

The ‘What are we learning about...?’ series is designed to make public the learning that has emerged from NCSL’s Networked Learning Communities (NLC) programme and other initiatives during the last two years. The aim is to generate useful and usable knowledge for practitioners and policy-makers. We intend to produce readable and practical publications, that enable some of the current learning about networking and collaboration, from both NLCs and the wider knowledge-base, to be shared more widely.

Each edition in the series will include:

- Accounts of practice, written by practitioners, that provide concrete examples of networked learning.
- Articles and think pieces drawn from the public knowledge-base that try to make sense of what is known in order to provoke and inform new thinking.
- Development tools and data-sets that enable system leaders and network leaders to work with others in order to develop, analyse and reflect on practice.

What are we learning about...?

Community leadership in networks

In this third edition in the series, 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 homogenous 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

These ideas are then illustrated through a series of think pieces, accounts of practice and development tools. They are intended to enable you to engage with theory, practice and policy perspectives on the best of what we are learning about developing community leadership within a networked landscape. We hope that the publication will be of interest – if you are considering developing community leadership activities within networks, schools and other organisations, or if you are simply interested in finding out more about community leadership in networks.

What are we learning about...?

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The first nine titles in the series will focus on:
What are we learning about...?

- LEA involvement in school networks
- Establishing a network of schools
- **Community leadership in networks**
- ‘*Making mathematics count*’ in school networks
- The impact of school networks
- Sustaining a network of schools
- Facilitation within school networks
- Professional development in school networks
- Leadership of school networks

To order a copy of this series, please email
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WAWLA/Community leadership

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What are we learning about...?

Community leadership in networks

“Organisations can sometimes appear impenetrable to those on the ‘outside’. Networks are less so. That is why we need to understand more about community leadership in networks and its role in building the all important relationships within and between schools and their communities.”

John West-Burnham