nexus brings together the views and findings from school leaders, practitioners and academics who have taken part in research and enquiry activity within and across schools. All have contributed to thinking about how, in the UK, the next phase of school reform can be tackled.

## Other publications of interest:



### Primary Strategy Learning Networks Directory

D

The Primary Strategy Learning Networks Directory is available to all schools in learning networks. The directory allows networks to locate and contact other networks with a similar learning focus. Learning networks can also update their own action plans or network details on the online version.



### Artefact creation in learning networks

D

A guide to creating network artefacts to ensure effective knowledge-transfer.

### Learning conversations in learning networks

D

A guide which describes some of the ways in which your professional conversations can become focused, structured and well-facilitated in order that transformational learning can take place.



### Writing research and enquiry summaries

D

This practical booklet, produced by NCSL and CUREE, provides guidelines which support the development of informative research summaries that are attractive to and useable by teachers in networks.

# Notes

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