

Networked Learning Group at ICSEI

From transmission to collaborative learning; best evidence in continuing professional development

This interactive symposium explores the characteristics of effective collaborative Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for teachers through modelling the use of evidence and research. The work developed from a systematic review of the impact of CPD on teaching and learning conducted through the EPPI-Centre at the University of London.

A group of teachers are testing and interpreting the challenges and recommendations suggested by the findings in relation to the development of their practice in Networked Learning Communities

(NLCs). This is a research and development programme comprising 109 networks of schools throughout England where practitioners explicitly privilege collaborative learning opportunities such as coaching and collective enquiry.

The symposium offers the opportunity to examine what it means to learn from what is frequently described as 'best practice', exploring how this may be made available to others to collaboratively learn from. It will be of particular appeal to those interested in collaborative and innovative ways of promoting sustainable school improvement and transformation.

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Jane McGregor

Jane McGregor taught in secondary schools in England for some years and worked as a member of the Senior Leadership team in her last post in a village college. As a Research Fellow in Educational Policy at Lucy Cavendish College she explored collaboration and collegiality in the secondary school workplace and also established the Lucy Cavendish Education Network. Her current research, based at the Open University in Milton Keynes, focuses on teacher workplace cultures.

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As a research associate at Cambridge University and an associate advisor for Cambridgeshire LEA. Jane has been involved with a variety of school improvement projects and is a member of NCSL's Networked Learning Group. She is currently working with the Networked Learning Communities initiative and is co-editing a book series, 'Improving Schools', for Continuum with Professor Alma Harris.



Philippa Cordingley

Philippa Cordingley is the founder and the Chief Executive of the rapidly growing Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE). As adviser to the DfES, the National Union of Teachers (NUT), NCSL, the General Teaching Council (GTC) and as Chief Professional Adviser on research to the Teacher Training Agency (1995 to 2001) she has instigated,

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designed and developed a range of strategies, policies and support programmes to increase teacher interest in, access to and use of research. She is a board member of The Education Network (TEN), a member of the National Steering Group for the Networked Learning Communities initiative and a school governor.

Networked Learning Group at ICSEI

Learning Internationally

6-9 January 2004

Beurs World Trade Centre

Rotterdam

The National College for School Leadership's (NCSL) Networked Learning Group is committed to learning both from and with educational research and development internationally. We are also seeking to contribute, through partnership and collaborative working arrangements, to generating understanding about sustainable learning communities that value practitioner and academic knowledge equally.

Outlined in this leaflet are three symposia, co-authored and presented by practitioners from Networked Learning Community schools in England, partners from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) Innovation Unit, CUREE (Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education) and representatives from NCSL's Networked Learning Group.

Each symposium will generate interactive and challenging learning exchanges where advocates of practice and theory can come together to learn from, with and on behalf of the ICSEI community.

We look forward to meeting you.

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Networked Learning Communities programme - what are we learning?

There will be a very short outline of the core principles of the Networked Learning Communities (NLC) programme in order to orientate symposium participants.

Paper 1: The development of good networks – what are we learning?

This paper will set out some of the key learning strands surrounding network design, incentivisation, implementation, internal leadership and external facilitation. Examples from practice will be used. Additionally, key learning points around what appears not to work will be made.

Paper 2: Characteristics of networked learning – what are we learning?

This paper will draw from the programme-wide enquiry and research activity of the first year to present emerging theoretical constructs and design principles that characterise successful school-to-school networks. In particular, it will seek to identify transferable principles of practice that might be of benefit to other network-based programmes.

Paper 3: Learning from, with and on behalf of the system – what are we learning?

This paper offers a synthesis of the emerging themes of wider system significance, and describes the way in which policy formulation processes are being influenced by 'networked learning'. It will outline the ways in which the Networked Learning Communities programme is engaging with the emerging policy agenda in the UK.

Seminar participants will be invited to select one of these three levels of analysis and to contribute knowledge from their own practice, their analysis and critical thinking. These facilitated discussions will be analysed in real time and played back in the final session.

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David Jackson



David Jackson began teaching in 1971. From 1987 until November 2000 he was the headteacher of Sharnbrook Upper School and Community College in North Bedfordshire – a community comprehensive which then had 1550 students, with a Sixth Form of over 500. In November 2000, David became Director of the Research and School Improvement Group (RSIG) at NSCL, which was founded upon a commitment to enquiry-based models of leadership. The initial programme of activity established five themed research and development strands: Successful Leadership in Urban and Challenging Contexts; Building Capacity for School Development; New Visions for Early Headship; Learning from Best Practice Worldwide; and Networked Learning Communities (NLCs).

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The growth and success of this last 'development and research' programme led, in April 2002, to the founding of NCSL's Networked Learning Group, specifically to implement Networked Learning Communities and to generate knowledge about 'networked learning'. Since September 2003, there have been 109 NLCs (incorporating over 1,200 schools) across the country. David is currently Strategic Director of the Networked Learning Group, a Director of NCSL and a member of the recently appointed Strategy Group for the government's Innovation Unit. He is also currently working with a DFES initiated project on networking and collaboration designed to help inform future policy development in this area.

Valerie Hannon

Valerie was until 1999 the Director of Education of Derbyshire County Local Education Authority (LEA). She was an adviser to the Local Government Association, Chair of the East Midlands Chief Education Officers and an executive member of the Association of Chief Education Officers. Formerly Deputy Director of Education in Sheffield, she has worked in a broad range of LEAs. Before joining local government she was a senior research fellow in the University of Sheffield, and a teacher.

In 1996 Valerie Hannon was appointed by the Secretary of State to be a member of the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education, which produced the report All Our Futures (1999, Department for Education and Employment /

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Department for Culture Media and Sport). She has subsequently worked to promote creativity in learning, teaching and leadership, acting as adviser to a number of LEAs, to the DFES, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), and to the Creative Partnerships initiative. She has worked independently with a range of LEAs and other public agencies interested in innovative approaches to the raising of standards. She is a regular contributor to conferences and seminars on these themes.

Her interests include the contribution of other sectors (particularly the creative and cultural sectors) to the transformation of education in the 21st century; the role of leadership and of research; and international approaches to these issues.



Jasbir Mann



Jasbir taught in a Bradford community school before moving to Loughborough to teach in a newly opened 11-14 high school. She then spent four years at the Centre for Multicultural Education, first as an advisory teacher for language support and then as an advisory teacher for multicultural education. This gave her an opportunity to work with a variety of schools and organisations, develop curriculum resources and raise awareness of multicultural/antiracist issues.

Jasbir then moved into primary education and became a headteacher of a large community primary school in Leicester for seven years where she was the primary headteacher representative on the Leicester City Partnership Board; the

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role of the board was to monitor the work of the Education Department following a poor OFSTED inspection.

In October 2000, Jasbir took up a secondment with Leicester School Development Support Agency which was set up as an advocate and catalyst for school improvement. Her role as Assistant Director was to support the headteacher school networks in Leicester.

Jasbir is currently the Facilitator Co-ordinator in NCSL's Networked Learning Group and is a Magistrate and Trustee of the Leicester Mercury Action Trust which helps groups and individuals working within their communities across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

New Perspectives on Leadership

The following thematic foci are taken as the basis for exploring new perspectives on leadership for learning and sustainable school improvement. By drawing upon research, practitioner and policy perspectives and facilitating discussion around key issues focused on the challenges of leadership in different learning contexts, we aim to engage congress participants through an interactive exchange.

Presentation 1: Striving for sustainability; re-designing leadership for learning in Networked Learning Communities

By focusing upon the work of the NCSL's Networked Learning Communities programme, this presentation explores the rationale for re-designing leadership for learning as a means of supporting sustainable improvement in schools. The paper explores the conceptual models of learning utilised within the programme and examines, from a practitioner perspective, the practical implications

of developing 'distributed leadership', 'learning-centred leadership' and 'leadership for capacity building' within networked learning contexts.

Presentation 2: Leadership learning to system change? Lessons from the NCSL's New Visions programme and implications for collaborative leadership learning

NCSL's programme, New Visions for Early Headship, represents an innovative approach to sustained leadership learning for new headteachers. With a robust theoretical framework built around constructivist approaches, an emphasis on process and contextual learning, and a focus on creating flexible provision on a national scale, the success of the programme has significant implications for developing collaborative leadership learning. Drawing upon extensive evaluation data, the presentation will explore the extent to which this form of leadership learning has implications for personal and organisational change in schools.

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Karen Carter

Having joined NCSL in 2001 as Assistant Director in the Research Group, Karen is now working as Co-leader for the Network Consultancy within NCSL's Networked Learning Communities programme. She started out her professional life as a primary school teacher and then worked mainly in the University sector in lecturing and research roles at the Institute of Education, Manchester Metropolitan University and the Centre for School

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Improvement at the University of Bath. She has been an avid enthusiast of action research and practitioner enquiry throughout her career. Her recent publications include work on distributed leadership, enquiry-based leadership and the facilitation of practitioner enquiry within networked learning contexts.



Jane Creasy



Jane is currently Assistant Director of NCSL's Networked Learning Group at the National College for School Leadership and leads the New Visions Programme for Early Headship, an innovative twelve-month programme, currently running in twenty regional groups around the country. She works with a small team of colleagues who have acknowledged expertise and reputation in the field of educational leadership on both the programme design and the support and development of facilitators and consultant heads.

Before she joined NCSL, Jane was head of Sir John Lawes School, a mixed 11-18 comprehensive in Hertfordshire, for nearly ten

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years. The school enhanced its reputation significantly over this period and grew from under 600 students to 1100. Students and staff celebrated a number of achievements whilst retaining a strong commitment to fully inclusive and collaborative approaches. Having been named as 'outstanding' after its second inspection, the school became a Beacon school in 2000. Shortly before Jane left, it achieved specialist Media Arts status.

Prior to leaving Sir John Lawes School, Jane was involved in a range of leadership development work and undertook a part-time secondment with her local authority to develop the County's Leadership Strategy.

Chris Cotton

Chris Cotton is the Managing Director of an educational services company, which provides training, research and consultancy for schools and operates a teacher recruitment and employment agency service in Yorkshire. For 17 years of his 34 years in the profession Chris was the headteacher of a large 11-18 Catholic comprehensive school in West Yorkshire, having worked in schools on Merseyside, in Monmouthshire and in Pontypridd. As head he led the school's involvement in a number of school improvement research studies including: the IQEA project, with the University of Cambridge; the Moving Schools project, with the University of Nottingham; and the DTI MELSO project. He

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recently completed an MPhil at Manchester University, which examined the lives of headteachers in successful secondary schools. He has presented interim papers on this topic at ICSEI 1999 and at BERA 2001. He has been involved as an adviser in the government programmes for performance management and threshold assessment and is a trainer for the Leadership Programme for Serving Headteachers. He is currently working on a number of initiatives with NCSL's Network Learning Group. His education interests and areas of particular expertise are in the fields of leadership, school improvement, values, spirituality and the professional development of teachers.

