

“When a school is regarded as the centre of change, strategies for change need to take this new perspective into account, focusing upon expanding the capacity (the internal organisational characteristics) of the school to take control of its own development (the ‘inside-out’ theory).

“A key component of any modern concept of capacity will involve socially and contextually distributed forms of leadership to support teaching and learning, which can also be further utilised through the dissemination of ‘good practice’ between schools.”

**Networked Learning Communities – Capacity Building,
Networking and Leadership for Learning**

David Hopkins and David Jackson

Available now
Quote ref. 002/SW/NLC

The concepts and theories covered within this paper draw upon a wide range of sources. Together, they provide both a theoretical background and the underpinning values for the Networked Learning Communities initiative. In particular, the paper explores, in an accessible way, the principles of capacity building, networking and distributed leadership.

Essential reading for co-leaders and headteachers of networked schools, this paper has the potential to be a valuable, shared-reading and talking piece for all networks as they join the programme. It is useful background reading and complements the other resources we are offering in this area. It would be an ideal starting point for a leadership learning group within a network.

Professor David Hopkins, co-author of this paper, was previously Professor of Education at the University of Nottingham. David is now Director of the Standards and Effectiveness Unit at the Department for Education and Skills.

David Jackson is Strategic Director of the Networked Learning Group at NCSL and Co-leader of the Networked Learning Communities initiative.

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“The term ‘professional learning community’ is used to describe a school committed to achieving a culture of collective learning and creativity that is characterised by: shared values and vision; supportive and distributed leadership; collaborative professional norms; an enquiry orientation; and facilitative organisational conditions.”

Adapted from the work of the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory

Professional Learning Communities – A Think Piece

David Jackson and Rachel Tasker

Available now
Quote ref. 009/SW/NLC

This short paper is designed to stimulate thinking about professional learning communities. By drawing upon the work of the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, a private, not-for-profit education research and development (R&D) corporation based in Texas, and upon work being carried out in this country by the DfES, GTC and NCSL, it attempts to explain what such communities look like and why schools and Networked Learning Communities might strive towards working in this way. It also highlights examples of successful practice within the education system.

Co-leaders and members of Networked Learning Communities may find this paper of interest in framing ideas and discussion as they consider the development of schools within the network as professional learning communities. The content and format of the paper is very accessible and will provide a context for more in-depth thinking and future action.

David Jackson is Strategic Director of the Networked Learning Group at NCSL and Co-leader of the Networked Learning Communities initiative.

Rachel Tasker was a writer/ researcher for the Networked Learning Group of NCSL.

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“The terms ‘capacity’ or ‘capacity building’, increasingly widely used by theorists, are not yet part of the language of school development and improvement for many practitioners.”

Building Capacity – Developing Your School

Mark Hadfield, Christopher Chapman,
Ian Curryer and Penny Barnett

Available now
Quote ref. 014/SW/NLC

This comprehensive, but accessible, booklet aims to bridge the gap between research and practice in the area of building capacity within schools. It is based on work with 50 notably successful school leaders and has been written and designed as a tool to help practitioners to reflect both on what they do and the theories, formal and informal, which underpin their work.

The publication uses a variety of formats and is designed as a stimulus for new thinking and action.

It is arranged into three sections:

1) Capacity and Capacity Building – Metaphors and Models, 2) Practical Principles and Strategies to Build Capacity, and 3) Issues and Implications.

Either by working with the document as a whole or in sections, this resource could be used as a stimulus for learning and development with any group of school leaders within your network.

Its focus on the voice of the practitioner is a real strength and the innovative format provides an interesting contrast with Networked Learning Communities – Capacity Building, Networking and Leadership for Learning by Jackson and Hopkins. The two artefacts could be used together or in isolation.

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This innovative research project was undertaken in 2002 and led by Mark Hadfield from the Centre of Research into Teacher and School Development, University of Nottingham, on behalf of the National College for School Leadership. Mark is currently Co-leader of the Learning Exchange with the Networked Learning Communities programme.

‘Our network is developing a programme which was created in one of our schools for children with Dyslexia. The programme has now been developed to use in three of the schools in our network. We are keen to set up this work as a research project and feel that the Research Lesson Study project would be the ideal way to undertake this research.’

Pendle Small Schools
Learning Community NLC

Research Lesson Study
Development and enquiry programme

www.ncsl.org.uk/nlc

A research lesson is a lesson that is designed, observed and analysed by more than one teacher (and sometimes pupils). It focuses around the intended and actual learning of 'case' pupils. The lesson is discussed, the findings are recorded and the new knowledge is generated. The overall result of the study captures (at times using video) replicable practices which can be accessed across schools, phases, networks and subjects.

This development and enquiry programme aims to put teachers in NLCs in touch with each other and to find practical ways of supporting their classroom enquiries – to help them help each other to:

- solve identified learning, teaching, curricular or assessment questions
- try out approaches which will create new ways of learning and teaching
- apply tried-and-tested techniques and important theories to new situations.

Participants will be involved in:

- the identification of a large problem or innovation of interest to them and their school
- the design, observation and analysis of a series of research lessons
- working with colleagues from other schools and networks

Participants will be involved in a range of enquiry activities focused around their NLC's pupil learning focus. The main activity will be through research lessons and sharing the knowledge and skills that the participants develop in teaching and enquiry. More broadly, it hopes to persuade policy makers that studying lessons in this way has real potential and direct benefit for learning, teaching, professional development and our pedagogic knowledge-base. Both the research and the development group members will regularly interact through the programme's online enquiry community and meet through research lesson development and enquiry seminars.

For further information, please visit www.ncsl.org.uk/nlc or contact Alison Wenham on 08707 870 370 or email alison.wenham@ncsl.org.uk

‘Reorganisation of the leadership teams has taken place in two of the three identified schools for this programme. In one it has been formed for the first time. This is an important time to grow these new teams – to learn from and with each other. All three schools believe they are on a journey where significant school improvement can be realised with improved leadership at all levels of the school.’

South West Area of Northants (SWAN)
NLC

**Developing Capacity for Sustaining
Networked Learning Communities**
Development and enquiry programme

www.ncsl.org.uk/nlc

The framework of this programme has been based on a well-researched model, NCSL's Developing Capacity for Sustained School Improvement programme. More than 200 leadership teams from all phases have been through the pilot programmes which have been developed to provide a network focus.

Participants will be involved in:

- considering the next 'big idea' for the network
- exploring their existing capacity to implement the 'big idea' and how this may need to be developed
- working with consultants and facilitators over 18 months to put this 'big idea' into practice

The programme will evolve over the next two years to meet the changing needs of the networks.

For further information, please visit www.ncsl.org.uk/nlc or contact Ann Wood on 08707 870 370 or email ann.wood@ncsl.org.uk

‘Why Networked Learning Communities?’, 2002

Available now
Quote ref. 027/SW/NLC

This DVD portrays examples of the six levels of learning on which the principles of the Networked Learning Communities programme have been based:

- pupil learning
- adult learning
- leadership learning
- school-wide learning
- school-to-school learning
- network-to-network learning

The emphasis when producing the product was on producing authentic stories from six different networks, detailing current, innovative practice. This provides a snap-shot of promising practices as we gather evidence about what networks are doing.

The six portraits have been developed on DVD so that the viewer can choose an area of interest and relevance at will. The utilisation and, indeed, the sequence of the footage can then be determined by the viewer.

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