



Working together: how local authorities and dioceses are jointly supporting effective succession planning and leadership development in schools

Resource

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While this publication focuses exclusively on the work undertaken by local authorities and dioceses, the implications for joint working and collaboration are equally applicable to providers of all schools with a religious character.

Contents

Introduction	2
Core values	2
Structure of this document	2
Sharing knowledge and expertise	3
Case study 1: East of England Region	4
School workforce data: supply and demand information about senior leaders	5
Case study 2: London Region	6
Recruitment of senior leaders	7
Case study 3: South-west Region	8
Case study 4: West Midlands Region	9
Leadership development planning	10
Case study 5: South-west Region	11
Leadership development programmes	13
Case study 6: South-west Region	14
Case study 7: London Region	15
Case study 8: North-east Region	16
Case study 9: North-east Region	17
Case study 10: Yorkshire and the Humber Region	18
Case study 11: South-west Region	19
Models of leadership	20
Case study 12: West Midlands Region	21
Case study 13: West Midlands Region	22
Case study 14: London Region	23
Appendix 1: Case study themes	24
Appendix 2: Dioceses referred to in the case studies	25

Introduction

This publication has been written primarily for local authority and diocesan colleagues involved in succession planning and leadership development. It has been developed for a number of reasons:

- There is some excellent joint work between local authorities and dioceses.
- Such good practice is not yet sufficiently widespread, nor shared and publicised across the system.
- There are some common core values which the case studies suggest are critical to effective joint working.

Furthermore, although our school system relies on a strong partnership between dioceses and local authorities in their respective roles as providers of schools, there is a surprising absence of examples showing how these two key partners work together or are expected to work together. So this publication is also contributing to the development of a better understanding about the choices that local authorities and dioceses can make about how to work effectively together.

This publication has been designed primarily to illustrate, via a series of case studies, what good practice can look like. In that sense, it is not an academic study but a snapshot of current work suggested either by dioceses or local authorities, or through the recommendations of the National College's national succession consultants. The style adopted is deliberately conversational, with the case studies based on a series of discussions with the individuals concerned. We think that this will have a greater impact as the language used and the issues considered should resonate with local authorities and diocesan colleagues across the country.

In considering the relationship between local authorities, dioceses and schools, it is important at the outset to acknowledge the distinctive nature of the partners and their different statutory rights and obligations as well as the different financial arrangements that pertain. For example, dioceses are not structured or funded to act as local authorities, and dioceses and local authorities have very few shared geographic boundaries; the same is true of Anglican and Catholic dioceses. However, notwithstanding the dual nature of much of the current school system¹ with the great majority of school places being provided either by local authorities or dioceses, the case studies presented here make clear how strong links can be forged and effective practice developed.

Core values

So what are the core values which can be discerned from the collection of case studies presented here? While effective practice can manifest itself in quite distinctive day-to-day practice, there are some very strong underpinning common themes which emerge.

We have identified four:

- **Personal relationships** are fundamental. In most cases, the relationships in question have been built up over many years. There is frequent, purposeful communication between dioceses and local authorities, and opportunities, sometimes formal, sometimes not, to develop that relationship.

And this personal relationship is built on three elements:

- **Knowledge:** this refers to knowledge of the statutory basis of how each sector works including any changes that occur to statutory duties as a result of new legislation; it also includes knowledge by each partner about the operation of the specific systems within each organisation.
- **Respect:** this refers especially to the distinctiveness of the contribution each partner makes and how this contributes to each partner's statutory duties and purpose.
- **Trust:** this refers especially to the integrity with which each partner works and the way in which joint work between local authorities and dioceses has built up trust over a period of time.

Given the core values noted above and the time these have taken to evolve and become established, it is perhaps not surprising that there are some dioceses and local authorities where there is, as yet, not a particularly strong tradition of joint working; and indeed some cases where these relationships have become fractured and need sustaining. For example, a high turnover of staff or restructuring that has created uncertainty about specific staff responsibilities can contribute to the success or failure of links between local authorities and dioceses.

Structure of this document

This publication has been arranged in relation to six key themes covering the majority of the activity around which dioceses and local authorities can typically co-operate with regard to leadership development. Each section identifies a number of features of effective practice which are then briefly illustrated by reference to specific case studies.

The case studies themselves are published as separate, stand-alone narratives. Their location in the publication is primarily determined by the extent to which the focus of the case study links to a particular theme. However, the majority of case studies cover more than one theme and therefore can be referenced in more than one section.

Appendix 1 provides a summary of the key themes with regard to particular case studies.

¹ The dual nature of the school system refers to how the majority of school places are provided: either by local authorities or by dioceses. Dioceses provide about 30 per cent of primary school and 15 per cent of secondary school places in England.

Sharing knowledge and expertise

A key feature of effective practice includes detailed and extensive knowledge about the work each partner undertakes. This can manifest itself in a number of ways:

- Key personnel in dioceses and local authorities provide each other with regular updates on trends and themes with regard to succession planning and leadership development.
- They advise and as necessary consult each other on changes of practice or policy that might impact on any aspect of leadership and leadership development.
- They have good knowledge and make sure each other is up to date regarding the relevant statutory requirements and regulations relating to community schools and schools with a religious character.
- Representatives from schools or providers of schools with a religious character are on the local authority's succession planning strategy group or equivalent.

The case studies provide some important illustrations of how this manifests itself in practice.

Example 1

Tony Gammage (p4) reflects on the long tradition of collaboration between the local authorities and dioceses in the East of England Region and how this history has helped them tackle succession planning in creative ways, maximising the use of the available resources.

Example 2

Debbie Innes (p11) describes how in Gloucestershire, the Local Authority and the Anglican Diocese of Gloucester work together at different levels. In addition to the Diocesan Director of Education and senior local authority officers meeting regularly, she also notes that this is matched by links at an operational level especially with those involved in succession planning, leadership development, new models of leadership and governor support. There is also a Diocesan representative on the local succession strategy group.

Debbie also stresses the importance of keeping each other informed about changes in practice, describing the links with the Diocesan Adviser for governors and making sure they are both aware of personnel changes, new legislation and the increasing commissioning role of the local authority.

Example 3

Chris Harries (p8) from Wiltshire Local Authority stresses the importance of sharing information and agreeing protocols such as the information flow in relation to headteacher recruitment. He also makes the telling point that it took dioceses and the Local Authority two years to develop the agreed guidance for headteacher appointments and that in doing so good working relationships were further improved.

Example 4

Colin Powell (p15) from the Diocese of Southwark notes that the Diocese is an associate partner with Kingston, Merton, Croydon, Richmond, Sutton and Wandsworth Local Authorities as part of the sub-regional leadership development project in south-west London. He notes that by working together they have been able to offer a far more joined-up approach to support for schools.

Example 5

Andy Brown from the North-east Region (p16) says how important good relationships are; a major aspect of his work involves brokering meetings with key people, generating and sharing information and breaking down any perceived barriers. It is also about seeing the diocese and the local authority as equal partners.

Case study 1: East of England Region

This case study was provided by Norwich Diocesan Consultant, Tony Gammage. After teaching, helping to write a Nuffield A-level science course and being an adviser, Tony became Chief Inspector for Norfolk Local Authority for 10 years and served on the National Curriculum Committee.

We are fortunate in that the East of England Region has a long tradition of collaboration between local authorities and dioceses and this history has helped us to tackle succession planning in creative ways, maximising the resources available to us.

In recent years we have built on this by developing a policy on succession planning for all staff in the Diocese of Norwich and this has led to the creation of some support programmes that are starting to have a very positive impact. Our flexible internships allow school staff to gain experience in schools with a different designation from their own. For example, those in schools with a religious character can gain experience in community schools and vice versa. The internships can be any length from weeks to months. We arrange them through the Diocese and the teachers involved then have concrete experience to support their applications for the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH).

Another area of collaboration between the Diocese of Norwich and Norfolk Local Authority is governor training. Rather than running separate programmes, we have opted for a unified approach which forms a solid basis of support for governors and has an optional unit on governance in a church school.

Now we're looking to the future and running a joint venture with regional Catholic dioceses that will provide an optional NPQH face-to-face training day on church school leadership as part of the NPQH programme. We are developing a Church of England secondary high school in south Norfolk as a training school, in collaboration with Norfolk Local Authority. This has the potential to become a training centre for multi-agency use including the police, social services, health services and the voluntary sector. The Diocese of Norwich also works closely with the neighbouring Dioceses of Ely and St Edmundsbury and Ipswich (covering over 280 church schools) under the banner *Church Schools East*. One focus is on school succession planning, and collaboration is being extended to include other dioceses in the Region.

A central part of our collaboration with Norfolk Local Authority is the mutual sharing of information on schools. The National College recognises the Diocese of Norwich as an authority, alongside the Local Authority, for releasing information on NPQH graduates so we can now target more effectively those who have gained NPQH but have not yet secured a headship post. We have also worked collaboratively on building clear pictures of each church school in the area, looking, for example, at staffing, previous Ofsted inspections, Section 48 inspections, planning for future population needs and the state of school buildings. This has allowed us to identify potential partnerships between the Diocese and the Local Authority in planning church schools for the future and exploring collaborative arrangements (akin to soft federations) where groups of two or three schools appoint one head whilst retaining separate governing bodies. In Norfolk there are now well over 20 schools working in this way and benefiting from additional Local Authority funding of £19,000 for each collaborative arrangement.

Other collaborations are now extending to cover all the Church of England dioceses and local authorities in the East of England Region where funding for diversity projects is being pooled to encourage greater effectiveness and mutual support. This will feed into our work in encouraging, for example, more women and those from ethnic minority groups into headship roles in the area.

We are already seeing clear impacts from these initiatives, most importantly in raising awareness of support for those who are considering the next steps towards headship. We have made it far easier for these staff to gain valuable experience through the internship programme and brokered stronger links with the Catholic dioceses and local authorities in the Region. This is being achieved through the search for common ground, of which there is plenty, rather than by identifying differences. It's through this commitment to identifying common ground that real collaboration is developing.

School workforce data: supply and demand information about senior leaders

However strong and effective the links are between dioceses and local authorities, they need to be supported by effective and regular data exchange (for example, anticipated headteacher retirement or resignation rates) so that both partners can consider succession planning requirements in their area jointly. The need for good school workforce data (for example, the age profile of headteachers) is a relatively new issue for many local authorities and dioceses. It parallels the general shift from being reactive to being proactive with regard to succession planning and recognises that it is no longer an option to leave succession planning to the market. The need for good, reliable information about the supply and demand of school leaders has become critical.

The range of information that dioceses and local authorities need to consider about the school workforce (and in particular senior school workforce) might include:

- age profile of existing senior leaders
- recruitment data such as the number and type of applicants
- demand and supply estimates for senior leader positions over the next few years
- relevant information such as school place planning (as it might relate to senior post requirements) or workforce trends
- numbers of aspiring leaders including (where known) those engaged on leadership development programmes such as those who might apply for, have been successful in gaining a place on, or completing, NPQH

Data analysis is an area where difficulties can occur. First, there is the need for caution in order to ensure that the requirements of data protection legislation are upheld. Second, data is often collected by different departments within a local authority (or outsourced to external agencies) which can lead to incompatible data sets; equally if schools do not buy in services such as payroll, data analysis may be partial.

At the same time there is a growing understanding of the importance of data to inform succession planning strategies. Local authorities have traditionally been a key source for this information; increasingly, dioceses² are engaged in developing relevant and complementary data sets.

The case studies show how the need for a comprehensive picture is beginning to be addressed.

Example 1

Colin Powell from the Diocese of Southwark (p6) shows that its approach has been to focus on aspiring leaders so that training can be more effectively targeted. In essence this has been by asking heads to indicate who in their team is aspiring to a leadership position. Once developed, the database (the development of which is being supported by a small National College grant) can be used to target support and training for them.

Example 2

Tony Gammage from the Diocese of Norwich (p4) notes that a central part of its collaboration with Norfolk Local Authority is sharing information on schools. The National College has recognised the Diocese as an authority, alongside the Local Authority, for releasing information on NPQH graduates. This has meant that the Diocese is now able to target more effectively those who have gained NPQH but have not yet secured a headship post. This is part of a process that the Diocese has put in place for developing a clear picture of each faith school in the area, looking, for example, at staffing, previous Ofsted inspections, Section 48 inspections and population estimates.

² There is some data collected nationally for schools with a religious character. For example, in 2009 the Catholic Education Service published its *Digest of 2008 Census Data for Schools* (ISBN: 978-1-903533-23-9) which included, on a diocese-by-diocese basis, headteacher vacancies and the number of staff holding or undertaking NPQH.

Case study 2: London Region

This case study has been provided by Colin Powell. Colin is Primary Adviser for the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education. Prior to this, he was a School Improvement Inspector in an outer London borough following 10 successful years as a primary headteacher in an outstanding Church of England primary school.

We are in the process of setting up a database of aspiring leaders in our schools so that we can target our training more effectively. This is a great way for local authorities and dioceses to collaborate relatively easily, sharing information that will help us to prepare school leaders for the future. We have been writing to all our schools asking heads to indicate who in their team is aspiring to a leadership position. We want existing heads to do a bit of talent spotting. Once we have this database of individuals, we can explore working collaboratively to target support and training for them.

We have approached this in a fairly formal way. We have someone in post now using some money we received from a National College grant with the purpose of setting up a database that can be relatively easily maintained as an administrative job. We then hope to build on this local intelligence by finding out what the people who are identified aspire to and then will work towards creating a path for that. This is helping to give us a far wider audience for the work that we're doing. The earlier we can target people, the better we will be at identifying career paths for them.

I think it's true to say that first and foremost dioceses and local authorities want heads that will give us better and better schools. That's certainly the case in this area. Developing this kind of data exchange has, in our experience, helped us to target support and development with very few hurdles.

Recruitment of senior leaders

The recruitment of headteachers for schools with a religious character has been the traditional area of co-operation with regard to succession planning between local authorities and dioceses, both of which have clear statutory responsibilities in this area. Although there is extensive good practice to illustrate how this area of work can be effectively co-ordinated, our knowledge of this aspect of joint succession planning indicates that there is still some room for improvement.

The case studies suggest that there are a number of key features of effective practice:

- well-rehearsed protocols that are regularly reviewed for informing each other of relevant recruitment information
- clear understanding of the respective roles and expertise that the diocese and the local authority bring to the recruitment process for senior school leaders
- good exchange of intelligence so that the resignations of senior school leaders are usually known in advance and initial preparatory work for recruitment can take place
- shared training for governors and others involved in recruitment
- regular reviews of, and reflection on, recruitment practice and its effectiveness

The following examples show how effective recruitment is being undertaken jointly and conversely, what is being done to address a lack of candidates.

Example 1

Chris Harries from Wiltshire (p8) provides an extensive description of how the Local Authority and dioceses have worked to establish a detailed set of protocols to support headteacher recruitment.

There are some important aspects which he notes:

- the need for the Local Authority, dioceses and governing bodies to all be absolutely clear about what happens when a head resigns
- the fact that it took two years of discussion and collaboration to get the guidance right
- the importance of clear information flows
- that creating a clear system has been highly effective in building and maintaining good working relationships

He also stresses that face-to-face meetings between dioceses and the Local Authority are critical (rather than relying on mobiles and emails) as a way of building strong relationships; and that all of the effort being put into this work has meant that there is now consistency in advice and practice that was not in place before.

Example 2

Sue Dudley is a National Succession Consultant (p9) and she looks at how the West Midlands Regional group of dioceses and local authorities worked together to address the problem of a shortage of applicants for headteacher vacancies in schools with a religious character. In this instance, an innovative leaflet has been published, jointly badged by all 14 local authorities in the area and 6 dioceses, with the aim of encouraging teachers in community schools to consider aspiring to a leadership position in schools with a religious character.

Case study 3: South-west Region

This case study has been provided by Chris Harries. Chris is currently Senior School Improvement Adviser for Wiltshire Local Authority. His responsibilities include leading Wiltshire Local Authority's leadership succession and development strategy, school improvement partner (SIP) management and other SIP work. Chris has been a teacher, headteacher and link adviser. His qualifications include an MBA in Educational Leadership (International).

Here in Wiltshire, we identified a need for a more cohesive approach to headteacher recruitment in church schools. Appointing a new headteacher can be challenging but it's an opportunity too and that's what we wanted to harness most positively, even when the resignation and the appointment are expected. In an ideal world, there would be plenty of time to undertake succession planning and advertise for and recruit a suitable replacement, but the real world can be a very different place!

In order to make sure that we, as a Local Authority, work most effectively with local dioceses and the governing bodies of church schools seeking to recruit headteachers, we created joint recruitment guidance so that governing bodies, diocesan education boards and we as a Local Authority are all absolutely clear about what happens when a head resigns. We took two years of collaboration and discussion between Wiltshire Local Authority, Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education, Bristol Diocesan Board of Education and Clifton Roman Catholic Diocese to get the guidance absolutely right, and now we have one set of principles for everyone involved in the recruitment process, regardless of what their role is. Built into this process is an annual review of how we work together.

Looking at this development now, it's clear to me that there are some factors that have helped to make it such a success. I think the most important factor is the clear identification of relationships between everyone involved. We are all clear now about where the information overlaps are, where the links are and where the links need to be. In other words, we know where the information flow needs to go and we have identified ways of facilitating this. Diocesan advisers, Local Authority advisers, governing bodies, selection panels, the Diocesan Boards of Education and the Local Authority Recruitment Team all have clearly delineated roles. We have developed an ideal 10-week timeline from the notification of the imminent vacancy to the interview day. At each stage, everyone involved knows the information they may need to share, the information they need to get, the purpose of the meetings that need to be held and the progress that should ideally have been made. We wanted to be this detailed in our guidance so that each time there a vacancy, we are as well-equipped as possible to ensure that the new headteacher is as appropriate for the role as possible. This isn't about filling gaps, it's about knowing what a school needs with reference to its context, character and direction, and seeking a head who can best meet those needs.

Having a process like this helps us to navigate the kinds of unforeseen problems that can arise when a head resigns; problems such as governing bodies not having enough experienced governors on the recruitment panel. Recruiting a head is a necessarily long process requiring certain skills and by being organised in this way, we can help to ensure that the people with the right skills are in the right place at the right time. This has been a key strategy for us at Wiltshire and working side by side with colleagues in the local dioceses to create the guidance has been an incredibly effective way of building and maintaining sound working relationships. We actively sought to broker links originally because we knew we needed to work smarter. Now we have total confidence in our practices. We all have a sense of ownership of the guidance, regardless of where we work and who we work for, and there is nothing like a culture of blame operating. This is about good old-fashioned relationships and plenty of commonsense. We also work at meeting rather than relying on technology like mobiles and emails. One well-timed face-to-face meeting can be worth a hundred emails and phone calls. That's how we have each bought into what we are doing.

The impact of this strategy has been clear: we now have a greater consistency in advice and practice, so there's a synergy which means we work as a close group of people, rather than in our separate silos. Everyone who needs to be signed up to these procedures has signed up, and given that statistically we've had to make more appointments in the last two years than in any two-year period before, this has to be a good thing. By working coherently as a team, appointments have been made with a shared vision for our schools.

We have to be realistic though. Of course what we've done isn't perfect. But it is a tremendous improvement on what we had and we can now ensure that we all have positive work to do together rather than responding to challenges of a negative nature. Looking to the future, we are planning to work on joint guidance for recruiting middle leaders too.

Case study 4: West Midlands Region

This case study has been provided by Sue Dudley. Sue works as a National Succession Consultant for the National College, having previously worked as a secondary headteacher and local authority inspector. In all her roles, she is passionate about developing leadership in aiming for the very best outcomes for children and young people.

In the West Midlands Region we were seeing a significant lack of candidates for leadership positions in church schools in the area, both Church of England and Catholic schools, so we co-ordinated a strategic response to the problem. The West Midlands Region has a higher percentage of faith schools than the national figures, particularly in the primary phase. One approach that we took was to work collaboratively to create a leaflet titled 'Thinking about promotion... what about a leadership position in a faith school?' It covers myth-busting, a brief history of faith schools, the main points about leading a Catholic school or a Church of England school, ideas on career development and sources of professional support. A visible sign of partnership working in the West Midlands Region is the badging of the leaflet by all 14 local authorities, the National College and 6 dioceses. This leaflet has now been published and is used in hard-copy format with aspiring leaders and governing bodies. An electronic version has been sent to every school, both faith and community, in the West Midlands Region.

It is too early to talk about the impact that the published leaflet has had, but what we have seen is that by getting representatives from the National College, local dioceses and local authorities to work together on a project like this, we have facilitated much wider conversations about the issues involved. An indication of this interest has been registered by the web team at the National College, with the related web discussion being one of the most popular in terms of readers and contributors.

Leadership development planning

This section and the next consider two important, related aspects of succession planning and leadership development. This section considers good practice in effective joint planning of leadership development and succession planning programmes and opportunities, while the next section looks at the programmes and the opportunities themselves.

In terms of joint planning, the key features of effective practice appear to be:

- a commitment from all key partners to joint planning
- regular exchange of information about leadership development needs and opportunities
- a commitment to working across diocesan and local authority boundaries
- a commitment to a leadership development opportunity entitlement that includes governors
- where practicable, publication of joint leadership development programmes and opportunities, or reference to where other opportunities are available

A number of our case studies show how joint planning has been developed and is being undertaken.

Example 1

Debbie Innes from Gloucestershire Local Authority (p11) describes how the Anglican Diocese of Gloucester plays an active part on the succession planning and leadership development strategy group which is responsible for planning the programme.

Example 2

Colin Powell from the Diocese of Southwark (p15) provides perhaps the most overt example of joint planning as the Diocese is a member of the South West London School Effectiveness Partnership (SWLSEP), which consists of six Local Authorities and the Diocese.

He notes that operating in this way has meant that this group has been able to offer a far more joined-up approach than as individuals, as well as wider access to support. This has enabled the group to identify very specific and tailored programmes for aspiring leaders.

Example 3

Chris Harries from Wiltshire Local Authority (p14) describes how the joint planning of the Targeted Support programme (between the Local Authority and the Diocese of Salisbury) has ensured that the specific needs of schools with a religious character and the requirements they have of their future headteachers are always brought into focus.

Example 4

Aidan Duffy from Newcastle Local Authority and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle (p17) provides a unique insight into joint planning as he works for both a local authority and a diocese. He notes that these two roles provide the opportunity for a strong conduit of information and local intelligence which both support effective planning.

Example 5

Tony Gammage from the Diocese of Norwich (p4) stresses the importance of the long tradition that the regional local authorities and dioceses have had of working together as a basis for joint planning. He also notes how the exchange of information about schools (on NPQH graduates etc) has supported joint planning.

Case study 5: South-west Region

This case study has been provided by Debbie Innes. Debbie is Leadership Development Consultant for Gloucestershire Local Authority, having been a headteacher in two small primary schools. Debbie now has responsibility for succession planning and leadership development across all phases in Gloucestershire.

Linda Olijnyk is a trained primary school teacher, has a national vocational qualification (NVQ) at level 3 in Training and Development and in 2006 gained a Master's in Church School Education. Linda is Diocesan Adviser to Governors at the Anglican Diocese of Gloucester.

In Gloucestershire, the Local Authority and the Anglican Diocese of Gloucester work together at many different levels. The Diocesan Director of Education and senior Local Authority officers meet to discuss pertinent issues and at an operational level, the collaboration, co-operation and exchange of information happens informally between Linda Olijnyk, Diocesan Adviser to Governors, and a number of local authority officers. As I am involved in succession planning and leadership development, including the development of new models of leadership, these collaborations are particularly important to me.

I have responsibility for the Local Authority's induction programme for headship as well as a number of other leadership development activities. Linda also delivers part of this programme and the Diocese offers headteacher retreats which are available to all headteachers in the county to support the wellbeing and spiritual development of our school leaders.

Linda is a key part of the succession planning and leadership development strategy group, which comprises representatives from primary, secondary and special schools, and local authority human resources and governor officers. She actively represents the needs of our significant proportion of church schools. This means that when it comes to sharing information about the enormous number of schools we have in our county, we trust each other well enough to know that we respectfully represent each other's interests effectively. In a hectic world where the resources of both the Local Authority and the Diocese are pushed to the limit, particularly regarding personnel, there will be times when we have to act without consultation, and years of trust and mutual respect help to underpin this effective working relationship.

An example of this collaborative working in action concerns one of our voluntary-controlled Church of England schools, which was one of the first schools in the country to have a co-headship arrangement. At the time this innovative model of leadership caused some concern at the Local Authority, but with the support of the Diocese the arrangement went ahead.

This model has now evolved and one of the co-heads is taking retirement. Using my advice concerning the new headteacher recruitment legislation and Linda's advice regarding headteacher recruitment processes, the school has been able to advertise for a co-head in order to continue the very successful model it has in place.

In 2009 Gloucestershire ran a series of governor information road shows to highlight the issues of succession planning and new models of leadership. Linda and I co-led the events, pooling our knowledge and resources to facilitate group discussions and to support governors in the initial developments of succession planning using the National College governor resource pack as a starting point.

For the first time in 2009 Gloucestershire qualified for the National College Targeted Support programme. Linda and I developed the programme together, identifying key heads of faith schools who were able to inspire participants at the launch event as well as providing practical support in the placement element, showing how the ethos of the school can be maintained on a day-to-day basis.

Linda has always worked closely with representatives from governor services to aid governors in the recruitment of new headteachers and acting headteachers. We are now reviewing this process in the light of personnel changes, new legislation and the increasing commissioning role of the Local Authority. Linda is working closely with us to develop an appropriate system, building on her significant knowledge.

With the Strategic Manager for the Review of Provision, Linda and I form the capacity to support governors with leadership planning. We meet with individual governing bodies to help them explore the now considerable options available to them for the future. We keep each other updated on whom we have advised and the advice we have given, and the trust we have in each other ensures that this happens as smoothly as possible.

Case study 5: South-west Region continued

Another key example of collaborative working in Gloucestershire is the development of a management partnership between two small rural primary schools, one of which is a community school and the other a voluntary-aided Church of England (CE) school. The community school's headteacher gained a promotion to work with the Local Authority and a collaborative partnership already existed between this school and the CE school. I was able to work with the governors through their decision to adopt a temporary executive head model to allow them time to consider the future leadership model for both schools. Linda and I are on the management partnership committee for the arrangement to monitor effectiveness while it is in place. Arrangements like this simply could not happen without strong collaborations and mutual trust.

Leadership development programmes

The case studies show an extensive range of leadership development and succession planning programmes. They include a number of key features:

- programmes that support leadership development for schools with a religious character and community schools
- availability of tools such as a leadership development portfolio which encompasses the needs of community schools and those with a religious character
- the involvement of headteachers and other experienced leaders from community schools and those with a religious character in planning and implementing programmes
- a range of development opportunities such as secondments and work exchanges for aspiring leaders and experienced headteachers in community schools and those with a religious character
- local authorities, dioceses and providers of schools with a religious character working together as further leadership opportunities become available, for example, using additional funding from the National College

The following case studies indicate the range of leadership development and succession planning opportunities.

Example 1

Wiltshire Local Authority and the Diocese of Salisbury (p14) jointly support a Targeted Support programme for pre-NPQH candidates offering internships and coaching and mentoring from experienced headteachers and an accredited National College coach. The internship includes identifying an area of enquiry for the internee to follow and report on to the host school.

Example 2

The Diocese of Southwark, in association with the South West London School Effectiveness Partnership (p15), supports:

- a two-day practical programme for aspiring leaders covering a range of themes around positive leadership such as data analysis and accountability
- a two-day aspiring deputy head programme with a focus on the application and interview process and preparing for leadership posts
- a series of one-day coaching packages for NPQH graduates looking at applications for headship
- a two-day residential programme for all aspiring leaders which among other things considers the distinctiveness of schools with a religious character

Example 3

Gloucestershire Local Authority and the Anglican Diocese of Gloucester (p11) support:

- a jointly run induction programme for heads focusing on wellbeing and spiritual development; the Diocese also offers headteacher retreats
- a joint programme of governor information road shows focusing on succession planning and models of leadership
- a jointly developed Targeted Support programme involving headteachers from schools with a religious character to support the programme, including offering placements

Example 4

Newcastle Local Authority and the Catholic Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle (p16) jointly support a Targeted Support programme which includes modules on values and ethos, coaching, peer support, career advice, application, one-to-one tutorials, presentation skills, interview training and networking. It also includes an internship of five days in a setting that shares participants' faith.

Example 5

The Diocese of Norwich and Norfolk Local Authority (p4) jointly support:

- a highly flexible range of internship opportunities for aspiring leaders (eg from schools with a religious character to community schools and vice versa)
- jointly run governor training including an option on governance in a church school

Example 6

Leeds Local Authority and the Diocese of Leeds (p18) jointly support:

- secondment opportunities for aspiring leaders
- talent-spotting processes
- a development programme for aspiring leaders
- local authority and diocesan mentoring support for newly appointed headteachers

Example 7

The Diocese of Exeter and the Local Authorities of Devon, Plymouth and Torbay (p19) jointly support:

- training of clerks to governing bodies
- training of governors

Case study 6: South-west Region

This case study has been provided by Chris Harries. Chris is currently Senior School Improvement Adviser for Wiltshire Local Authority. His responsibilities include leading Wiltshire Local Authority's leadership succession and development strategy, school improvement partner (SIP) management and other SIP work. Chris has been a teacher, headteacher and link adviser. His qualifications include an MBA in Educational Leadership (International).

Like many areas, here in Wiltshire we realised that we were having significant difficulty recruiting to church schools and smaller community schools. We wanted to tackle this issue in a sustainable way, in partnership with the Diocese of Salisbury, which we have done through the Wiltshire Targeted Support Wave 3 programme.

The leadership development programme is funded by the National College and Wiltshire Local Authority and targets middle and senior leaders in schools who are yet to achieve NPQH. It is geared towards supporting them in becoming heads in smaller schools and faith schools. The programme enables participants to experience leadership in other schools through internships, and to receive coaching and mentoring from experienced headteachers and network with other participants on the programme.

These Targeted Support programmes aren't particularly original – many areas have them – but we have linked ours specifically to the needs of smaller schools and church schools, so that the professional learning undertaken by participants has this particular slant. When our participants have completed the programme, they are prepared for leadership opportunities within their schools as well as thinking about applying for NPQH. But by working closely with the Diocese of Salisbury, the specific needs of church schools and the requirements that they have of their future headteachers are always brought into focus.

Gaining direct experience of leadership in another setting is seen as a key strand in our succession strategy and this project offers an internship of up to five days in a block. Participants and receiving or host schools are both able to identify what they want to get from the internship and this supports individual leadership development and school self-evaluation. An area of enquiry is identified as part of the internship for the participant to follow in the form of an evidence trail that allows him or her to learn about leadership, and the school to gain an objective view from an external person. This is a win-win situation.

A key component of the programme is breaking down barriers and perceptions about working in a small or faith school, so any misconceptions about the ethos and the religious impact on the culture and curriculum are challenged and discussed. The aim is to encourage participants to consider applying for posts in these contexts in their future career plans with a genuine understanding of how well they may be matched to the needs of these schools rather than dismissing them at an early stage.

The programme also provides participants with individual coaching from an accredited National College coach based on their own needs analysis before and after their internship. The response so far has been very positive and the first cohort has been oversubscribed. Both the participants and host schools are funded for the costs associated with the programme. We are planning to do a detailed impact report six months after the completion of the programme so that we know how personal leadership competencies and succession have been impacted.

Case study 7: London Region

This case study has been provided by Colin Powell. Colin is Primary Adviser for the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education. Prior to this, he was a school improvement inspector in an outer London borough following 10 successful years as a primary headteacher in an outstanding Church of England primary school.

South West London School Effectiveness Partnership (SWLSEP) is a partnership between Kingston, Merton, Croydon, Richmond, Sutton and Wandsworth Local Authorities with the Diocese of Southwark as an associate partner. This is a truly collaborative and co-operative historic arrangement that has really helped us to build on our capacity for school improvement. By working together we've been able to offer a far more joined-up approach to support for schools as well as wider access to support and training packages.

Within this partnership we have a strong training programme for developing leadership at all levels because we have identified a need to get potential leaders ready to apply, successfully, for headship posts. Our Aspiring Leadership courses run for two days and cover all the main themes of positive leadership, for example, book scrutiny, analysis of data, accountability, collecting evidence, making judgements and identifying good practice: our approach is wholly practical. This is about equipping potential leaders with the skills they need to do the job in practice.

We also run a two-day course for aspiring deputy heads and a course for aspiring heads. Again, we take participants through the process of applying, how to interview well, how to identify stories of impact from their work to date and how to show that they are a good match for a school. Deputies going for headship posts can sometimes approach the interview as a deputy rather than projecting themselves as the future head of an establishment. All of these areas were weaknesses in some of the applicants that were coming through for these kinds of leadership positions.

More specifically, across the SWLSEP group, we offer one-day coaching packages targeted at people with NPQH and exploring issues such as how to gain a greater understanding of a particular school they wish to apply to, how to write a great letter of application and how to deliver stories of impact at interview. The amount of experience and expertise that we have access to across the whole SWLSEP group means that collectively we really know how to support these aspiring leaders and we have demonstrable success in moving suitable candidates onwards and upwards.

SWLSEP recently held a two-day conference in Brighton for the whole of the SWLSEP group. This was a chance to explore the issues facing us so that we can find ways of moving through them positively. Again, our approach in SWLSEP is always practical and always focused on the development of leaders. Something that worked very well at the conference was a very open and frank discussion about the key distinctions between Church of England schools, Roman Catholic schools and Jewish schools. It's essential to explore distinctiveness so that you can approach the leadership of faith schools effectively. There will be many shared core values (and many of these will be shared with community schools as well), but it's important to identify exactly what underpins those values in specific faith schools. What is different about faith schools? What is different between faith schools? It's not always easy for people to answer these kinds of questions, so we talk about them as often as we can. It's not just about the mechanical differences – the “double wrapping” that a faith school has from a local authority and a diocese or equivalent – it is about the distinctiveness of values. People can be afraid to be practical about this but potential leaders have to be able to say why those values exist, where they come from and what they look like on a day-to-day basis. What is the peg on which those values are hung? In Christian schools it is the gospels. This is what makes leadership of a faith school a practical thing.

The impact we have seen from the training and support packages we have run so far has been great. There's no doubt that deputies who have come through our training programmes perform very well. But we've also seen very positive outcomes regarding community cohesion, with schools working really effectively in clusters and partnerships.

So often you hear about real success stories which have happened because someone was encouraged at just the right time in their career, or a particularly creative combination of people happened to turn things around. This is 'right place at the right time' stuff; it's about happenstance. What we are trying to do at SWLSEP is to make happenstance a little more systematic, so we're not just waiting for it to happen – we are enabling it to happen.

Case study 8: North-east Region

This case study has been provided by Andy Brown. Andy is a National Leader of Education and co-headteacher of a large, challenging primary school in Hartlepool. He is also a National Succession Consultant with the National College and a School Improvement Partner in three local authorities.

I'm currently driving our local Targeted Support programme and we have 21 people signed up to it at the moment. We set a maximum number of 25, so that participants are supported as effectively as possible. We promoted the programme widely and I think it's fair to say that we are using this as an opportunity to build a mutually useful framework so that true collaboration between local authorities and dioceses in the area can take place.

It's really important for us to do this kind of work in the North-east Region because we are not yet facing the peak in the number of departing heads in the area. It looks like this won't be for another 12 to 18 months so we need to be as prepared for that as possible, especially in church primary schools which we have identified as having particular difficulties in recruiting to leaderships posts.

The North-east dioceses' Targeted Support programme has the focus of recruiting the most talented future church school leaders. We aim to achieve, and are achieving this, through strong leadership development support. The leadership programme is for schools of all sizes, and focuses on what leading a church school really means and the role that church schools have in the communities they serve. We cover modules on values and ethos, coaching, peer support, career advice, job applications, one-to-one tutorials, presentation skills, interview training and networking. That's not all; each participant also completes an internship of five days in a setting that shares his or her faith. During this internship, the participant is asked to view his or her work through three lenses: the personal perspective, the perspective of his or her home school community and finally the perspective of the host school community. At the end of the internship, the participant spends half an hour or so with the host school's leadership team to discuss the learning derived from this three-lens approach and offers some reflection, praise or suggestion for the host school. This means that each participant, who has viewed the host school with fresh eyes, is giving something back at the end of the internship.

We think that this programme is quite unique in that we cover all Church of England and Catholic primary schools across the North-east Region's 12 local authorities and we involve all 5 regional dioceses. This is a really broad Region; there are long distances involved and we rely on a lot of goodwill for the programme's success. Each diocese is firmly committed to home growing faith leaders for the Region and not necessarily just for their own individual dioceses. This is because we recognise, collectively, that the need is not only to prepare more NPQH graduates for headship in church schools, but also to prepare middle leaders in church schools for NPQH. We currently have low numbers of applications for church schools, especially those that are relatively isolated and small.

Working as we have been with the dioceses in the Region, we have made sure that the programme we devised respected the core purpose of church schools, where leadership is distinctive and draws on gospel values. And we have been keen to explore local solutions to the local issues we have identified.

In our experience, great relationships are everything and we have worked hard to broker these where possible by meeting with relevant people, having conversations, passing information on and involving as many people as possible. This is about breaking down any perceived barriers to assistance. We're working on seeing local authorities, the Church of England dioceses and the Catholic dioceses as equal partners in tackling this particular leadership issue and so communication between these three bodies has to be as free and as open as possible. When we pool our knowledge and expertise, we can become so much more than what we are as separate organisations. It's this collaborative approach that helps to compensate for any instances where we're working under-capacity in our respective organisations.

Looking to the future, we hope that we will be able to develop this work into a sustainable network so that we can exchange good practice in each diocese in areas such as recruitment and retention. That's the challenge. Even though this project is in its infancy, we have already seen such enthusiasm and commitment from the participants. The evaluations so far have been great. The only stumbling block has been where headteacher facilitators have focused primarily on the leadership values enshrined within their own faith rather than looking more broadly at the leadership requirements of faith schools generally. But so far, this has been easy to rectify.

Case study 9: North-east Region

This case study has been provided by Aidan Duffy. Aidan is Assistant Director for Schools in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle. Formerly an officer with the Metropolitan Police and a respected primary headteacher, he has held numerous roles within the Diocese and Newcastle Local Authority.

I'm in a unique role, I think, being employed by both a local authority and a Catholic diocese. I spend two days a week as a school improvement adviser for Newcastle Local Authority and three days a week as assistant director of schools for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle. Having both roles keeps me incredibly busy, there's no doubt about that, but it gives me a great perspective on the needs of both the Local Authority and the Diocese.

I have an overview of 10 local authorities in the region, while working for one in the area of school improvement. That gives me both local and regional contexts to draw on in my work. In theory, there could be a conflict of interest, and I do have to be very aware of the privileged view I have. In reality, a conflict of interest hasn't occurred yet. What does happen is that where appropriate I share strategic and specific knowledge on the journeys that schools take to improvement to help ease that path for them and for other schools too. I act as a conduit of information and local intelligence, and from the position I occupy, am well placed to see who might be able best to support a school in very challenging circumstances.

There are huge economies of scale for local authorities and dioceses that choose to work collaboratively in this way. It is possible to broker these kinds of arrangements. I was a head of an outstanding Catholic voluntary-aided school and worked collaboratively with the local authority then. I also worked closely with the diocese so the roles I have now grew from those earlier collaborations. The blend of my previous work as a head, combined with my current roles with the Local Authority and Diocese, give me a credibility that helps me to do my jobs. But I have to be flexible. Fortunately, both the Local Authority and Diocese understand and support this need for flexibility and there is genuine co-operation between the two organisations.

One of the main complexities of my roles is the need for me to work both practically and strategically. These approaches require very different frames of mind. When I'm working on school improvement I'm hands on, in a school, empowering school staff to bring about positive change. At other times, my job is more strategic and less practical and involves looking at the bigger picture.

The professional development I've gained while in these jobs is incredible. This collaboration has changed me and changed my professional outlook. It has been a wonderfully positive experience which has enabled me to be a part of real, on-the-ground benefits for children.

Case study 10: Yorkshire and the Humber Region

This case study has been provided by Deirdre Rowe. Deirdre has been Principal Officer for Education for the Catholic Diocese of Leeds for the past three years and during that time has concentrated on strengthening the distinctive nature of Catholic schools in the Diocese through governor training, offering opportunities for spiritual development for senior leaders and working effectively with local authorities to ensure that their work complements the work of Catholic schools.

The Diocese of Leeds works closely with six local authorities and in particular, with Leeds Local Authority. The Diocese and Local Authority have developed mutually compatible training and support programmes, which are both aimed at training middle and senior leaders in schools. Leeds Local Authority is keen to develop leaders for Catholic schools and the Diocese shares that goal.

Our mutual collaboration means that each party does what it does best. The Local Authority looks after the leadership part, focusing on all the details required to lead a maintained school, and we work with aspiring leaders to help them embed all aspects of their leadership in the distinctive nature of a Catholic school.

Working together in this way has meant that we have been proactive in filling vacancies. We haven't been in crisis in our schools up to now and currently all our headship vacancies have been filled with good-quality leaders who are appropriate for the needs of the schools. New school leaders are also given a mentor by the Local Authority and a mentor by the Diocese so that every aspect of their new role is supported.

This collaboration works really effectively because it's real. There is very little time in everyone's diaries for meetings but as a Diocese we communicate enough with the Local Authority to know that we are doing the right thing, with mutual goals. This works because everyone involved shares the belief that the development of future leaders, in particular leaders for Catholic schools, has many facets to it. The Diocese and Local Authority can fill for each other any gaps in the provision of training and support. This also means that we catch everyone who is considering school leadership, regardless of whether they approach the Local Authority or the Diocese. We can then share this information between ourselves and this makes our succession planning a lot more effective and efficient. Our work with the National College in the area of succession planning also helps to make this a three-way partnership.

One of the most successful elements of the support we are giving is the opportunity for a secondment to a leadership role. This way, would-be leaders get to try the job out without taking that final step, to make sure that they are happy with it. It can sometimes be very difficult to convince people that they are ready for that move and yet almost all of those who try a secondment decide that they are ready. The secondment seems to be the encouragement that they need.

All of these approaches work because of our mutual commitment to co-operation and communication. We have taken what seems to be a sensible approach; there isn't a load of paperwork associated with it or hidden prohibitive costs. This is about taking the time to get to know colleagues from the Local Authority and sharing information face to face where possible, and so far, it has worked. We aim to further develop this collaborative working with Education Leeds, a not-for-profit company formed in April 2001 and wholly owned by Leeds City Council. We are also beginning similar work with North Yorkshire Local Authority.

Case study 11: South-west Region

This case study has been provided by Christina Mabin, School Admissions and Governance Adviser with the Diocese of Exeter. Christina has been with the Diocese for three years. She very much enjoys working with its 130 schools. She previously worked as a teacher in Devon and for St Edmundsbury Cathedral Education Centre in Suffolk.

Collaborations in Exeter work really well, largely because we have a history of co-operation between the local authorities in the area and the Diocese of Exeter.

One area that has been particularly successful is in training for clerks to governing bodies. Devon Local Authority delivers the training and I am invited along to present on clerking at a church school. This avoids having to ask clerks to attend two lots of training, and helps to ensure that the training we deliver jointly as a Diocese and Local Authority is consistent and focused.

We also run collaborative training days for governors of church schools. Plymouth and Torbay Local Authorities fund the training and the Diocese of Exeter delivers it. We team up with Catholic schools too so that their governors can benefit from the generic training on being a governor at a Christian school, even though this is delivered from an Anglican perspective.

Part of my role at the Diocese of Exeter involves attending a group of South-west regional co-ordinators of governors. This group was set up by Local Authority officers but it also includes Diocesan officers who work with governors. There is also a South-west regional admissions officers group. Both of these areas of work in a school can be difficult so having strong links with the Local Authority and easy access to colleagues to discuss any emerging problems as quickly as possible is essential. Members of these groups are also kept informed of any changes and updates via email so we get a steady stream of relevant information. I work with Plymouth, Torbay and Devon Local Authorities on admissions and we work collaboratively on any problems that have arisen before they go to consultation or appeal. This makes the necessary processes far smoother and more efficient than they might be if we didn't work together so closely.

I think what makes these collaborations work so effectively is that as a Diocese we often think ahead about what the local authorities we work with might need to know and vice versa. This means that we can quickly disseminate information across our respective organisations as necessary. The quicker I'm given the information I need for my schools, the quicker I can pass it on. This saves a huge amount of work in the long run, and the local authorities I work with appreciate me being there as a conduit of information.

Models of leadership

There has been a considerable increase in the level of interest in different models of leadership in the past couple of years. It is not surprising therefore that many dioceses and local authorities have been considering the implications for their schools. This section considers how some local authorities and dioceses have together been considering models of leadership issues.

Several features of effective practice are already emerging:

- regular discussions between local authorities, dioceses and other providers of schools with a religious character about the principles and practicalities of different models of leadership
- if practicable, agreements in principle about situations in which different models of leadership apply
- joint advice and training opportunities for governors, school leaders and aspiring school leaders
- regular sharing of experiences about the range of issues pertinent to different models of leadership (eg, HR implications of co-headships)

The examples provided for this section consider models of leadership from quite different starting points. The first two examples from the West Midlands Region focus on developing a dialogue with key partners about how different models might further enhance and support school leadership. The third example details how a diocese and local authority used different models to address specific issues for one school.

Example 1

Sue Dudley (p21) provides details of a joint local authority and diocese conference which explored the issues with regard to different models, including seeing whether federations might provide opportunities for experienced heads at the same time as enabling deputy heads to step up into headship.

Example 2

Margaret Buck of the Archdiocese of Birmingham (p22) describes its approach to different models of leadership as being very positive. This gives as an example one school where, through strong liaison between the Diocese and Local Authority, a cluster of schools has been developed and the head of each school takes a lead in a different area of development.

Example 3

Jan Martin from Merton (p23) describes how, through the Local Authority and the Archdiocese of Southwark working together, a strong and effective federation between Catholic primary and secondary schools has been put in place where previously the primary school had twice been in special measures.

Case study 12: West Midlands Region

This case study has been provided by Sue Dudley. Sue works as a National Succession Consultant for the National College, having previously worked as a secondary headteacher and local authority inspector. In all her roles, she is passionate about developing leadership in aiming for the very best outcomes for children and young people.

We initially developed this project following discussions with the Archdiocese of Birmingham's Diocesan Schools Commission, which covers 13 local authorities, about the need for governors and aspiring school leaders to discover new ways of leading. It's a common problem, but we were finding it increasingly difficult to recruit to leadership positions in faith primary schools and had to tackle the issue.

The first thing we did was to host a conference with the theme of new models of leadership. We invited local authority representatives, chairs of governors, people from local dioceses and those with the potential to be executive leaders in schools.

The conference covered a whole range of leadership models including federations. We did this in part to address future need and in part to explore retention strategies that schools might usefully adopt. For us, this was very much about looking at ways of providing leadership for a range of schools that might be struggling to recruit suitable leadership candidates. This can offer extended leadership roles for experienced headteachers, whilst offering opportunities for other leaders to step up to "head of school" positions as valuable learning for headship.

Another strategy that we have developed is the primary executive headship programme. This has contributed considerably to the creation of several federations in the area, some of which cross local authority boundaries. Not only are these possible, where there's a will, but they can also work incredibly effectively too. In the West Midlands Region, local authorities have been very supportive in trying to find mechanisms to make this work. Naturally these have to be specific to the needs of a locality, so there is no absolute guidance, although paperwork to support the processes is available via the Diocesan website (www.bdsc.org.uk). Making these collaborations and federations work involves clear communication and developing relationships, whilst not being afraid to branch out and do something that may seem cutting edge.

In the West Midlands Region, though, we have been really keen not to view new models of leadership as simply meaning federations. There is far more to leadership in the future than just federations, although they do play a very important role. But it's important to understand that federations are just one potential solution.

Case study 13: West Midlands Region

This case study has been provided by Margaret Buck. Margaret is Director of Schools for the Archdiocese of Birmingham's Schools Commission. She says (apart from wishing she was young enough to be a headteacher again!) that there is great reward in seeing practising Catholics have faith in their vocation to lead and step up to headship of a Catholic school in order to enable children to be the best they can be as children of God.

Here at the Archdiocese of Birmingham we view new models of leadership as a very positive approach to the challenges of school leadership. New models are definitely not deficit models. Given this perspective, we have been able to focus carefully on what it is that makes Catholic schools unique, why they exist and what kind of leaders we need to take them forward and raise standards. It is so much more than simply being caring and sharing. All good schools have this dimension to them. What we wanted to do was to identify precisely what it is that we need from our future leaders to lead schools that put Christ at the centre of all that they do. For us, it is about integrating that key principle with creative ways of leading Catholic learning communities.

From this standpoint, we have been looking at what leadership can achieve if we extend the range of the best leaders so that they can influence leadership and outcomes in other schools, and what schools can achieve if we extend the range of the best schools. This is about extending the scope of influence of exceptional schools and their leaders beyond individual school boundaries. To this end, formal collaborations and even federations are potentially effective tools although it is worth remembering that federation is essentially about governance rather than leadership.

An extra dimension to this issue of school leadership in Catholic schools is that our heads have to be practising Catholics. Catholic schools are there firstly to pass on the faith; to support Catholic families in the formation and education of their children; and to provide an education in the faith for baptised Catholic children, so our core purpose is different from other schools with a religious character. For this reason, it's not a solution to have non-Catholics leading Catholic schools. The personal faith of the headteacher should witness to the presence of God, his or her belief in Jesus Christ, the authentic daily living of the values of the gospel and the moral and social teaching of the Catholic Church which flows from those values. We have to find other solutions to securing the Catholic character of our schools; the appointment of headteachers who may be in sympathy with the Catholic faith is not the same thing as appointing headteachers who daily give expression to their personal faith in Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Catholic Church through their professional life.

Something that helped us when exploring the possibility of cross-authority boundary collaborations in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent was looking carefully at where connections already existed in parishes which sometimes reflect more authentically the roots and nature of local community relationships than ever administrative political boundaries are able to do. This is well worth exploring and certainly worked well for us. Sometimes a wider community may be split between two authorities but geographically and from a faith perspective can be very integrated. Often it is the parish or faith connection that is the cement in collaborations, and parishes work effectively together by clustering as pastoral families. An incredibly important by-product of these kinds of collaborations between parishes and local authorities is a positive influence on community cohesion. If we could build on the relationships between homes, schools and parishes to form clusters; develop a local strategic board of governors to set the direction for partnership and collaboration across the whole cluster; and within each cluster have a range of models of school leadership, we might find a positive way of tackling these issues effectively. This has to be a potential vision for the future that is worthy of consideration.

If these school clusters were really tight, we could free staff to work across school boundaries so that they got to experience other settings. This would be a hugely positive move.

We have one such collaboration in Leamington where three primary schools with three new headteachers have formed a joint strategic committee across the three governing bodies. This makes perfect sense for that context. The headteacher of each school will take a lead in a different area of development so all the schools in the cluster will benefit from each headteacher's specific expertise.

These kind of models, that are bottom-up solutions, need to be worked out at a local level; there is no off-the-shelf package. Progress is only possible through joint collaboration with the local authorities and diocese and by adopting a totally fresh way of approaching the challenges we face.

Case study 14: London Region

This case study has been provided by Jan Martin. Jan began her career in education as a classroom teacher, progressing to headteacher, a role she held for five years. She has spent the last decade working in three local authorities and is currently Head of Education for the London Borough of Merton.

Two years ago, one of our schools, St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, went into special measures. That was actually the second time in the space of a few years (once in 2003-04 and again in 2007-08) that the school had been judged this way. At the point when special measures hit for the second time it was clear that the school needed a radical change of direction. Through our discussions with the local Catholic Diocese we knew that we were all in agreement.

During the period after the headteacher of St Teresa's resigned, we advertised twice nationally for a new headteacher and weren't successful, so once an interim headteacher and new governors were in place we explored the idea of a soft federation (collaboration).

Working as we were with the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark, we were committed to finding another Catholic school to form a federation with St Teresa's. At that time there wasn't another suitable primary school in the vicinity so we widened our search beyond the borough boundaries. Again, we were not able to identify a suitable Catholic primary school as a federation partner, so we approached Ursuline High School, an outstanding Catholic school within Merton Borough.

Once Ursuline's governors had agreed, in principle, to a soft federation, our first step was to negotiate the secondment of a deputy from another primary school to act as associate head at St Teresa's.

Formal federation between the two schools started in April 2009 and was thoroughly planned throughout the previous spring term. The schools now have one executive head and two separate governing bodies. In the time since the federation began, St Teresa's has made enormous progress. It's clear to us as a local authority that the key impact of the federation has been determined, strategic leadership from an outstanding headteacher who is working to build a strong leadership team in the primary school. It is the federation that has enabled this to happen and we were able to facilitate it in such a way as to support the school's Catholic ethos. New staff were recruited and roles reorganised so that they were appropriate to the needs of the school and the children it is educating. This determination to improve the standard of education the children were receiving has fed through and helped to create a far more effective primary school, but this could not have been achieved without outstanding leadership and continued collaborative working between the borough of Merton and the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark. St Teresa's is now out of special measures and consideration is being given to the next stages in the development of the school.

Appendix 1: Case study themes

Theme of collaboration	Case study
Historical tradition of collaboration	Case study 1: East of England Region Case study 7: London Region Case study 11: South-west Region
Internships	Case study 1: East of England Region Case study 6: South-west Region Case study 8: North-east Region
Joint governor training	Case study 1: East of England Region Case study 5: South-west Region
Training school for multi-agency use	Case study 1: East of England Region
Sharing information on schools and data exchange	Case study 2: London Region Case study 3: South-west Region Case study 5: South-west Region Case study 9: North-east Region
Executive headship and new models of leadership	Case study 12: West Midlands Region Case study 13: West Midlands Region Case study 14: London Region
Headteacher recruitment and aspiring heads	Case study 3: South-west Region Case study 4: West Midlands Region Case study 7: London Region
Succession planning and local leadership project and targeted support	Case study 5: South-west Region Case study 6: South-west Region Case study 13: West Midlands Region
Importance of relationships	Case study 3: South-west Region Case study 5: South-west Region Case study 8: North-east Region Case study 12: West Midlands Region
Understanding the ethos of schools with a religious character	Case study 10: Yorkshire and the Humber Region Case study 13: West Midlands Region
Collaborative training and coaching	Case study 5: South-west Region Case study 7: London Region Case study 10: Yorkshire and the Humber Region
Preserving the distinctive values of schools with a religious character	Case study 7: London Region Case study 10: Yorkshire and the Humber Region Case study 13: West Midlands Region
Joint employment by local authority and diocese	Case study 9: North-east Region

Appendix 2: Details of dioceses mentioned in the case studies

Diocese	Anglican or Catholic	Website
Diocese of Norwich	Anglican	www.norwich.anglican.org
Southwark Diocesan Board of Education	Anglican	www.southwark.anglican.org/education
Diocese of Salisbury	Anglican	www.salisburyanglican.org.uk
Anglican Diocese of Gloucester	Anglican	www.glosdioc.org.uk
Roman Catholic Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle	Catholic	www.rcdhn.org.uk
Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark	Catholic	www.rcsouthwark.co.uk
Archdiocese of Birmingham: Diocesan Schools Commission	Catholic	www.birminghamdiocese.org.uk/diocesan_schools_commission_home.asp
Diocese of Leeds	Catholic	www.dioceseofleeds.org.uk
Diocese of Exeter	Anglican	www.exeter.anglican.org
Diocese of Bristol	Anglican	www.bristol.anglican.org
Clifton Diocese	Catholic	www.cliftondiocese.com
Diocese of Ely	Anglican	www.ely.anglican.org/education
Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich	Anglican	www.stedmundsbury.anglican.org

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