

Leadership for learning:  
The challenges of leading  
in a time of change

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## Foreword



One of the main challenges facing Scottish education is to build on existing strength to create an excellent educational experience and successful outcomes for learners of all ages. Achieving that goal will require leadership of the highest quality throughout our education system.

We recently published the *Improving Scottish Education* report which evaluated the quality of leadership across all sectors. Educational leaders work in a challenging and complex environment and it is encouraging that we found very good leadership in around forty percent of cases and good leadership in around a further forty-five percent. These figures are very positive but they also mean that around fifteen percent of evaluations of leadership were weak or unsatisfactory. This report and the accompanying case studies are intended to help improve leadership at all levels.

Successful leadership in education demands among other things: clarity of purpose and the ability to communicate that purpose persuasively; the capacity to cut through complexity; a desire to learn allied to vigilance in seeking and testing new ideas; effective use of available resources; and constant focus on impact and outcomes for each learner. We give many examples of such leadership in this report drawn from across all sectors and from all parts of Scotland.

## **One of the main challenges facing Scottish education is to build on existing strength to create an excellent educational experience and successful outcomes for learners of all ages.**

Developing leadership is not just about honing the skills of those in the most senior positions, important though that undoubtedly is. It is also about releasing the energies of every member of staff and every learner and about giving each of them a sense that their contributions are valued. The development of such a culture is important in its own right and as a response to the pressing requirement to build leadership capacity and to develop the leaders of tomorrow.

A desire to take responsibility and to accept accountability is part of good leadership. Ultimate accountability rests with the person at the head of the formal structure but all members of staff must be committed to and feel accountable for their own development and performance. Such commitment lies at the heart of professionalism.

It is essential that we build a leadership culture in Scottish education which encourages initiative, tackles difficult problems directly and is genuinely aspirational.

Graham Donaldson  
Her Majesty's Senior Chief Inspector  
HM Inspectorate of Education

One

Introduction

If all our children, young people and adult learners are to develop and use their potential to the fullest extent, and contribute to a world-class economy, providers of education, training and related services must work together.

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## What approach have we taken to this report?

This report affirms that high quality leadership is essential in promoting excellent, effective learning across all sectors of Scottish education. It adopts a cross-sectoral approach which asserts that the principles of effective leadership are common to all sectors although the challenges and methods of approach may well vary depending on context. The report builds on the findings set out in *Improving Scottish Education* and aims to encourage practitioners and managers to learn more about what is happening in other sectors and to share what is happening in each. It is all too easy to focus on those aspects of good practice that are related to the sector we know and to skip those aspects that relate to other sectors. We do recognise, however, that aspects of college leadership and management are influenced by the sector's own history, its diverse client base and the demands of incorporation. Therefore, the main thrust of the report, which draws together and builds on key messages of earlier Inspectorate work, is of primary relevance to the pre-school, school and community learning and development (CLD) sectors of Scottish education.

**Partnership is crucial if Scotland's people are to achieve their aspirations.**

Partnership is crucial if Scotland's people are to achieve their aspirations. Quite simply, if all our children, young people and adult learners are to develop and use their potential to the fullest extent, and contribute to a world-class economy, providers of education, training and related services must work together. Effective liaison and collaboration are taking place at points of transition. Innovative practices include: family learning teams and early years staff easing the transition from pre-school to P1; youth workers, outdoor education staff and voluntary agencies working alongside school staff to ease the transition from P7 to S1; and vocational programmes for learners to ease the transition from school to the workplace or from unemployment back into work.

This report draws heavily on a generic framework for self-evaluation, inspection and review capable of application across sectors. The framework includes a suite of four quality indicators (QIs) for leadership which have already been contextualised in education authorities<sup>1</sup>, the CLD sector<sup>2</sup>, children's services<sup>3</sup> and increasingly by other inspectorates and agencies. It has informed the revision of our inspection model for schools. We believe that further exemplification provided in this report will help those working in all sectors of Scottish education to look more closely at leaders and leadership within their own context. The indicators have informed the structure of this report and the exemplification of ideas relating to leadership and its development.

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- 1 *Quality Management in Education 2*, HM Inspectorate of Education 2006.
- 2 *How Good is Our Community Learning and Development? 2*, HM Inspectorate of Education, 2006.
- 3 *A guide to evaluating services for children and young people using quality indicators*, HM Inspectorate of Education, 2006.

## What are we trying to do through this report?

The main objectives of this report are to:

- provoke discussion about the changes necessary to meet the leadership challenges facing Scottish education;
- identify key issues in leadership and management which are common across sectors and some which are more sector specific;
- identify and disseminate features of good practice and capture people's imagination to think about what would really make a difference; and
- encourage all those with a stake or an interest in education to consider their contributions to leadership and how these contributions may be facilitated and extended.

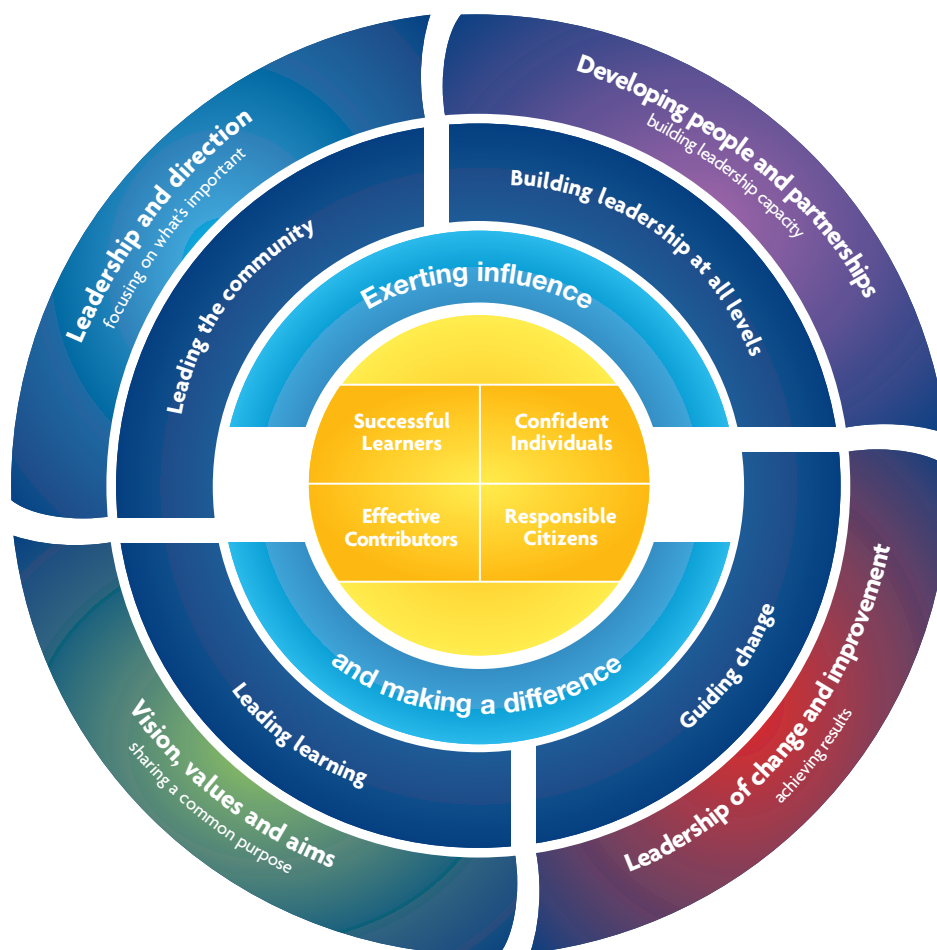
Each section sets out key messages which are followed by discursive additional commentary. Each key message could be used for discussion and we would encourage the use of them in this way as the basis for further professional discussion and debate.

We recognise that a 'one size fits all' approach to leadership will not work because of the very different contexts that exist within Scottish education for professional and ancillary staff and for users of educational services and facilities. This is why the report aims to deal with ideas deriving from both inspection and the literature, and provides examples of best practice across sectors. It challenges readers to set up discussion groups to deal with aspects of the report and to translate the ideas into challenges for staff in their particular contexts. Examples of self-evaluation exercises and activities which have been developed in this way are included on the HMIE website. Our aim is to produce a report which becomes a working document for staff in educational establishments and services.

## What kind of structure have we used in the report?

The diagram overleaf illustrates the four capacities for education, the growth points for leadership set out in the *Improving Scottish Education, The Journey to Excellence* reports and the suite of leadership QIs being used in HMIE self-evaluation guides. As with any diagram or model, it can be used flexibly, either as a quick point of reference or as a tool for individuals and groups to think more about leadership ideas. It is possible to generate any number of questions that arise from working either from the inside-out or from the outside-in. For example, 'What are my strengths as a contributor and where do I make a real difference in my area of work? What is my role in contributing to and promoting our vision, values and aims?'

Subsequent sections set out to develop key ideas underpinning the four leadership QIs in particular, and to alert readers to possible future lines of enquiry within their particular context.



## Each section of this report sets out a different aspect of leadership

Section 2, *Leaders Matter*, provides an overview of some of the key ideas related to leadership and to the thinking behind the QIs. Sections 3 through to 6 then develop each of the QIs and related themes in greater detail are designed to allow the reader to focus in more depth on:

- vision, values and aims (Section 3)
- leadership & direction (Section 4)
- People and partnership (Section 5)
- change and improvement (Section 6)

Section 7 highlights the importance of developing pathways for leaders and sets out some of the key priorities for each sector to further consider.

Readers may find it most useful to read Section 2 then choose one of the other sections to look in more detail at a particular aspect of leadership using it for discussion and debate.

Overleaf is a summary of the key messages in the report to help readers locate the areas of the report they wish to focus on.

### Self-evaluation Materials

Each section identifies features of good practice and provides questions which can aid the practice of self-evaluation and reflection. More detailed exercises and practical tools for self-evaluation can be accessed from the HMIE website: [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk). These relate well to Part 5 of *The Journey to Excellence*, which will be an interactive resource including films of excellent practice in leadership.

## Summary of Key Messages

### **Leaders matter: exerting influence and making a difference (Section 2)**

- Effective leaders help everyone make an impact on the quality of learning, teaching and achievement.
- There is no one leadership style and no one way to be successful.
- Leaders are not just at the top of an organisation. The most effective organisations have strong leaders at every level.
- A culture of student leadership is focused on releasing the talents and energies of the leaders of the future.
- Accountability is ultimately tied to the person who leads the organisation but every member of staff is accountable for the quality of their day-to-day work and allocated responsibilities.

### **Vision, values and aims: sharing a common purpose (Section 3)**

- Leaders have a clear vision of where they want to go, and give people the self-confidence that they can make a difference and will be recognised for this.
- To be effective visions, values and aims are best developed through the active participation of stakeholders.
- Leaders show through day-to-day activities what is really important in the life of the establishment.
- An establishment's culture can either work for or against improvement and reform.

### **Leadership and direction: focusing on what's important (Section 4)**

- Strategic planning sets out the future direction of the establishment or service.
- Leadership for learning means putting learning and learners at the centre of the agenda.
- Effective leaders have a firm grasp of budgetary planning and target resources, including staff resources, to identified priorities.
- Effective leaders and effective establishments promote and support innovation and change, whilst evaluating and managing risks.



### **Developing people and partnerships: building leadership capacity (Section 5)**

- The most important resource in any establishment or service is its people.
- Leaders create an empowering culture in which staff feel able to argue, propose, question and challenge.
- Leaders recognise the benefits of teamworking and the development of teamworking skills. They sometimes need to be in the chorus rather than out front.
- The most effective establishments/services initiate networks and partnerships that bring significant benefits to learners.

### **Leadership of change and improvement: achieving results (Section 6)**

- Change is complex but often small, cumulative technical changes can have a profound effect on the culture of an establishment.
- Challenge and support need to be finely balanced in promoting change.
- Change is best evaluated against impact and outcomes.
- Learners need to be fully involved in self-evaluation and continuous improvement.

### **Pathways for leaders (Section 7)**

- Leadership cannot be left to chance - leaders need to learn how to lead.
- Professional development can be specifically geared to developing the leadership and management capacity of staff.

Two

Leaders matter: exerting influence  
and making a difference

The quality of leadership in any establishment is key to  
providing excellent learning.

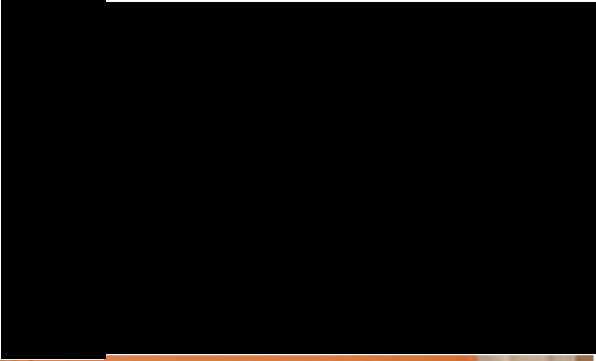
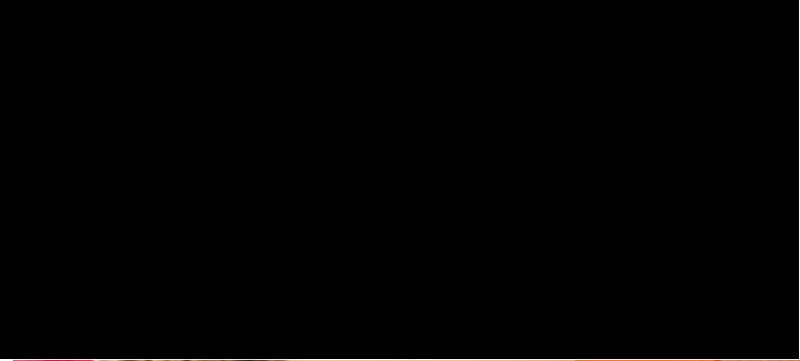


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This section provides an overview of some of the key ideas relating to effective leaders and effective leadership. Since the publication of *Improving Leadership in Scottish Schools*<sup>4</sup> there have been significant changes in the educational world. Developments in the curriculum and in the staffing structures in schools have influenced thinking on leadership and leadership skills. *The Journey to Excellence* further develops our understanding by identifying the key features of excellence in leadership. This thinking is still developing. This section considers some fundamental ideas such as the impetus for change, the need to distribute leadership as a vehicle for succession planning, and notions of accountability.

<sup>4</sup> *Improving Leadership in Scottish Schools*, HM Inspectorate of Education, 2000.

## What do we know about leadership in Scottish education?

Staff within education, operating at different levels, are constantly reviewing their practice and making changes, sometimes on a small scale and sometimes on a larger scale, in order to improve what they are doing. We recognise that the work of individual members of staff matters and makes a difference. There is also an awareness that this difference is more pronounced when there is a collective effort and when staff are working on a united front. It is clear too, that a key driver is a desire to make things better for learners. Leadership for learning is about initiating changes that improve the chances of all learners to achieve well. There is a common sense of purpose to provide a wide range of opportunities which help learners gain qualifications and experiences that enhance their life chances and develop confidence in their own talents and abilities. For this to happen, learning and teaching need to be at the centre of everyone's thinking.

The quality of leadership in any establishment is key to providing excellent learning. If we focus on the leadership of senior staff in the school sector and the data that is available through the General Teaching Council for Scotland, the need to think urgently about succession planning is evident. At the current time, 84% of secondary headteachers are aged over 50. In the next five years we will have to fill approximately 170 secondary headteacher posts. The corresponding primary statistics are just as challenging. About 32% of headteacher posts (730) will have to be filled in the next five years. Over this same period of time, we will need to appoint around 900 new headteachers. Other sectors face equally challenging statistics. This is a timely reminder that developing our thinking about leadership is a necessity. How are we going to provide all staff with opportunities to develop their leadership potential and how are we going to make this an attractive and exciting proposition? Within a climate of more flexible working patterns and demands for personalisation and choice, we should be thinking about a greater variety of routes and options for leadership development.

Data from inspection reports reveal that the quality of leadership provided by those in senior positions is good or better in most establishments. Between 80% to 85% of Scottish establishments are well led. However, this leaves 15% to 20% of establishments where leadership is weak or unsatisfactory, with serious implications for a large number of learners. What is clear is that effective leaders matter and are needed to continue to drive up improvements in the system.

**'The Committee considers that the development of effective leaders is critical to the success of any organisation. Successful delivery of this significant programme of reform will depend on high quality leaders, who are responsive to citizens' needs, able to work collaboratively in a multi-agency context and who are able to create public value.'**<sup>5</sup>

Whilst the *Improving Scottish Education* report confirms the importance of leadership for learning, and leadership from the top, it also reflects a growing awareness of the need to combine this with enhanced leadership capacity within establishments and services. A view of more corporate or collegiate leadership is emerging.

**'Increasingly, leadership is being viewed as a corporate concept which relates not only to the head of establishment but also to the combined impact of all those who have responsibility for leading any aspect of provision for learners. The head is ultimately accountable in terms of the quality of education within the establishment and of the resulting progress made by learners. Leadership is therefore both individual and shared.'**<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> *Leadership Development: How Government Works*, Audit Scotland, 2005.

<sup>6</sup> *Improving Scottish Education*, HM Inspectorate of Education, 2006.

# What do we know about leadership more generally?

## Key Message

Effective leaders help everyone make an impact on the quality of learning, teaching and achievement.

Effective leaders help everyone to make an impact on the quality of learning, teaching and achievement. They organise regular opportunities for staff and learners to engage in conversation and dialogue about, for example, learning and teaching, attainment and achievement, progress and assessment. They also create a culture where staff are empowered to work beyond their remit and show initiative in taking forward work that they can see needs to be done.

Leadership of the school was excellent. The headteacher had won the respect of parents, pupils and staff and the wider community. She inspired confidence and commitment and had developed highly effective teamwork amongst staff. She was very well informed about developments in education and had shown great skill in building on the very effective leadership of the previous headteachers. She provided constructive guidance to staff in further developing the curriculum and learning and teaching arrangements to more effectively meet the needs of pupils.

**HMIE Report, The Isobel Mair School, Clarkston, East Renfrewshire, March 2006**

Whilst leaders may have very different leadership styles and qualities, they will often share common characteristics. For instance, they:

- are passionate about learning and committed to learners and other staff;
- exert influence and help others to envisage new ways of thinking, seeing and working;
- show a determination towards achieving the highest standards for all;
- are initiators and doers;
- are good listeners and know other staff well; and
- serve as models and can help provide insights into what it means to be a lifelong learner.

The most effective leaders help others to retain a focus on the core purpose of education. The real challenge is not just putting new learning or teaching strategies into place but making sure they happen in a way that makes a difference. This requires knowing what is taking place in the classroom and beyond. Rudy Crew, a principal in a large American school, presents an interesting approach which is based on collaborative work with teachers and coaches.

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“Every week, the three coaches pick one teacher and follow him/her all week. On Monday, there’s an observation. On Tuesday, the coaches model aspects of practice. On Wednesday, the teacher and the coach co-teach a lesson. On Thursday, the coaches re-observe and on Friday, they meet and develop a plan of action to improve what they need to improve. It’s like when you build houses in a complex. They may all have the same exterior, but they have a different design inside.”<sup>7</sup>

During inspections, we see examples of effective and innovative leadership practices which are set up to ensure high quality learning, teaching and achievement. Whilst the ways of working are unique and adapted to the context and individual circumstances facing staff, they share similar features. These features include, for example:

- high expectations for all learners, both in terms of their academic achievement and their personal and social learning;
- effective management systems which work to ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the service/establishment;
- high levels of involvement by staff and learners in working groups and in leading tasks;
- a culture where innovation and new ideas are promoted and supported;
- regular opportunities for staff to meet in groups and teams to discuss learners’ progress; and
- effective use of funding and timetabling to release staff to visit other departments/establishments/services to learn from each other and share good practice.

<sup>7</sup> *Harvard International Summer School – Change through large scale reform: Session on Leading Change, Changing as a Leader*, R Crew, July 2006.

Staff at different levels can and do make an impact on the learning, motivation and achievement of children and young people. Leadership for learning is provided by a range of staff, including, for example:

- pre-school staff who establish a love of learning and engage children through imaginative and purposeful play;
- teachers who build the confidence of learners so that they attain the skills to become leaders of their own learning;
- college and community staff who work with young people who have had a poor experience of education and who support their entry back into a world of learning that enriches their lives; and
- care and education staff working together effectively in residential schools and secure care accommodation services to meet the social, emotional, health, behavioural and learning needs of vulnerable pupils.

The headteacher provided dynamic leadership. She had developed a very strong sense of teamwork that took good account of everyone's strengths. Staff felt fully involved in the decision-making process and readily took responsibility for improving aspects of the school. The education authority had provided an opportunity for the headteacher to go to Denver, USA to learn about successful strategies used to engage vulnerable pupils. What she had learned there was impacting positively on the work of the school. All teachers gave very good assistance to four probationer teachers. Staff formed a reflective and supportive team and were conscientious in carrying out their duties. Pupils at all stages contributed to setting their own learning targets. Learning assistants and parent helpers worked well with teachers to ensure maximum support to pupils across all stages.

**HMIE Report, Knightsridge Primary School, Livingston,  
West Lothian Council, June 2006**

## What external factors are driving change?

The renewed focus on leadership is influenced by a wide range of diverse factors which pose significant challenges to all of us. These include:

- the impact of globalisation and the challenges of up-skilling those in work to prosper in increasingly competitive markets;
- social change, diversity and health inequalities;
- closing the attainment gap in areas of multiple deprivation;
- the poor outcomes for some of our most vulnerable learners, particularly those who are looked after<sup>8</sup>;
- the need to work in partnership to achieve outcomes that cannot be achieved in isolation;
- variations in performance within establishments and services and across the education system as a whole;
- increasing scrutiny and public accountability of performance; and
- increasing expectations about the provision of high quality services.

We all need to have a shared understanding of these challenges and an increasing awareness that establishments and services do not work in isolation. We are beginning to see more effective joined-up services in areas of regeneration and economic development. The education service, like all public and private sector services, has to be more responsive if it is to keep apace with modernisation and reform. In the best examples, we see a joining up of services across educational boundaries, and the sharing of best practice to make a difference.

**The practice of leadership becomes something that is within the power of every member of staff and not something that only senior staff do.**

<sup>8</sup> The term 'looked after' in this report includes all children looked after and accommodated by a Council.

## Why is it important to think about distributive leadership?

### Key Message

Leaders are not just at the top of an organisation. The most effective organisations have strong leaders at every level.

The most effective way to perform the range of functions required within complex establishments/services is by sharing responsibility for leadership. The Integrated Children's Service policy and practice agenda has increased the demand for shared leadership development as a way of supporting joint working.

The scale and pace of change is increasing the demand for leaders at various levels and a broadening of the scope of practice. We are seeing a growing shift towards equally responsive and flexible leadership patterns. The practice of leadership becomes something that is within the power of every member of staff and not something that only senior staff do.

It may be a considerable culture shift to begin to think of the unpromoted youth worker, college lecturer, care worker or teacher as a leader of learning, or for unpromoted staff to think of themselves as leaders. But that is what is required. An important spin-off of giving staff and learners regular opportunities to demonstrate their leadership is that they begin to think of themselves as leaders.



**“People have to make an active decision to be a leader – it is not achieved merely by virtue of position. An individual must choose to do leaderly things and think and feel in a leaderly way. In other words, people volunteer that discretionary effort or their full engagement in the task required and this is quite distinct from the minimum level of movement or compliance required to do the job.”<sup>9</sup>**

Across the school sector, the Teachers’ Agreement<sup>10</sup> has accelerated the pace of change and caused schools to consider how they should best deploy staff. These include faculty leaders, principal teachers, newly qualified probationer teachers, chartered teachers and business managers. All of these staff, along with aspiring headteachers who have demonstrated the *Standard for Headship*<sup>11</sup> are strongly placed to take on board leadership responsibilities.

Similarly, the Children’s Services agenda has seen leaders from different agencies working together with education staff to ensure effective delivery of joined-up services for children.

In a Scottish context, the shift towards a more consultative style of leadership is providing the basis for strong teamwork among staff. This has been given impetus through the publication of *Continuing Professional Development for Educational Leaders*<sup>12</sup> and *The Journey to Excellence* which reinforce collegiate and collaborative working practices and the role that leaders have in making the practical implementation of policies the central driver. Section 5 provides further advice on how to develop teamwork and partnership working to best effect. Section 7 explores some of the challenges in identifying professional pathways to support current and future teachers and build capacity in the system.

Sharing a task reduces the strain on individuals and can help to improve the quality of the process and the outcomes achieved. In this way, people become part of a professional community of co-learners who help each other and provide support when the going gets tough. Collaborative ways of working make sense. In larger establishments/services or in complex organisations such as residential special schools or secure care accommodation services, distributive leadership is an organisational necessity. In smaller establishments/services, such as pre-school or community centres or small primary schools it is a means of genuinely sharing decision-making.

9 *Fast Track Leadership* (p.8), Spiro Press, I Lawson, 2003.

10 *A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century*, Scottish Executive, 2001.

11 *Ambitious, Excellent Schools: The Standard for Headship*, Scottish Executive, 2005.

12 *Continuing Professional Development for Educational Leaders*, Scottish Executive, 2003.

### **Distributive leadership in the nursery**

The nursery management team involved the headteacher, the acting depute headteacher and the nursery class teacher. Together, the team provided very good leadership to the nursery. The headteacher was strongly committed to improving the nursery and shared her vision for its continuing development effectively with staff. The depute headteacher demonstrated a very good knowledge of early years practice and was well organised and approachable. The nursery class teacher provided the large team of child development officers and pupil support assistants with very good support. Strong teamwork between managers and staff was a major factor in the quality of support given to the children.

**HMIE Report, Kelbourne Special Nursery School, Glasgow City Council, February 2007**

### **Distributive Leadership in a Secondary School**

The leadership of the school was excellent. The headteacher provided a very strong lead and had high expectations for all within the school community. He had a clear strategic vision for the school, established effective policies and procedures, and empowered senior and middle managers. The quality of pupils' learning experiences was at the forefront of this vision. The depute headteachers also made a major contribution to the effective leadership of the school through sustaining and improving the ethos and quality of learning and teaching. The business manager provided an exceptionally good analytical service which enabled pupils' performance to be tracked in detail. Middle managers were very effective at leading continuous improvement in the work of their departments.

**HMIE Report, St Andrew's Secondary School, Glasgow City Council, June 2006**

**Sharing a task reduces the strain on individuals and can help to improve the quality of the process and the outcomes achieved.**

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## What does distributive leadership look like?

The previous extracts provide examples of distributive leadership in a nursery and secondary setting. Other examples include:

- sector managers in colleges, working in partnerships with local enterprise companies to develop skills courses for local workers;
- college senior managers leading college consortia and tracking learners' progress from HNC awards to degree-level provision;
- CLD staff leading multi-agency partnerships as part of community planning and regeneration;
- youth workers heading up specific projects as part of youth work team;
- nursery teachers leading *Assessment is for Learning* (AifL)<sup>13</sup> projects for the early years;
- secondary language specialists leading modern languages in primary schools;
- chartered teachers working as tutors to newly qualified teachers; and
- primary principal teachers working across primary and secondary sectors and developing shared approaches to learning and teaching.

It is important to clarify the respective roles and responsibilities of staff who may have a quality assurance role such as senior managers, principal teachers faculty, other principal teachers and heads of department.

### Distributive Leadership:

- is about actively sharing and spreading responsibility for leadership more widely across staff operating at different levels;
- is about a move towards the collective leadership of an establishment rather than dependency on the power of one person;
- is about building a culture that supports and encourages the creativity and leadership potential of learners and staff;
- reinforces the need for teamwork, partnerships, collaboration, networking and facilitating; and
- entails that leaders at different levels are working in supportive and complementary ways.

<sup>13</sup> *Assessment is for Learning* (AifL) is a Scottish Executive Education Department development programme which outlines key principles which connect assessment with learning and teaching.

Within the early years, *The National Review of the Early Years and Childcare Workforce: Report and Consultation* sets out a distributive approach to leadership, particularly in relation to the roles and responsibilities for leadership and management in the early years. The literature on leadership in early childhood also identifies some key features of leadership in early education which require to be fully recognised as being important given the differences in culture which may exist in the early years sector.

## How do we help students to become leaders of their own learning?

### Key Message

A culture of student leadership is focused on releasing the talents and energies of the leaders of the future.

A number of other curriculum initiatives can be clearly aligned to developing the leadership of learners, but might not normally be considered in this way. For instance, initiatives linked to the citizenship agenda such as volunteering, involving young people in organising and running conferences or workshops, charity work or buddying can all be seen as part of leadership development. Similarly, teaching initiatives which develop the active engagement of learners, for example, cooperative learning, personal learning planning, peer learning, small group work or enterprise-based initiatives can be seen as part of culture which is focused on developing the leadership and learning of staff and students. A key question that we need to consider is,

**“How do we develop a culture of student leadership which releases the talents, energies and creativity of all learners who will become the decision-makers and leaders of the future?”**

### Some thoughts from young learners: aged 10-12

We are leaders of our learning when we:

- plan our homework over the week;
- do independent research;
- have target sheets;
- choose what to put in our record of achievement;
- set personal targets;
- explore websites on the computer; and
- choose to study on our own.

Sections linked to the learner perspective are included in each of the following sections and begin address the challenge of helping students to become leaders of their own learning.

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### Student leadership in CLD

By working with a range of partners Youth Learning Service staff had successfully coordinated and supported young people to produce a video raising environmental issues and encouraging more responsible use of the Morgan Glen. In addition to learning video production techniques young people were supported and encouraged to take full responsibility for devising the programme, promotion and organisation for the performance event and to perform in it. Partner organisations made effective contributions ranging from providing assistance and expertise around health and safety risk assessments, on-site facilities, security and transport through to Strathclyde Police funding the costumes for the dance performance group. Young people fully participated in debriefing meetings with partner agencies after the event. As a result of participation young people reported increase self-confidence and of feeling more involved in their own community.

**HMIE Report, Community learning and development in Larkhall,  
South Lanarkshire, 2006**

## What does distributive leadership mean for accountability?

### Key Message

Accountability is ultimately tied to the person who leads the organisation but every member of staff is accountable for the quality of their day-to-day work and allocated responsibilities.

Most organisations have leaders who are in a position of formal authority such as Chief Executive, Director, headteacher, head of centre, principal or service manager. They play a vital role in the practice of leadership. Inspection evidence shows that the quality of leadership provided by these leaders in influencing their establishment matters greatly. It is important to note, however, that these leaders are seen to be effective not simply because of their position or power, but because of their ability to influence and empower others.

Whilst a number of people within an establishment or service share a sense of responsibility for leading tasks or projects or teams, they are not all accountable in the same way. Accountability is ultimately tied to the person who leads up the organisation. He/she has to make the decisions, have the challenging conversations and make the final decision which is in the best interests of the organisation. A key role is to ensure that everybody is working collectively towards common goals and towards the development of a quality establishment where learners achieve well. Leaders at all levels need to be clear about the person(s) to whom they are accountable, what is expected of them by their line managers and their responsibility in implementing agreed policies.

## For long-term projects we need drive which may come from the top or from the bottom, and accountability for the results.

As inspectors we evaluate the impact of the leadership provided to an establishment/service and the ongoing monitoring where evidence is collated to effect improvement. This is demonstrated in, for example, the quality of student learning and achievement, attainment data, attendance and absence data as well as indicators such as the morale of staff and learners and the views of other stakeholders. Those in senior leadership positions take on the responsibility and are held increasingly accountable for orchestrating the conditions of learning so that all staff and learners perform to their potential.

Accountability for successful work and continuous improvement rests with everyone. Everybody in an establishment/service has to take responsibility for the quality of their work. Senior staff have to be prepared to delegate authority but not always accountability, and that is a real challenge. They need to be able to answer the question, 'Who is accountable for what?' and 'Who is monitoring the impact of the work?'. This may include for instance, a middle manager ensuring a regular review of programmes, engaging in dialogue with staff about the quality of their work and monitoring departmental or sector planning to ensure that deadlines are being met. Similarly, unpromoted members of staff will be responsible for ensuring that they are well prepared for and regularly monitor the progress and assessment of learners in their charge. All staff are personally accountable for the quality of work they deliver on a day-to-day basis. It can be seen, therefore, that responsibility and accountability are part of the leadership equation. In the most effective establishments/services, responsibility for learning and teaching, high expectations and accountability coincide.

### Self-evaluation Materials

Examples of self-evaluation/case study materials relating to this section can be found on the HMIE website: [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk).

## Key Message

There is no one leadership style and no one way to be successful.

HM Inspectors visit a wide range of establishments and see different kinds of leaders working in very different contexts. What is clear is that there is no one leadership style and no single way to be successful.

Leaders need to develop different approaches for different situations. The most effective leaders are conscious of and able to adapt their strategies and styles to suit particular circumstances. Further discussions of adaptive and technical leadership are explored in Section 6.

## Key Messages: Section 2

### Leaders matter: exerting influence and making a difference

- Effective leaders help everyone make an impact on the quality of learning, teaching and achievement.
- Leaders are not just at the top of an organisation. The most effective organisations have strong leaders at every level.
- A culture of student leadership is focused on releasing the talents and energies of the leaders of the future.
- Accountability is ultimately tied to the person who heads up the organisation but every member of staff is accountable for the quality of their day-to-day work and allocated responsibilities.
- There is no one leadership style and no one way to be successful.



## Why would you want to be a leader? Some thoughts from staff and students.

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Because I feel passionate about doing a good job and taking other people along with me. People get a kick out of being part of a good team – I'd like to think I could create a sense of 'team' if I got the chance.  
College Team Leader

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Because leadership is rewarding, challenging and stimulating!  
Primary Chartered Teacher

Because I want to make a difference and challenge myself in different ways.  
Further Education Associate Assessor

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It means you get responsibilities and are proud when you do them right.  
Primary school pupil

To have responsibility, to make people happy, to help people to achieve things, to make people confident and calmer.  
Primary school pupil

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Because there's nothing like the buzz of helping others achieve.  
Headteacher Secondary

I don't know, I ask myself that question everyday!!! Seriously though, in order that I can influence the decisions and take action that will make a difference to other people's lives, particularly young people.  
Headteacher

To apply my skills in more settings/to increase professional challenges.  
Principal Teacher

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To try to inspire people to be all they can be.  
Head of Year

You can have your ideas, meet new people and make changes – and it makes you happy!  
P6 pupil

To broaden the range of activities I am exposed to; to learn how things work at a higher level; to make real differences in how the service moves forward.  
Children's Services Manager

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To take charge of my life and to help guide others.  
College student

# What is leadership?

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## Some views from college students

- Being able to guide a group towards common agreed goals.
- Being an effective speaker and being able to make decisions.
- Having good management skills and good people skills.
- Without leadership there is no direction; with poor leadership there is the wrong direction.

## Some views from student focus groups aged 12-17

- Helping people to achieve things.
- Gaining respect of others.
- Taking responsibility.
- Achieving something.
- Taking charge in a group.
- Helping other people.
- Taking responsibility.
- Communicating with other people.
- Leaders are major contributors to the groups they lead.
- Leaders help others in the group to get things done as quickly and successfully as possible.
- Groups with good leaders do better than others – this applies to teachers and pupils.
- Leaders have thought ahead and are prepared and organised.
- Leaders don't make all the decisions – they listen to others and help other people achieve.
- A leader has to be enthusiastic to motivate other people.
- A good leader is able to communicate with lots of different kinds of people.
- A good leader will know what the others are good at.

**Without leadership there is no direction; with poor leadership there is the wrong direction.**

# What makes a good leader?

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## Some views from college student focus groups

A good leader is someone who:

- has confidence, good interpersonal skills, good management skills and is good at delegating;
- can put themselves forward; and
- wants to look after others.

## Some views from pupil focus groups aged 8-12

A good leader is someone who:

- shows a good example, is helpful and follows the rules;
- is kind, caring and trustworthy;
- is confident but is down to earth;
- can listen and respect other people's opinions;
- is determined but understands;
- can report back;
- can encourage others;
- can cope in tricky situations and can take control;
- can speak their mind;
- inspires;
- can follow a discussion;
- is wise; and
- thinks before they act.

**A good leader is someone who has confidence, good interpersonal skills, good management skills and is good at delegating.**

## Student focus groups aged 12-17

A good leader:

- get things done;
- supports and guides others and helps develop other people;
- has confidence to do things that are not easy or popular – “I had the job of telling a fellow prefect that he was not carrying out his duties properly and that if he did not improve his performance I would recommend that he lost his position as a prefect.” (S6 pupil);
- has the confidence to speak in public and to say the things that other people are thinking they also know when to speak and when not to speak;
- is reliable and does what he says he is going to do;
- volunteers without being asked;
- puts the needs of others first;
- generates respect from others;
- does things to the best of her ability;
- doesn't give up – finds ways round problems;
- recognises and rewards the contributions of others.

Three

Vision, values and aims:  
sharing a common purpose

One of the key roles of any leader is to provide direction based on a strategic vision for the future.

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## Key Message

Leaders have a clear vision of where they want to go, and give people the self-confidence that they can make a difference and will be recognised for this.

This section explores the themes of vision, values and aims and how they work to provide direction and a common purpose to everyone involved in an establishment or service. It outlines evidence from inspections on how visions are generated in ways that help people see what is best in themselves and in their community. It also includes the perceptions of leadership as expressed through focus groups by young people of all ages. When a vision works well it compels staff to question what they are doing, why they are doing it and how they are going about their work. Once a vision has been established it can give life to the work being undertaken and acts as a way of aligning long-term and short-term goals.

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## What do we want to achieve and how are we going to go about it?

One of the key roles of any leader is to provide direction based on a strategic vision for the future. The *Standard for Headship in Scotland*<sup>14</sup> identifies Professional Values as one of the elements for the practice of headship.

**“Headteachers should demonstrate commitment to educational values through being able to devise and communicate an overall vision for an effective school, taking account of its context and culture.”**

*The Journey to Excellence* provides examples of good and excellent practices within the school sector in “creating and sustaining the shared vision” (pp 52-53). Sometimes people are uncomfortable with talk of vision and prefer instead to talk about ‘preferred futures’. Others refer to the mission of the establishment or the mission aligned to an establishment motto. Whatever language is used, leaders are able to set out where an establishment/service is aiming to go, how it will get there and what it will look and feel like.

For this to happen, there has to be ownership and a collective drive where everybody feels that they have a part to play. Our findings, particularly from follow-through inspections, demonstrate that effective leaders help staff to be able to describe their establishment/service well and articulate where they have reached in their improvement journey and what it means to be performing better. Staff can describe what they have done and what is going to be different next year. The development of a vision helps staff to grasp the big picture and have a shared sense of purpose. Without such leadership, establishments may have a narrow and overly-restrictive focus on day-to-day operational functions.

### **Modelling the vision**

The headteacher gave a clear and highly effective lead to the school. His open and very approachable style of management had earned the respect and confidence of staff, pupils and parents. He demonstrated an exceptional commitment to promoting a thriving school community which celebrated diversity and where pupils were given strong support to help them succeed. He had managed the recent merger of staff and pupils from another school very well, ensuring all were welcomed and pupils quickly settled in their learning.

**HMIE Report, Dalry Primary School, City of Edinburgh Council, February 2006**

14 The *Standard for Headship in Scotland*, Scottish Executive, 2002.



Leaders are faced with the very real task of engaging staff in thinking about and feeling ownership of the distinctive vision for their establishment/service which relates to the direction provided by the national agenda and the agenda set out by their education authority or governing board.

## How do we capture our vision succinctly?

The most effective leaders have a clear picture of the future purpose and appearance of the establishment/service they lead and the role it plays in the community. They are also able to communicate that vision and to encourage other stakeholders to buy in to it so that it guides the future direction. Most establishments take time to set out their vision (or mission) and to share it more widely with others in key documents, on websites and in literature. It is interesting to read these statements because they give a flavour of what is seen to be important. Often organisations will summarise their vision in a short, catchy phrase that people can identify with and use to direct their thinking and planning. For example, Aberdeen City Council has a vision of being '*a city of learning*'; East Renfrewshire Council talks about '*no school or pupil left behind*'; and Troup House Residential Special School has a vision of '*believe and achieve*'.

### Setting out a clear vision statement

Lead Scotland wants an inclusive adult education system in Scotland that provides equality of access for disabled young people and adults and carers to develop to their fullest potential. Lead's vision and mission statement had been consistent over a number of years enabling staff and volunteers to retain a clear understanding of the focus of the organisation's work.

**HMIE Review, Lead Scotland, March 2006**

## Key Message

To be effective, visions, values and aims are best developed through the active participation of stakeholders.

## How do you build a shared vision?

Building a shared vision is an ongoing and continuous process. A genuine vision comes from people asking, '*What do we want to achieve and how are we going to go about it?*' This is commonly taken forward as part of in-service work where staff share exemplar vision statements, make choices, establish priorities and consider those statements that reflect their establishment/service. They then begin to build a new statement of vision which is enacted and shared more widely. Visions for the future are based on the experience of review on the part of staff and learners, on personal and professional reflection and on continuing development. Consequently no two leaders will develop their visions in exactly the same way and there is no template for doing so.

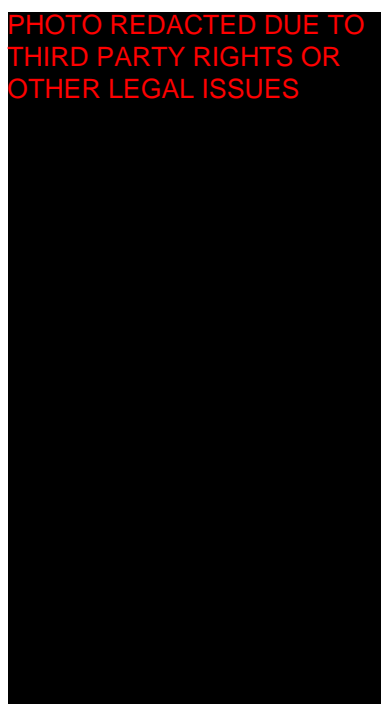
### Sharing the vision in a nursery context

The head of centre was strongly committed to improving the nursery and shared her vision for its continuing development effectively with staff. She had a sound knowledge of early years practice, was very well organised and approachable, and provided staff with very good support. Strong teamwork between managers and staff was a major factor in the quality of support given to the children.

**HMIE Report, Richard Stewart Nursery Centre, North Lanarkshire Council, 2006**

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## How might we involve learners in vision, values and aims?

If we are to develop learners as effective contributors and responsible citizens we need to consciously develop a culture which involves them in meaningful ways. The importance of engaging learners in setting the vision and direction for the establishment should not be underestimated. A positive understanding of what the establishment is trying to achieve can make a significant contribution to increasing identification and promoting effective learning. Many establishments/services regularly use surveys (including online), feedback mechanisms and conversations to collate the views of learners as part of a process of on going self-evaluation and improvement. Similarly, when establishments are reviewing their vision, values and aims, it is common to involve stakeholders including learners in any major review or consultation.

Children, young people and adult learners cannot be treated as a homogenous group. Different approaches will be needed for different groupings. Those with disabilities, ethnic minority groups or those who are disengaged from learning may have additional and specific needs. Encouraging more active participation on the part of learners can be a way of re-engaging learners. This can have positive knock-on effects to their self-esteem, confidence and leadership potential. Some practical examples of approaches used across sectors to develop consensus on vision, values and aims include:

- developing mechanisms and activities that support a vision of learners as active citizens in their establishment and local community such as access to local facilities, concessionary travel and fees, volunteering, reimbursing out-of-pocket expenses incurred, work experience, placements and community planning forums;
- modelling the uses of being a learning organisation through opportunities such as secondments, exchanges, bids for extended periods of time to develop projects, small grant schemes, negotiated curricula and residential arrangements to engage in debate;
- student-led presentations, workshops and focus group meetings to develop common statements of values among learners, staff and stakeholders which characterise an establishment/service;
- agreed statements of values and aims which are linked to joint responsibilities on the part of learners and staff and to acceptable ways of working and behaving;
- systems and processes which exemplify values and aims such as empowerment in learner representative councils/forums, peer mentoring and coaching programmes, assemblies, youth citizens' panels, high-level committees for children and young people, Young Scot and Dialogue Youth; and
- regular joint reviews by staff and learners of the impact of the vision, values and aims.

The Community Planning Advice Note<sup>15</sup> provides interesting case studies of ways in which various councils have engaged with young people to help deliver their vision.

<sup>15</sup> *Engaging children and young people in community planning*, Scottish Executive, 2006.

## Are there critical points when we should review our vision?

There may well be critical points in an establishment's development when it is possible and even desirable to develop a new vision, create new strategies and move in new directions. Sometimes this will happen when:

- a new leader comes into post and recognises that staff need to be re-energised and refocused;
- there has been a significant turnover of staff for a number of reasons;
- there has been a highly significant event which has affected a community such as an amalgamation of two centres, plans for a complete rebuild or community regeneration activities;
- external changes signal a significant shift in thinking which need to be embraced internally;
- discontentment with the status quo becomes the catalyst for change; or
- a critical inspection report or negative self-evaluation points to significant weaknesses.

The key is knowing when to initiate such a change of direction. The most effective leaders tend to have the ability to know not only what to do but when to do it. Being able to sense the right time to take action is an important aspect of a leader's repertoire. The list of bullet points above may help leaders to reflect on their own establishment/service in this context.

## Let's talk about values

Vision, values and aims need to be closely aligned. This is important because the values that are identified signal what an establishment stands for – in short, what is valued. This might be termed the 'ethical dimension of leadership' or in Fullan's terms, its 'moral purpose'<sup>16</sup>.

**“The headteacher should demonstrate commitment to educational values through exemplifying consistent educational values in their behaviour and translating these into practical aims and policies, which engage the whole school community in relating their practice to educational aims and values.”<sup>17</sup>**

Inspection evidence suggests that the ability to establish and communicate appropriate values is an important dimension of leadership. These values will often include a strong commitment to developing:

- learners personally, socially, emotionally and morally;
- a sense of belonging;
- the care and welfare of learners and members of the community;
- openness and transparency;
- trust, honesty and integrity; and
- equality, fairness and inclusion.

To those may be added:

- passion for success and achievement;
- promotion of collaboration and teamworking; and
- a sense of personal responsibility.

Within any educational setting, we would all expect to find a culture where everyone is valued and is treated with respect, where learning and teaching is centre stage and where there is a commitment to improvement. Increasingly there is a focus on leaders working across and within diverse cultures and with a mixed social population.

<sup>16</sup> *The Moral Imperative of School Leadership*, M Fullan, Corwin Press, 2003.

<sup>17</sup> *Standard for Headship in Scotland*, Scottish Executive, 2002.

### **An example of inclusion**

All teachers, pupil support assistants, visiting teachers and senior managers displayed a very strong commitment to improving pupils' learning experiences. The school had very successfully established an inclusive ethos based on the values of equal opportunities for all. The headteacher played a key role in the establishment of an inclusive ethos in the school. She valued the contributions of all staff and all pupils. She had led the development of the anti-racist policy which ensured that the promotion of racial equality was integrated into all aspects of the curriculum. Her emphasis on the development of pupils' citizenship skills through assemblies and learning and teaching was commendable. The deputy headteacher also played a key role in the management of the school including planned support for pupils.

**HMIE Report, Glendale Primary School, Glasgow City Council, 2005**

### **Key Message**

**Leaders show through day-to-day activities what is really important in the life of the establishment.**

We judge the appropriateness and levels of acceptance of an establishment's values by their influence on relationships, on the quality of learning and teaching and on the experiences of individual learners. Values are apparent in the quality of the interactions between staff and learners and in the relationships amongst learners. These values are demonstrated in the care that learners show for one another and in their conduct towards the staff with whom they come in contact. Similarly the extent to which values have been embedded can be evaluated from the ways in which staff relate to learners and to one another.

Establishments that have successfully developed, communicated and implemented their vision, values and aims ensure that these are reflected in their key strategic documents such as their policies on learning and teaching. These policies are the key strategic documents of any establishment. In the best examples, they closely reflect vision and values and are shaped by national and local aspirations and priorities. Learning and teaching policies and their derivatives, for example, policies on assessment, support for learning and homework, will be heavily influenced by the establishment's values that relate to the nature of learning.

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## Setting out shared aims and using these to evaluate progress

Developing vision and values needs to be matched with clarity of aims. These are important because they help to direct the work of staff and students in ways that can be set out more explicitly. Some schools set out their aims by linking them to the seven key areas of HGIOS, whilst others use the five national priorities as organisers. These organisers have the advantage of helping staff to be very clear on the core business of the school and to think about their work in terms of the specific aims they have developed together. As indicated previously, best practice includes students and staff developing and reviewing the aims together, to ensure that there is a consensus on where the establishment/service is trying to go. The aims of an establishment/service are often clearly set out for staff, students and stakeholders in prospectus documents, noticeboards and newsletters. Some examples of statements of aims are set out below.

The school's aims reflect the headteacher's vision. Among the aims are:

- to encourage an open, supportive climate where all staff are able to work effectively as a team making best possible use of appropriate accommodation, resources and space;
- to encourage children to be motivated, independent learners and to achieve their full potential in all aspects of the education and life skills; and
- to provide equal opportunities for all pupils, maintaining a positive ethos by promoting positive self-discipline and self-esteem, recognising individual needs and celebrating cultural diversity.

**Gylemuir Primary School, City of Edinburgh Council, 2007**

By maximising the positive impacts of volunteering and adopting an independent leadership role, we aim to listen to individuals and stakeholders to champion their voice; to gather intelligence and evidence to inform and influence thinking; to innovate in key areas; to provide legislative, regulatory and support services; and to work in partnership with the Scottish Executive and key stakeholders and partners.

**Volunteer Development Scotland**



## Bridging the gap between rhetoric and reality

On some occasions, leaders will require considerable professional courage to promote and defend values that they believe should lie at the heart of the establishment/service and its work. Similarly, it is likely that all leaders will encounter situations that severely test their values, for example in ensuring the fair allocation of scarce resources.

To exercise leadership, people need to work as closely with their opponents as they do with their supporters. In this way, leaders learn about why people hold particular views, and are then in a stronger position to influence them. Dialogue, listening and good communication are essential because the content of people's ideas improves when they take other viewpoints into account. In the final instance, the successful resolution of dilemmas may well be dependent on the extent to which the establishment's values have been debated and accepted by stakeholders.

Consensus on vision, values and aims is dependent on the extent to which a leadership culture has been cultivated. The sharing of leadership responsibility more widely across the establishment may change how people perceive 'the ways things are done around here'. The concept of a positive culture implies shared values that bind a group together and provide the basis for perceptions of what is important.

### Sharing leadership

The headteacher had been very successful in ensuring that all staff were part of a team. The depute headteacher and principal teachers provided very good support for the headteacher. Their individual strengths complemented one another and, together with the headteacher, they formed an effective management team. They were well regarded by others and supported staff very well. Their leadership was having a positive impact on pupils' experiences.

**HMIE Report, Seaview Primary School, Angus Council, February 2006**

## Key Message

An establishment's culture can either work for or against improvement and reform.

Perhaps the most challenging job of any leader is to change the prevailing culture of an establishment/service if it is a barrier to improvement and reform. One strategy to promote a change of culture may include the distribution of leadership more widely. Even in the smallest primary school, leadership can come from a number of directions – from the headteacher, from other teachers, from non-teaching staff, from pupils, Parent Council members or other members of the parent and/or local community. In changing the culture of an establishment/service small things can make a big difference.

It is likely that staff will require support if they are to buy into a culture in which they contribute more strongly to the leadership of their establishments. An effective way of developing leadership is to make the goal of developing leaders at every level an explicit and accepted part of the culture.

## Key Messages: Section 3

### Vision, value and aims: sharing a common purpose

- Leaders have a clear vision of where they want to go, and give people the self-confidence that they can make a difference and will be recognised for this.
- To be effective, visions, values and aims are best developed through the active participation of all stakeholders.
- Leaders show through day-to-day activities what is really important in the life of the establishment or service.
- The culture of an establishment or service can either work for or against improvement and reform.

**On some occasions, leaders will require considerable professional courage to promote and defend values that they believe should lie at the heart of the establishment/service and its work.**

### Self-evaluation Materials

Examples of self-evaluation/case study materials relating to this section can be found on the HMIE website: [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk).

Four

Leadership and direction:  
focusing on what's important

Setting a vision and translating this vision into action  
requires clear direction.

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This section is concerned with those key aspects of leadership which help to translate an organisation's vision, values and aims into priority activities and desired outcomes. Effective and inclusive strategic planning is necessary to realise aims and focus on what is important. In the independent and non-compulsory sectors of education in particular, crucial components of leadership include an assessment of the resources required to achieve the desired outcomes and the identification of sources of funding. In all sectors, available resources have to be effectively deployed. Successful leaders also encourage innovation and welcome change where it is necessary. The evaluation and management of attendant risks is an integral attribute of successful leadership.

#### Key Message

Strategic planning sets out the future direction of the establishment or service.

We highlighted in Section 3 that leaders work with others to define and agree the shared vision, values and aims and then use them to inform strategic planning. While it is recognised that leadership is partly about managing through what may seem at times to be confusing and difficult issues, strategic planning is critical in translating a vision of the future into reality. Some form of strategic plan is needed to translate the high-level expression of the aims and priorities for a foreseeable period such as one, two or three years.

## Is planning about management or leadership?

Setting a vision and translating this vision into action requires clear direction. In recent years the focus has shifted from management on its own to leadership with effective management. What is required is both a long-term vision and a routemap: milestones in realising the vision and short-term indications of where people are on the journey. There are various definitions of leadership and management. What emerges is that leadership tends to be equated with vision and strategic direction while management is seen as a practical way of getting things done. For some the boundaries are clear – for others they tend to be blurred.

Management tends to be equated with an operational focus and a concern with meeting targets whereas leadership tends to be equated with vision and direction-setting. However, there is a danger of over-simplification and of downplaying the importance of management and management practices. It is crucial to have effective management systems in place so that establishments/services run smoothly and are well served by transparent budget and resource allocations and staffing structures. Both are required. It is also important to recognise those aspects of management which differ across sectors. For example, schools must work with their education authority in relation to issues such as staffing and devolved funding. Colleges on the other hand, are independent institutions who have control over finance and resources. This gives college principals much more control and scope to make changes than their counterparts in the school or CLD sectors. Leaders in independent residential special schools and secure care accommodation services must liaise with their placing authorities to agree the appropriateness of their curriculum and their strategies to meet the complex needs of young people.

### **An example of effective leadership and management**

The headteacher was an effective manager and excellent leader. He shared his vision for the school and promoted teamwork amongst staff. He empowered staff to develop new initiatives and to lead teams. Two very experienced depute headteachers ably assisted and supported the work of the headteacher. Together with the principal teachers, the corporate leadership of the school was very good. The principal teachers were particularly effective in their leadership of curriculum developments in writing, science, ICT, French and enterprise. They provided well-judged support to class teachers. The standards and quality report was evaluative and based on a range of evidence including feedback from pupils and parents.

**HMIE Report, Our Lady of the Mission Primary School, Thornliebank,  
East- Renfrewshire Council, October 2006**

## Thinking and talking strategically

As with the development of vision, values, the involvement of staff in the planning process is vital to ultimate success. The contributions of individual staff will, of course, vary depending on each person's role within an organisation. It is difficult to overstate the importance of good two-way communication in ensuring that staff at all levels feel that they have some ownership of the future direction and are both able and keen to play their part in meeting its strategic aims. Strategic thinking is a demanding task that requires leaders to consider competing priorities and make the hard decisions about those issues that are absolutely central to future development. It requires the ability to look some way ahead and to understand the factors that will have an impact. An effective strategist is able to see the big picture. Decisions have to take into account national and local priorities and the capacity for change in the establishment or service.

**“Headteachers should demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the range of external influences which have an impact on strategic and operational planning.”<sup>18</sup>**

A number of colleges have a strategic forum, chaired by the principal, comprising senior and middle managers who meet on a regular basis to respond to strategic issues. The forum becomes an important vehicle for the exercise of leadership on the part of the principal and for the involvement of senior and middle management in policy formulation and decision making. The involvement of middle managers at the strategic forum and within their own sector review meetings ensures clarity of direction at strategic and departmental level.

### **Involving and Empowering Staff**

All senior staff in the department were providing effective direction and support to staff. The Head of Communications was highly regarded both within and outwith the department. He provided a clear vision and had led a major refocusing of the service towards key national and local priorities. Managers, section leaders and unit leaders demonstrated a high level of professional competence and commitment. Staff enjoyed working in the department, and were committed to its aims and objectives. The culture of openness and mutual respect had a very positive impact on staff morale. Senior staff had developed very good relationships both within the authority and key partners.

**HMIE Report, Community Learning and Development in Kirkton and Central Dundee, Dundee City Council, 2005**

<sup>18</sup> *Standard for Headship in Scotland*, Scottish Executive, 2002.

## Developing alternative models of leadership

In an education authority context, we are beginning to see alternative models of leadership which both enhance leadership capacity in schools and provide systems to create more focused monitoring across establishments. These include the development of learning communities and also clusters of two or three small schools managed by one headteacher.

### Cluster headships

In cluster headships, arrangements are made whereby a specific teacher, sometimes a principal teacher, becomes a daily point of contact for parents and staff in the headteacher's absence. An advantage of the model is that it gives the nominated teacher the chance of experiencing new leadership responsibilities and the experience of headship first hand. Monitoring on a day-to-day level is then being taken forward by this teacher and more strategic monitoring is overseen by the headteacher. There are additional benefits and flexibilities in sharing resources between sites, offering wider career development and opportunities for pupils to meet as part of a larger group for a range of activities such as sports, arts and personal and social development.

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#### **An example of shared leadership**

The headteacher, who was also responsible for two other schools, demonstrated very good leadership and management skills. She showed an obvious commitment to the school and had worked effectively with the staff and parents to improve the school. Although the teacher was responsible for three schools, she was a very successful headteacher in Raasay. All involved knew where she could be contacted when not in school.

**HMIE Report, Raasay Primary School, The Highland Council, October 2006**



## Creating time for staff to meet and talk about learning

### Key Message

Leadership for learning means putting learning and learners at the centre of the agenda and remain focused on that.

We need to share ways in which leaders use their time creatively to allow staff to meet in small groups or teams to reflect on learning. Most staff feel that they are fully stretched in their day-to-day job. Time available for activities other than minor fine-tuning is often difficult to come by. All leaders face the challenge of creating time within busy staff schedules for reflection on learning and teaching and key improvements to be planned and delivered. It is important to create timetabled time for working groups and committees to meet. This will mean careful planning and the use of staff cover where necessary and agreed commitments at the beginning of a project.

Other factors which enable people to make progress and the best use of meeting times include:

- clear remits for working groups and/or committees;
- time for staff to talk about and reflect on learning and to learn from each other;
- involvement in action research projects;
- clear tasks linked to improvement priorities;
- SMART targets with associated milestones; and
- regular monitoring and progress reporting.

### Involving Staff in leadership projects

Staff actively promoted positive behaviour in a clear and consistent manner and carried out effective approaches to anti-bullying. Support staff made a very positive contribution to meeting pupils' needs through well-judged support and in their sensitive management of pupil's personal care. The headteacher had ensured productive partnerships with businesses, colleges and the wider community to promote pupils' personal development. She had fully engaged all staff in improvement planning and provided opportunities for them to take on leadership roles. One depute headteacher had very effectively led the introduction of the Life Skills Unit through a seminar involving staff, parents and the wider community. Together with the principal teacher for S5/S6 she ensured that young people's learning and personal development was of a high standard.

**HMIE Report, Glencryan School, Cumbernauld, North Lanarkshire Council, February 2006**

## How do we help learners to take control of their own learning?

*Leadership for Learning* implies that staff and learners share their thoughts about learning and their respective roles in learning. In the best establishments, from the smallest primary school to the largest college, learners are supported to become leaders of their own learning and to take responsibility for their own progress and development. When this is considered seriously and planned for, learners become independent learners who have been supported to work individually as well as part of a group. Often this is supported by a clear focus on an aspect of learning such as independent learning featuring as a priority in the relevant improvement plan.

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### Examples of leading learning

We lead our own learning when we plan our homework over the week, do independent research, have target sheets and choose what to put in our record of achievement. (primary school focus group)

Some of our teachers give us responsibility for organising our groups. In religious and moral education we have to appoint a facilitator, scribe/writer, timekeeper, materials manager and reporter/spokesperson. (learner aged 12)

I feel that I am a leader of my own learning because I know what I want to achieve from my education – I have received enough support to do this. (college student)

The move towards individual target setting and the tracking of progress is important in providing opportunities for conversations between staff and learners. Similarly, processes which support the personal development of learners can help to develop their confidence to express opinions and to challenge ideas. Clear advice and support at transition points, especially between school and post-school helps to ensure that learners are guided towards the kind of options that are most appropriate to their needs. The development of programmes such as thinking skills or study skills can help learners become aware of their learning strategies.

Learners who are helped to engage positively in conversations about:

- *how they are doing;*
- *where they want to go; and*
- *what they need to do to get there,*

have an increased chance of continuing to learn and strengthening their own leadership for learning. It is also helpful for students to realise that staff too, are continually developing their own learning and to share this with students. Similarly, staff like to learn about the kinds of activities that young people are engaged in outwith an establishment/service in order to maximise success for all learners. Guy Claxton talks about 'building learning power' to focus teachers on helping young people to become better learners.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> BLP [www.buildinglearningpower.co.uk](http://www.buildinglearningpower.co.uk).

## Key Message

Effective leaders have a firm grasp of budgetary planning and target resources, including staff resources, to identified priorities.

Leaders need to plan for sustainable improvements which balance long-term and short-term priorities which are linked to budgetary planning and control. Having established key educational priorities and outcomes through the planning process, leaders need to establish the volume and nature of resources required to achieve their objectives. The process of obtaining the resources required varies across sectors. For example, colleges obtain resources from a variety of public and private sector organisations, whereas in the school sectors, resources are derived largely or solely from a single central source. In residential special schools and secure care accommodation services, resources are acquired from placing authorities and a range of other sources. People skills and financial planning have become a large part of the job and managing an annual budget is an important feature of what senior leaders have to learn to do.

In all sectors leaders need to rank their priorities to ensure that resources are targeted most effectively. Effective leadership at all levels is built on awareness of the rationale for resource allocation decisions. To maintain staff morale and ensure effective teamworking, leaders involve staff in the decision-making process. This ensures that all are aware funding is being used to best effect, and is providing maximum value for money in terms of benefit to learners. Sustainability is a crucial factor and improvements need to be planned and delivered on a long-term basis.

### FinPlan: financial modelling tool

The college had developed and implemented information systems based on intranet technology to support college managers in the planning of a balanced and controlled curriculum. Staff had developed the systems to overcome the difficulties of dealing simultaneously with the impact of individual curriculum decisions on income, staffing, accommodation and equipment. A comprehensive database of available units, linked to courses provided curriculum managers with the building blocks for their curriculum and ensured accurate representation of hours and student units of measurement (SUMs) in the FinPlan financial modelling tool. FinPlan displayed interactively for each course decision, the effects on income and resources.

**HMIE Report, Central College, August 2005**

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## Key Message

Effective leaders and effective establishments/services promote and support innovation and change whilst evaluating and managing risks.

## How much risk is acceptable in relation to managing change?

Developments in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and the emergence of lifelong learning have had a major impact on the planning and delivery of curricula across all sectors. Even where effective practice is taking place, successful organisations and their leaders look for ways to extend existing services to a wider group of learners, or progress from what is good towards excellence.

Changing circumstances require innovative responses. For example, Anniesland College decided that the arrival of asylum seekers in Glasgow in 2000 provided new opportunities and challenges for education providers in the area. In identifying and meeting these needs, the college inevitably took risks. The college has been successful in rising to the challenge, because of an approach to leadership which was based on teamwork and mutual support.

Innovation, change, a commitment to excellence, maintaining the status quo – all these factors involve risk.

Effective leaders are aware of:

- the main types of risk;
- the different levels of risk associated with various organisational activities;
- the likelihood of each risk actually occurring; and
- the ways to address a risk when it does materialise.

Consequently, they are able to undertake activities that bring rewards. In the education sector these include crucial gains such as improved learning and attainment, more vocational or employment opportunities for learners or increased numbers of learners moving onto FE or HE provision.

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## What procedures do you have for managing risk?

Organisations face a variety of risks which range from organising educational excursions to the risks involved in taking forward too many changes too quickly and losing staff support. Risks can be categorised and associated with different levels of work within the organisation. These are some examples of risks to an establishment/service:

- the disappearance of a major income stream;
- a major curriculum change;
- losing strong partners from effective partnerships;
- major restructuring;
- being unable to deliver an integral part of a programme to a group of learners because of the illness of key staff and the unavailability of suitable cover; and
- change of policy of placing authorities who may prefer to place young people in local provision.

While all risks associated with educational institutions impact in one way or another on the quality of learner experiences, some have more direct effects than others. Leaders do need to have the courage to act in situations where results are not assured. They need to learn how to manage risks. Learners too often encounter challenging activities but must be helped to understand that they can risk making mistakes because they understand that they can learn from them.<sup>20</sup>

### Key Messages: Section 4

#### Leadership And Direction: Focusing On What's Important

- Strategic planning sets out the future direction of the establishment or service.
- Leadership for learning means putting learning and learners at the centre of the agenda.
- Effective leaders have a firm grasp of budgetary planning and target resources including staff resources, towards identified priorities.
- Effective leaders and effective establishments/services promote and support innovation and change whilst evaluating and managing risks.

#### Self-evaluation Materials

Examples of self-evaluation/case study materials relating to this section can be found on the HMIE website: [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk).

<sup>20</sup> *Curriculum for Excellence: Promoting Active Learning*, Scottish Executive

## The best advice I ever received – some thoughts for you to consider

If you haven't got time to reflect, and think, and plan – sort out your time management.

Headteacher Secondary School

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Always have good lines of communication.  
Be a good watcher and listener.

Headteacher Nursery

Lead by example – to lead is to serve.

Depute Head

Always walk on the sunny side.  
Be yourself.  
Think before you speak.  
If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all.  
Count to ten.  
Eat your greens!  
P6 pupils

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You can do anything you are given to do.  
Always consider things from other people's perspective before making a decision.  
Principal Teacher Primary

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Don't make a hasty decision when someone is pressing for an answer. THINK. REFLECT. DECIDE!  
Headteacher Secondary

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Go for respect, not popularity.  
Headteacher  
Special School

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Fail to prepare – prepare to fail.  
Deal with problems before they escalate.  
56 students

To listen with your eyes!  
Headteacher Primary

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A noisy teacher makes for a noisy classroom!  
Primary Teacher



Five

Developing people and partnerships:  
building leadership capacity

In education, we have a highly-skilled workforce that is engaged directly in delivery or as part of the support infrastructure. Their key focus is on adding value in ways that deliver maximum impact for learners.

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In this section, there is a focus on how people and partnerships can be developed in order to build leadership capacity. Previous sections have highlighted the need for leaders to build a strong team around them and to involve staff and learners in key developments. Effective leadership results in a culture that supports and encourages the creativity and leadership potential of each member of staff. Examples are provided of practices that release the potential of staff and learners and develop the characteristics of effective team and partnership working.

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## Key Message

The most important resource in any establishment/service is its people.

In education, we have a highly-skilled workforce that is engaged directly in delivery or as part of the support infrastructure. Their key focus is on adding value in ways that deliver maximum impact for learners. In other words they try to teach well, and care for, nurture and support the young people they are responsible for. This includes creating motivating and stimulating learning and providing good leadership for learning. Effective leadership harnesses energy and capitalises on what people bring to and get from their role. Feeling part of an effective team is a good feeling.

**“To achieve the highest standards for pupils and teachers, the headteacher must create the conditions and structures to support and develop effective learning and teaching. She or he achieves this primarily through the leadership and management of others within the school and its community.”<sup>21</sup>**

No establishment/service can work in isolation. We all operate within a context that involves groups of stakeholders including learners, their families, the broader community, employers, local authorities and funding bodies. All of these groups, and others, have an interest in education and can have something to give to the quality of the learners' experience. Where this interest develops into an effective partnership, with two or more establishments working together with a common purpose, there can be major contributions to the wellbeing and progress of learners. Partnership working can have a wide range of benefits including learning from others and delivering services in a joined-up way.

<sup>21</sup> *Standard for Headship in Scotland*, Scottish Executive, 2002.

## Effective leaders build leadership capacity by:

- developing leadership talent experientially, both through modelling and through experience of managing projects;
- providing induction for all new staff at the right time, covering key aspects of the job;
- all staff having access to a full range of appropriate and effective professional development opportunities, including accredited professional development;
- using every opportunity to develop the potential of staff to exercise leadership and to be innovative;
- keeping staff remits under regular review and agreed adjustments made to improve individual and establishment effectiveness and to maintain job satisfaction and motivation; and
- organising processes for staff review, support and supervision which encourage staff to explore their future career paths.

### An example of project leadership

In one secondary school eight teachers were involved in leading and managing an identified project. They had attended a two-day course on project leadership with a follow-through project to be undertaken in school either at whole school or departmental level. This work was supported by an experienced principal teacher and a member of the senior management team. The specific objective for the project was shaped by the school's aims and development plans and therefore linked with the education authority's national priorities. One project was focused on improving the effectiveness with which the department plans for, and delivers, the teaching of technical accuracy in writing in S1.

The project leadership approach was designed to provide staff with early opportunities to develop some key leadership skills. These included leading the team, setting direction and formulating policy in agreement with others, delegating tasks and networking. The project leader might, for example, lead a working party, liaise with education authority staff or consult with colleagues in other schools. The management of the project allowed opportunities to consult, communicate, develop and trial new resources. Monitoring the impact of the initiatives included the self-evaluation processes of audit and review, application of quality indicators and class visits.

**HMIE visit to Cumnock Academy, East Ayrshire Council**

## What about developing the leadership skills of learners?

Within the learning community everyone becomes a learner. Across sectors, there is an increasing awareness that students need to be supported to take on leadership responsibilities. This is described in *The Journey to Excellence* in relation to the dimension that, *Values and empowers its staff and young people* (pp 93-99). Many learners will have had experience of leading others through activities such as buddying, mentoring or playing a role in a pupil or youth council or as a student representative. The *Columba Ambassador Academy*<sup>22</sup> has been used by a number of schools to develop the leadership potential of targeted pupils and to empower them to take forward initiatives in their own school. Previous sections have included examples of other activities and schemes which are geared to developing aspects of student leadership.

### Developing the leadership skills of learners

Pupils had opportunities to take responsibility and influence the work of the school. Representatives from each class were elected by their peers to the pupil council. The council met regularly and had achieved improvements in the school's environment. Pupils participated in the school nutrition action group, and were trained as peer mediators, monitors and buddies to nursery and P1 pupils. Buddies in P6 helped younger pupils with reading. At all stages, pupils developed their teamwork skills by carrying out enterprise tasks. Pupils had cooperated well to design, make and sell products for charity.

**HMIE Report, Kiltearn Primary School, The Highland Council, June 2006**

The school recently established a pupils' learning and teaching group to provide an opportunity for them to express their opinions of what and how they are taught and to suggest improvements. This is working well. (Principal teacher in a secondary school)

My youth club has given me opportunities for leadership through the Young Quality Scot Award. This is a community project that includes a two-day training course and a follow-up weekend course. (Member of a secondary age focus group)

The college sector in England has recently developed an interesting programme called the *FE Student Leadership Programme 2006/07*. This has been developed by the National Union of Students (NUS) in conjunction with the *Centre for Excellence in Leadership* (CEL)<sup>23</sup>. The programme is aimed at *amplifying the voice of learners in the learning and skills sector*, and is a three-day residential programme designed specifically around the needs of a student leader and/or students' union officer in a College. The programme focuses on the development of practical leadership skills through interactive role-play sessions as well as face-to-face and peer-group coaching.

22 The *Columba Ambassador Academy* ([info@columba1400.com](mailto:info@columba1400.com))

23 *Centre for Excellence in Leadership* ([www.centreforexcellence.org.uk](http://www.centreforexcellence.org.uk))

## Recognising the leadership skills of learners

The National College for School Leadership (NCSL), based in Nottingham, has developed a number of projects and case studies which are geared to developing the student voice and involving students more actively in improving their learning<sup>24</sup>. The Networked Learning Communities (NLC) Programme is one of the largest projects involving 135 networks across 90 local authorities in England<sup>25</sup>. The initiative has involved a number of innovative strategies which are worthy of reflection as we move forward in our thinking about developing and recognising the leadership skills of learners. These include the following:

- encouraging feedback from learners on learning and teaching;
- conferences run by and for young people;
- learner visits to other establishments;
- learners selecting projects to investigate and being involved as researchers and co-researchers;
- learners receiving training and then working as peer mentors, researchers and ambassadors within and between their establishment and across networks;
- involving learners in questions such as, “What does leadership mean to you?”;
- learners working collaboratively with adults to co-lead learning;
- inter-visitations or learning walks with other learners and staff, using agreed protocols;
- involving members of councils/forums as ‘VAK detectives’ (looking for examples of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning) on learning walks; and
- developing videos and DVDs to share with other learners.

24 National College for School Leadership ([www.ncsl.org.uk](http://www.ncsl.org.uk))

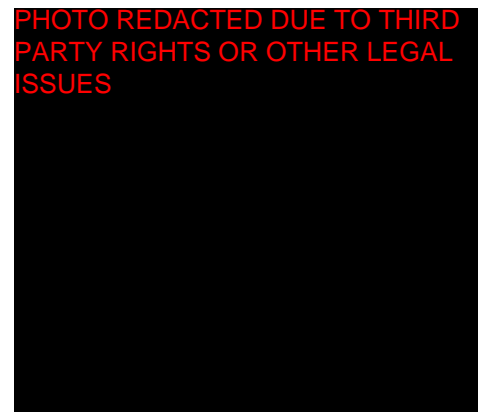
25 *Networked learning through collaborative enquiry*, J McGregor, 2004.

## What do we mean by a learning organisation?

Much has been spoken about learning organisations<sup>26</sup> and the manner in which educational establishments should be focusing on developing deep rather than surface learning. Schools, colleges or CLD services that reflect the characteristics of learning organisations tend to:

- focus strongly on improvement;
- provide opportunities for staff to regularly discuss learning and the craft of teaching;
- encourage learning in context;
- recruit, retain and reward people who are committed to the shared vision, values and aims;
- prioritise professional development and invest in training;
- set aside time for regular observations, review meetings and feedback; and
- encourage people to work in teams.

**Much has been spoken about learning organisations and the manner in which educational establishments should be focusing on developing deep, rather than surface, learning.**



<sup>26</sup> *The Fifth Discipline – the art and practice of the learning organisation*, P Senge Doubleday, New York, 1990.



## How can staff help learners to become 'leaders of their own learning'?

A learning organisation creates the conditions where staff have confidence in exercising their initiative and in grasping opportunities to share knowledge and assume responsibility. Such conditions serve to develop the capacity of people and teams to achieve a positive impact on the life of the establishment. Current and future leaders learn with and from others, formally and informally, prompting reflection and change. Modelling and training promotes the conditions through which establishments and services sustain excellence. Leaders strive to provide leadership opportunities for learners to become leaders of their own learning and to become aware of when they are under-performing and not reaching their potential. The kind of activities that are encouraged include:

- clear tracking and target-setting systems which facilitate one-to-one discussions between learner and teacher;
- a range of peer education programmes and activities;
- opportunities for students to be involved in decision-making that affects their learning and working environment;
- programmes to enhance citizenship skills in the establishment and community; and
- opportunities to lead aspects of specific programmes such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, The Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN), Sports Leaders, health-promoting schools and Eco Schools.

We all have a shared responsibility to help people to think of themselves as leaders of learning. In this way we aim to develop:

- a pool of potentially untapped resource;
- effective teachers/tutors who bring benefits to learners;
- an enhanced leadership capacity; and
- vibrancy in the culture.

## Key Message

Leaders create an empowering culture in which staff feel able to argue, propose, question and challenge.

## Don't forget about culture

Previous sections highlighted the importance of giving staff and learners a sense that collectively, they have ownership of the direction of their own work and the work of the establishment. Inspectors find that confident leaders encourage people to take on a leadership role. This is evidenced by regular opportunities for staff at all levels as well as learners to:

- meet together as a community to review developments;
- tackle identified issues in groups and teams;
- put their ideas into practice;
- engage in fruitful consultations, dialogue and conversations;
- give and receive feedback;
- share best practice both within and outwith the establishment; and
- benefit from coaching.

All staff benefit from opportunities to work with colleagues in other services and partner agencies. Interactive opportunities for joint and interagency training on generic topics such as child protection and anti-discriminatory practice are particularly helpful.

### Creative partnerships

Community Learning and Leisure Services (CLLS) staff and their partners had encouraged an extensive range of innovative and creative initiatives to address rural community regeneration in the Fort William and Lochaber areas. In traditional music, CLLS staff had worked closely with organisers of the *Fèis* and *Blas* festivals to significantly increase the educational content of these events, and to raise awareness of contemporary Gaelic culture to an international audience. CLLS staff were now working with European partners to develop a new model of sustainable community businesses as a result.

**HMIE Report, Community learning and development in the Lochaber area, Highland Council, 2007**

## We all need regular opportunities to give and receive feedback

Every member of staff is entitled to receive constructive feedback on how well they are taking forward their work and how they can improve their own performance further. Unfortunately, too many people confuse feedback with criticism. Feedback is valuable to everybody and plays a key role in performance improvement. Leaders need to set an example by encouraging the giving and receiving of feedback as a normal part of working. This can be encouraged at the end of meetings, as part of regular exchanges or more formally through 180° or 360° feedback. Leaders can demonstrate that they are willing to learn and receive feedback from colleagues. This is something that has to be approached sensitively but where there is an open and confident culture it can contribute to better teaching and more effective learning. The development of a coaching culture is something that many establishments are working towards.

When staff receive constructive feedback on their work this exerts a positive influence on the culture. The same is true of learners. The extent of feedback in establishments/services varies and the balance between giving and receiving feedback is usually in favour of the former. It is always helpful to bear in mind three key questions in relation to feedback.

**'Have you given any feedback recently?'**

**'Have you received any feedback recently?'**

**'Is one outweighing the other and what can you do about it?'**

Feedback in the form of coaching and mentoring is an important dimension in building leadership capacity and there are a number of factors that are strongly in favour of effective coaching. This requires training, including the 'how' of feedback as well as support and clarity of roles and responsibilities.

## Key Message

Leaders recognise the benefits of teamworking and the development of teamworking skills. They sometimes need to be in the chorus rather than out front.

Often we find that teams receive little training in effective teamworking yet this is a key aspect for taking forward the priorities of the establishment/service. There are many types of teams. Project teams rely on the effective combining of the skills, knowledge and talents of individuals. People tend to be deployed to roles or responsibilities with due regard given to their key strengths, experience and/or interests. A broad range and balance of skills, knowledge and experience can lead to a highly effective management team. This is reflected in a senior management team that demonstrates collective responsibility in ways that ensure a high level of consistency in learning experiences.

**“When you ask people about what it is like being part of a great team, what is most striking is the meaningfulness of the experience. People talk about being part of something larger than themselves, of being connected, of being generative. It becomes quite clear that, for many, their experiences as part of truly great teams stand out as singular periods of life lived to the fullest. Some spend the rest of their lives looking for ways to recapture that spirit.”<sup>27</sup>**

Team role analysis, using a wide range of tools available, can enable leaders and team members to develop strengths and manage weaknesses within a team. Key questions for any establishment seeking to improve and work more effectively as a learning organisation are, ‘How can we develop teams that produce consistent, high-level results?’ and ‘How do we best create high performing teams?’. The key point here is to set aside time to reflect on effective teamworking and share good practice to effect improvement.

<sup>27</sup> *The Fifth Discipline – the art and practice of the learning organisation*, P Senge Doubleday, New York, 1990.

### **Teamwork in action**

The school's very positive ethos was founded on strong relationships and teamwork between teachers and pupils. Pupils attained very well in a caring and supportive environment for learning. The school also had a number of successful wider strategies to raise pupils' achievement, including an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities. The headteacher had developed a very strong team of depute headteachers who very ably assisted him in leading the community of faith and learning in the school. Principal teachers were very effective in leading changes to the curriculum and improvements to teaching and learning. Teachers across the school were involved in leading a range of working groups responsible for taking forward key developments. Significant numbers of parents were involved in their children's learning through, for example, attending the Innovative Routes to Learning Seminar. The school encouraged the active engagement with a wide range of partners, businesses, community representatives and agencies to provide imaginative contexts, learning experiences and opportunities for pupils' personal development.

**HMIE Report, St Ambrose High School, Coatbridge,  
North Lanarkshire Council, March 2007**

**Team role analysis, using a wide range of tools available, can enable leaders and team members to develop strengths and manage weaknesses within a team.**

## Key Message

The most effective establishments/services initiate networks and partnerships that bring significant benefits to learners.

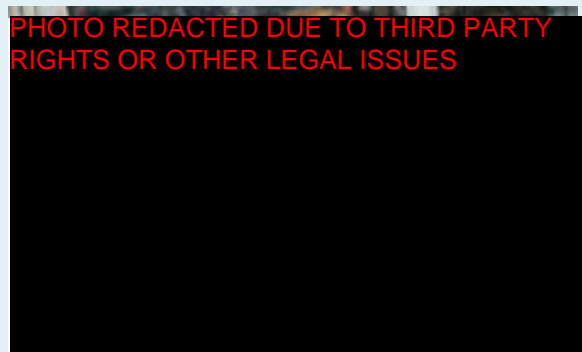
## How do we develop fruitful partnerships?

Strong partnerships enable establishments/services to share expertise, resources and good practice. They can help to meet the diverse needs of learners, including the most vulnerable. Partner establishments can:

- share expertise and resources to enable each to meet statutory requirements and learners' needs that they might not be able to meet working independently;
- facilitate learners' transitions between education sectors or from education into employment;
- help to widen learners' opportunities for progression; and
- prepare learners appropriately for further study and, more generally enrich their experiences.

For a partnership to work well, there should be clarity about the competences of each partner and the contribution that each can make. It is important that all staff involved in the work of a partnership are clear about its purpose and objectives. Ongoing dialogue is needed between relevant staff to ensure that the objectives are understood and supported by staff in each of the establishments. The formation of a partnership may result in staff development needs that should be addressed as early as possible. Agreed arrangements should be in place to monitor regularly the progress made on the partnership's objectives and to evaluate its effectiveness. As relevant information will be shared, it is important that when a partnership is set up, learners and, where appropriate, their families are clear about what information is held about them and with whom it might be shared.

**“Staff actively seek feedback from partner agencies and, where needed, change course significantly to benefit pupils. They listen to partners and stakeholders at times suitable to partners and respond to, and do their best to act promptly on, concerns, challenges and contributions.”<sup>28</sup>**



<sup>28</sup> *The Journey to Excellence*, HM Inspectorate of Education, 2006.

## Partnership working in the community

A wide range of activities can improve learners' self-esteem and creative skills and prepare them for their future roles in society. In the best examples, motivated staff actively seek out partnerships that offer opportunities for community involvement. Partnerships vary enormously in size and remit and can be both formal and informal. Potentially, they are a very powerful way of achieving objectives that are beyond the scope of a single establishment working on its own. However, they can be costly both of time and resources if the costs outweigh the benefits. In order to make partnership most effective it is important to invest in making them work well.

The basis of any partnership can set out in a partnership agreement or memorandum of understanding. Such an agreement will include:

- a statement of the guiding principles;
- the strategic aims of the partnership and, where appropriate, more specific strategic objectives;
- the responsibilities of each partner and funding arrangements;
- the names of individuals or post-holders who take responsibility on behalf of each partner; and
- the arrangements for monitoring, evaluation and review.

The best partnerships bring benefits to learners through joint-improvement activities. Strong partnership working adds shared value to work in progress and is responsive to current and anticipated stakeholders' needs, taking account of the local context. Suitable arrangements ensure coordination of action within the partnership which ensure that progress is monitored regularly and reported. These monitoring arrangements help to avoid the partnership becoming a talking shop.

### Key Messages: Section 5

#### Developing People and Partnerships: Building Leadership Capacity

- The most important resource in any establishment/service is its people.
- Leaders create an empowering culture in which staff feel able to argue, propose, question and challenge.
- Leaders recognise the benefits of teamwork development and the development of teamworking skills. They sometimes need to be in the chorus rather than out front.
- The most effective establishments/services initiate networks and partnerships that bring significant benefits to learners.

#### Self-evaluation Materials

Examples of self-evaluation/case study materials relating to this section can be found on the HMIE website: [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk).



## How does your school develop your leadership skills?

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ISSUES

Our teacher uses abbreviations

- OPV "Other pupils' views"
- PMI "Plus, minus, interesting"
- CAF "Consider all factors"
- We use these to check each other's learning

### Quotes from pupils aged 10-12

We run the healthy tuck shop – it's like a mini market and we count the money.

"Squaddies". We go in pairs. We have fluorescent jackets and we look out for younger pupils who are on their own or who might be unhappy. We also have a pack with balls and games that we can play with them. We also supervise the school doors at lunchtime. There is a rota on the wall in the classroom and if we can't do our duty we swap with someone else.

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"There is a school council and we meet to discuss things that are important to us. The council is chaired by a P7 and there are typed up minutes. We discussed what we would like to see in our new school, although we won't be there when it opens. There are other groups that talk about school lunches and things to do with the playground."

"The head boys and the head girls, together with the house captains, meet every week to discuss school issues. We take responsibility for the agenda, for chairing and for writing and circulating the minutes. The roles are rotated to make sure that we get experience of each one."

Primary-secondary links including junior sports leadership award.

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Some quotes from students aged 12-17

"The school's new tutor system means that all form classes are now made up of pupils from S1 to S6. The seniors have the opportunity to support the junior members of their group and to set a positive example. Some find it easier to do than others and some more training is probably needed."

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Leadership for Life award: (Community-based project involving 6-12 pupils)

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Involvement in Enterprise topics, e.g. related to St Valentine's day.

Young Quality Scot award. This is a community project which includes a two-day training course and a follow-up weekend course.

Six

Leadership of change and improvement:  
achieving results

The reality of change means that leaders have to adapt to the changing roles demanded of themselves and their staff.

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This section considers some of the key issues surrounding leadership of change and improvement. The reality of change means that leaders have to adapt to the changing roles demanded of themselves and their staff. Leaders have to base their decisions, which affect the potential and life chances of learners, on real evidence. There is seldom a quick fix. We need to have one eye on the futures agenda and the other on educational gain. Leadership of educational establishments is being influenced by the need for integrated working with children's services which demands a more strategic overview of tasks and working practices.

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**“Headteachers should demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the principles and practice of leadership and the management of change.”<sup>29</sup>**

Leaders are the backbone of any organisation and the guiding and managing of change places very real demands on them. When leaders, staff and learners see these changes impact positively, they become a powerful motivating force to engage in further changes. The demands on leaders are considerable but these are less onerous when they are shared. It is an exciting task to be a leader of an establishment or service and we see from our contacts that there are real satisfactions in taking this role forward well. Other staff too are responding positively to the challenges and satisfactions of being part of a wider team and playing a more strategic role. Heads of establishments are beginning to think about how they can best deploy their staff team in productive ways. Increasingly we are seeing staff playing a key role in chairing and contributing to working groups and making distributive leadership a reality.

**Taking forward change**

The roles and responsibilities of the management team and nursery staff were well defined and communicated clearly. The headteacher had fostered very good teamwork skills with the nursery staff and met weekly with them to discuss their work. He actively encouraged them to take part in wider early years initiatives. The principal teacher provided very good leadership and had developed a supportive role within the nursery team. She had responsibility for monitoring and evaluation and made weekly visits to the nursery and had developed very good relationships with the staff and children. The nursery teacher was a very strong leader. She managed planning and curriculum development to a high standard and was extremely committed to the work of the nursery and its future direction. Staff were knowledgeable about child protection procedures and were aware of the requirements within the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice.

**HMIE Report, Maddiston Primary School and Nursery Class, Falkirk Council, December 2006**

The headteacher provided excellent leadership. His forward-thinking approach had helped the school develop a wide and challenging range of educational experiences for pupils to support their academic and personal development. He led and supported innovative practice very effectively. His clearly demonstrated commitment to continuous improvement inspired and supported pupils and staff to meet the high standards he set for the school. Staff monitored pupils' efforts and progress very closely. They targeted actions well to meet developing needs and help pupils reach their full potential. Almost all pupils in the primary department and senior school were committed to regular extra-curricular activities which had helped to develop high levels of self-confidence and self-esteem and enabled them to demonstrate high achievement.

**HMIE Report, Lomond School, Helensburgh, February 2007**

<sup>29</sup> *Standard for Headship in Scotland*, Scottish Executive, 2002.

## Adaptive challenges and technical problems

As the agenda for leadership becomes more unpredictable and complex, new solutions are needed. In one influential model, leadership is characterised as requiring either adaptive or technical approaches. In the latter, both the problem and the solution are clear and lie within the parameters of what we already know. In adaptive work, the problems may be more complex, the solutions are not at all clear and the environment is more complex and unpredictable. These problems demand a different approach and mindset.

The notion of technical and adaptive leadership is useful because it highlights the need to recognise where a more active form of leadership is needed. In those establishments/services that are proactive in developing a leadership culture, we notice that:

- partnerships and team working are encouraged;
- time is protected for professional discussion and sharing best practice on learning and teaching;
- staff are supported to experiment and take measured risks;
- there are clear and effective channels of communication;
- attention is focused on outcomes and impact (*what difference is X making?*);
- information is disseminated widely; and
- attainment and achievement are prioritised and celebrated.

### An authority-wide approach to adaptive leadership

Our commitment to improvement means that we have to acknowledge some of the more adaptive challenges that will require us to think and behave differently. We believe that the distinction between technical problems and adaptive challenges is helpful because it provides us with a framework which identifies the nature of the issue we are dealing with and the type of response that is required and ensures that the new ways of working are developed in response to adaptive challenges rather than technical problems. We intend to place greater emphasis on nurturing and harnessing the creativity and talents of our staff. We will do this by increasing significantly, the opportunities for staff to be involved in adaptive work which leads to the development of a more dynamic education system which is responsive, flexible and open to new ideas and new approaches to learning and teaching.

**Vision, Adaptive Challenges and New Ways of Working: Department of Education, Culture and Lifelong Learning, South Ayrshire Council**

## Where do you focus your energies?

Effective leaders at all levels ensure that there is a clear focus on the activities that impact directly on learners. These are often referred to as high-leverage activities. Richard Elmore reinforces this when he states that, *“If you can’t see it in the classroom then it’s not happening.”*<sup>30</sup>

What is being emphasised here is that leaders need to be out-and-about so that they know what is happening in learning and teaching. This is because the only way to improve performance is to be where the performance is happening. This sounds easy and simple, but as those in leadership positions know, it is all too easy to get drawn into other things that demand attention. The most effective leaders are able to prioritise tasks, reinforce the direction of travel and focus on what really matters. The following questions can be useful to keep in mind:

- *“Where can I intervene to make the most impact on learning?”*
- *“What are the ‘high-leverage activities’ that will make the most difference?”*

### High-leverage activities include:

- regular opportunities to observe what is happening in ‘classrooms’ along with immediate, face-to-face feedback to staff;
- rigorous analysis of data to highlight trends in performance, pinpoint areas of under performance and develop plans of action linked to priority areas;
- simple and effective target-setting and tracking systems to monitor the performance of learners;
- opportunities for staff to meet in teams and review and develop the quality of provision on offer; and
- effective and targeted CPD linked to the process of professional review and focused on improvements in learning, teaching and achievement.

**Effective leaders at all levels ensure that there is a clear focus on the activities that impact directly on learners.**

<sup>30</sup> *Leadership as the practice of improvement*, R Elmore, 2006.



One of the most significant things any leader can bring to a team or organisation is encouragement to be creative. A culture based on trust, listening and feedback inspires confidence. Recruiting the right kind of people and having these people in the right place also matters. The kind of questions that you might find helpful include:

- What have we done that is creative and innovative and what happened as a result?
- What aspects of the process are worth repeating?
- How do we reward/inhibit creative projects?
- Where do we want to bring creativity into our work?

## Change is more liable to be successful and sustained where the following apply.

It is useful to think about the process of change and to begin to build up our understanding of the change process and the pieces of the jigsaw that need to be in place. In the most effective establishments:

- proposed changes are understood in the context of the big picture and are not just ad hoc or reactive;
- key changes are understood across teams and departments;
- communication and consultation are given priority so that leaders retain the confidence of staff;
- strategies are in place to monitor and evaluate the impact of the changes; and
- leaders anticipate the impact of change on individuals and reduce feelings of isolation by keeping in contact.

### Creating a positive climate for change and innovation

The principal's leadership was outstanding. He valued the contribution of his managers, encouraging innovative approaches amongst the staff team. He displayed a high level of commitment to developing productive partnerships with other agencies and had led on the introduction of initiatives to improve the quality of services being provided to the young people. All staff with additional responsibilities showed a high degree of commitment to young people and promoted a strong sense of teamworking. There was a good level of joint working between managers and effective communication was ensured through a range of well-coordinated meetings. The service had a very good model of distributive management in which almost all staff at all levels were able to assume a high level of responsibility.

**HMIE Report, Edinburgh Secure Services, March 2007**

## Key Message

Change is complex but often small cumulative, technical changes can have a profound effect on the culture of an establishment.

Inspection evidence indicates that a pattern of small, cumulative technical changes can build up to support and lead cultural change. Changes do not always need to be large. Indeed, sometimes small changes or 'tweaks' can and do affect people's ways of thinking and working and, in turn, the culture of the establishment/service. Some strategies which have been successful in establishments visited have included, for example:

- starting off staff meetings with a brief challenge (e.g. what would you do if you walked down the corridor at lunchtime and saw...?) followed by time to discuss and exchange ideas;
- organising a weekly extended break for staff to meet and for senior staff to make key announcements;
- programming short, regular meetings so that key staff can meet together to review their practice;
- developing and agreeing shared criteria for observing learning and teaching;
- setting aside ten minutes during team meetings for staff to engage in focused conversation on a current issue/topic; and
- reviewing the way that meetings are conducted and sharing points arising from those meetings.

## Leadership for learning implies the targeted use of data – without becoming a prisoner to it.

An increasing number of establishments have introduced electronic systems which quickly indicate if learners are on, off or ahead of target. These systems allow all staff to access aspects of the profile and other key staff, such as guidance staff to have password access to more sensitive areas. Profile data can be collated to provide a leadership team with a very clear picture of what is going on and to target resources to areas for improvement. Similarly, department or sector teams can review profile data to see if they are on track and if aspects of the curriculum or of learning and teaching need to be altered. It is important to note that data itself is not enough. Data needs to be used effectively as a basis for dialogue. The more opportunities that staff and learners have to meet and talk with one another about progress, the more chance there is that students at risk of underachieving are identified and supported.

All organisations will produce a wealth of data and information that will be potentially valuable. The best-led establishments will have effective management information systems (MIS) in place because it is recognised that data management is the key to effective performance. Data needs to be updated on a regular basis and used as the basis for discussion. Data collated from learner profiles is a key source of information for staff. This usually includes information relating to assessment, test results, homework/research or assignments. Data then becomes a strategic tool to enable purposeful conversations to take place.

## Leading change programmes

Staff leading change programmes need to be aware of where they are in the improvement cycle and what expectations are reasonable at a particular time. Clearly, leaders have to introduce change which is well thought through and not reckless. As indicated previously, these changes do not need to be ground-breaking or dramatic. They do, however, need to be made with an eye on:

- educational gain for learners;
- effective consultation;
- risk assessment in the broadest terms;
- data collection and monitoring to track progress, make necessary adjustments and evaluate outcomes; and
- financial and resource considerations.

### **Case studies of establishments which have successfully implemented changes to the curriculum**

One secondary school was readily prepared to adjust courses that were not working. Significant numbers of pupils experienced an adapted curriculum. Two groups of eight pupils who were amongst the most challenging and in very real danger of permanent exclusion from the mainstream school experienced a reduced/enhanced curriculum for three afternoons per week in areas where pupils were more liable to be successful. These areas included physical education, art, music and craft, design and technology. An industrial artist worked with the group who explored, through the medium of the arts and the history of sectarianism, issues relating to territorial disputes.

#### **From HMIE visit to Cathkin High School, South Lanarkshire Council**

Another secondary school had introduced significant and well-considered changes to the structure of the curriculum.

Classes in S1 had been grouped by pupil interests. These pupils had then chosen two year courses for the start of S2, leading to examination presentation at the end of S3. Pupils in S4-S6 would study a range of National Qualifications units and courses. The school had created some combined classes from across the three year groupings to meet pupils' needs. The school's commendable aim was to improve pace, motivation and challenge and to offer a wider range of choices across levels and to increase the opportunity for vocational learning.

#### **From HMIE visit to Kirkcudbright Academy, Dumfries and Galloway Council**

### Key Message

Challenge and support need to be finely balanced in promoting change.

School leaders and Quality Improvement Officers play a key role in both supporting and challenging schools to continue to improve. They have a significant contribution to make to the quality assurance of school performance and share responsibilities for staff development, the building of teamwork, collegiate responsibilities and leadership capacity within the organisation at all levels.

In an effort to gain improvement, it is important to strike the right balance between challenge and support. This requires sensitive judgements based on the context an establishment is working in and where it is in the improvement cycle. Just as there is no simple link between changes in provision and achievement, there is not a simple, linear connection between high attainment and excellent learning, teaching and curriculum. A high-performing establishment/service will often have to work just as hard to make a 1% gain in attainment as a lower-attaining establishment which may be looking for a 10% gain. A high-performing establishment in an economically advantaged area, may be evaluated as having good attainment overall rather than very good, because it is not making sufficient value-added improvements given the starting levels of learners.

### **Following through on improvement**

Class teachers had collaborated very well with promoted staff to evaluate jointly the effectiveness of learning and teaching. Promoted staff had observed lessons and provided feedback with a view to promoting good practice. Teachers also made effective use of their records of work to make evaluations of pupils' progress and received helpful feedback from the headteacher with constructive advice on programmes of work. The school's system for setting targets and tracking progress in English language and mathematics was proving effective.

**HMIE Follow-Through Report, Philipshaugh Community School, Scottish Borders Council, December 2005**

Establishments in economically deprived areas often need additional support in order to retain staff, create smaller groups or provide specialist provision to support learners and their families. It is often difficult to secure consistency of staff in these circumstances yet vulnerable learners, of whom there will be a higher proportion, are more susceptible to changes in staffing. Decisions need to be made at a strategic level in order to target funding to areas of deprivation. Support may come through various funding streams and result in additional staffing, input from specialist staff such as social workers, health professionals, counsellors or youth work staff. Sometimes whatever the arrangements, enhanced packages are agreed to attract staff to work in economically deprived areas. There needs to be a shared understanding of the issues the establishment is facing, a shared vision of where it wants to get to and a commitment to consistently implement agreed policies and practices.

### **Responding creatively to leadership challenges**

Improvements in staffing had provided much-needed stability. The school was working with two other secondary schools to take forward a project with funding from the Scottish Executive which was aimed at targeting and supporting pupils in the lowest performing 20%. An increased number of the college courses being followed by pupils led to qualifications. The school continued to group more able pupils in order to provide additional pace and challenge. Young people who were gifted in the arts were given funding through a school based community project to develop their skills and abilities including participation in drama and singing classes. Specific programmes, including study support, individual tutoring after school and a Get Up and Get Motivated programme helped pupils prepare for examinations. Additional staff had enabled provision in very small classes in some subjects. Developments in the curriculum had provided positive alternatives for pupils who were reluctant to engage with formal education.

**HMIE Follow-Through Report, Castlebrae Community High School, City of Edinburgh Council, December 2006**

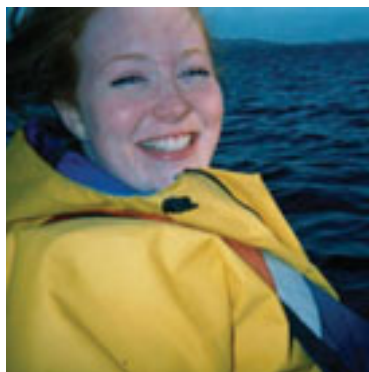
## Key Message

Change is best evaluated against impact and outcomes.

## How do we know that changes are working?

An important change which represents a culture shift is the move towards a focus on outcomes and impact. The outcomes of *Curriculum for Excellence* are clearly expressed in terms of confident individuals, successful learners, effective contributors and responsible citizens. Outcomes are not simply examination passes, important as these are. The outcomes above signal the key role that education must play in helping children and young people to be prepared for the future's agenda and to be lifelong learners and resilient young people.

Tracking the impact of initiatives such as sporting programmes, arts and cultural events or outdoor education experiences on the achievements of learners is complex. However, there is a shift in awareness that we need to begin to find effective ways of doing so. Large numbers of learners are achieving well, sometimes extremely well, in these types of activities both within and outwith programmed time. Establishments are looking to broaden their programmes in order to cater more effectively for the all-round talents of learners. Some establishments are developing a database to track students' involvement in clubs and to target those who have little or no involvement. In one recent example, this was being taken forward very effectively by a business manager liaising with staff leading clubs.



## Developing self-evaluation and building capacity for improvement

Within CLD, self-evaluation is becoming increasingly embedded building on the publication of *How Good is our Community Learning Development 2?*<sup>31</sup> Within schools, self-evaluation is well established using HGIOS (Second Edition). Future self-evaluation will focus on the new suite of indicators set out in HGIOS (Third Edition)<sup>32</sup>. The primary purpose of monitoring is to achieve improvement in terms of the learning experience for students and other stakeholders and this is set out in *Evaluating Learning and Teaching*, which is published as part of the HGIOS (Third Edition) guidance. The process should lead to individuals and groups reflecting on their own performance. It should leave people clear about what needs to be done to further enhance already good practice as well as rectify weaknesses. In Scotland's colleges, the statutory responsibility of Boards of Management for overseeing strategic direction, taken together with the principal's role as Accountable Officer, has led to generally well-established procedures for systematic monitoring. Senior management teams and faculty heads/boards monitor progress against departmental and college objectives. The use of quality indicators as a vehicle for taking forward self-evaluation is becoming increasingly established across sectors.

<sup>31</sup> *How good is our community learning & development 2?* HM Inspectorate of Education, 2006.

<sup>32</sup> *How good is our school? (Second and Third editions)*, HM Inspectorate of Education, 2002 and 2007.

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### **Building capacity for improvement**

Robust self-evaluation procedures were linked directly to the development planning process which involved staff at all levels. This had contributed to an ethos of constructive self criticism from staff with regard to their work and a sense of ownership of the whole planning and evaluation process. Local team planning was clear, well focused on significant outcomes, action-orientated and periodically evaluated. The structure created had provided the means to implement monitoring and evaluation across community learning and regeneration involving partners and community representatives.

**HMIE Aspect Inspection of CLD in Irvine and Garnock Valley,  
North Ayrshire Council, February 2007**

Self-evaluation as an aspect of organisational learning has a crucial role in leading continuous improvement. To have maximum impact, it needs to be embedded into the life of the establishment/service. Activities must be interconnected, rigorous and focused on learning and the progress of young people. Across sectors, possible strategies include:

- closely monitoring the progress of initiatives or changes and their impact on learners;
- sharing best practice within and outwith the organisation through 'internal or external' staff visits, team teaching opportunities or collaboration with a neighbouring establishment/service;
- using national indicators of quality to evaluate the impact of changes on learners; and
- adopting initiatives such as mini observations of teaching linked to face to face feedback.



## Key Message

Learners need to be fully involved in self-evaluation and continuous improvement.

## Remember to involve learners in self-evaluation strategies

Effective leadership ensures learners are fully involved in self-evaluation and strategies for continuous improvement. These might include:

- regular reviews of learning targets and agreed next steps in learning;
- profiling and tracking systems which are used to gauge and improve the quality of individual learning;
- student-led learning and teaching forums or committees;
- units or courses on learning to learn;
- responding to learners' views and promoting their involvement in planning appropriately stimulating activities;
- AifL strategies in schools focused on how to improve learning; and
- guidance systems to help learners plan their future paths.

The potential contributions of learners in providing feedback on the quality of teaching and of their learning in formal and/or informal settings should not be overlooked.

### Developing a culture of improvement

Leadership at all levels was very good. Staff had an important role in leading improvements in learning, teaching and achievement through their involvement in working groups, and departmental developments. Pupils were also influential in leading aspects of school improvement, for example in, multicultural issues. The school had established a range of effective methods for reviewing the quality of its work. As a result, the pupils had benefited from improvements in, for example, the curriculum and promoting positive behaviour. Staff contributed to school improvement through their involvement in planning developments, and active involvement in working groups and committees. The school had achieved *Investors in People* accreditation. Senior managers also maintained helpful ongoing links with departments to improve learning and raise attainment.

**HMIE Follow-Through Report, Eastwood High School, East Renfrewshire Council, February 2006**

Leading successful change and improvement programmes lies at the heart of continuous improvement. This section has highlighted some examples that have helped to direct the work of establishments/services that are at different stages in their journey towards excellence.

### Key Messages: Chapter 6

#### Leadership of Change and Improvement: Achieving Results

- Change is complex but often small, cumulative technical changes can have a profound effect on the culture of an establishment.
- Challenge and support need to be finely balanced in taking forward change.
- Change is best evaluated against impact and outcomes.
- Learners need to be fully involved in self-evaluation and continuous improvement.

#### Self-evaluation Materials

Examples of self-evaluation/case study materials relating to this section can be found on the HMIE website: [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk).

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Seven

Pathways for leaders

Given the increasing importance of, and emphasis on, effective leadership there needs to be an increasing focus on effective professional development.

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This report is based on the premise that aspects of leadership can be learned and that leadership competencies can be developed over a number of years. This section establishes the need for clear development pathways for leaders so that leadership capacity building becomes an outcome of design and planning rather than of luck and happenstance. It sets out some key priorities for the different sectors from the messages arising in previous sections.

### Key Message

Leadership cannot be left to chance - leaders need to learn how to lead.

Given the increasing importance of, and emphasis on, effective leadership there needs to be an increasing focus on effective professional development. Capacity building cannot take place without appropriate professional development and support to develop the skills and expertise of staff. Those leaders who are in a position to exercise control over their funding allocation, target resources on developing the skills and knowledge of their staff. In this way, they take control of helping to grow their own leaders and taking succession planning seriously.

Many professionals in educational establishments are expected to be leaders but may have received little or no preparation, formal or informal, for the job. If Scottish education is going to progress on its journey to excellence it will require systematic and joined-up strategies at national, local and establishment level to develop leadership capacity and capability. An important issue is the development of someone's leadership potential from early in their career perhaps, through project leadership to leading a team and then shadowing someone in a senior post. Whilst people learn and manage their learning in many different ways, leadership skills need to be honed and developed over time with regular opportunities being provided to develop leadership potential.

## What's happening in the school sector and what are the emerging priorities?

In response to the need to develop leadership at all levels, we have seen a number of major initiatives which are engaging increasing numbers of authority staff and, at times, students. These have included *The Headteachers' Leadership Academy* (HTLA), coaching and mentoring programmes, insights into system-wide reform from international 'thought leaders', education authority pilots on adaptive leadership and initiatives geared to middle managers. These are helping to increase capacity in the system, raise the profile of leadership development and contribute towards new thinking on leadership for learning. To date, the only qualification open to those aspiring to headship in the school sector has been the Scottish Qualification for Headship (SQH). This has been an attractive route for many in senior promoted posts who have used it as a stepping-stone to headship.

The challenge for establishment and education authority staff is to be selective in drawing upon the range of provision available and building clear and coherent pathways for staff at different stages in their career. A recent evaluation of the CPD implications of implementing *A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century* is outlined in *Teaching Scotland's Children*<sup>33</sup>.

## What are the professional development priorities for the pre-school sector?

- Leadership training for non-teachers in posts with responsibility.
- Developing leadership by creating a workforce that is led by degree (or work-based equivalent) qualified professionals.
- Leadership for learning for all heads of pre-school centres.
- Developing the skills of nursery teachers in leading teams.
- Developing the ability of all pre-school staff to recognise and respond appropriately to children's learning needs.

### Sharing a commitment to improvement

The headteacher had a clear vision for the continuous improvement of learning and teaching and involved the local community in the life of the school as a key part of this process. Policies were updated regularly with staff to make them current and usable in the day-to-day running of the school. The headteacher formally monitored and evaluated playroom practice twice yearly and provided staff with clear steps for improvement. She had regular weekly support meetings with staff. She had identified the need for new assessment and record keeping processes and staff had made good progress with this work.

**HMIE Report, North Walls Junior High School Nursery, Orkney Islands Council, February 2007**

<sup>33</sup> *Teaching Scotland's Children: A report on progress in implementing A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century*, HM Inspectorate of Education, 2007.

## What are the professional development priorities for the primary, secondary and special sectors?

- The development of CPD programmes for staff at all levels, particularly middle managers who are taking on new roles such as principal teacher learning and teaching, principal teacher curriculum or principal teacher faculty.
- Ensuring that non-teaching staff have access to CPD programmes and are included in school developments.
- Leadership for learning initiatives which impact directly on the experience of all pupils from those with additional support needs to those who are higher attaining.
- Multi-agency programmes to share best practice and take forward the children's services agenda.
- CPD for effective team and partnership working as well as self-evaluation and quality assurance.
- Coaching and mentoring development.
- Leadership at all levels including pupil leadership.
- Developing approaches to the evaluation of leadership and management programmes to evaluate their impact on personal and establishment effectiveness, succession planning and/or the leadership of learners.

### Developing a learning community

The school had very good arrangements in place to ensure the care, welfare and protection of pupils. There were regular training sessions and written procedures for dealing with child protection incidents, bullying, seizures and other aspects of care and welfare. There was appropriate attention to pupils' physical health with regular fitness sessions, advice from the school nurse and specialist support from the occupational therapist. Along with the speech and language therapists, these partner agencies provided valuable advice and support for pupils alongside staff in classrooms.

**HMIE Report, St Kevin's RC School, Glasgow City Council, October 2006.**

## What's happening in Scotland's colleges and what are the emerging priorities?

Leaders of Scotland's colleges have faced very different challenges, many of which have emerged since Incorporation in 1993. Unlike leaders in other sectors, college leaders and their Boards of Management have been required to create the vision, identify the mission and clearly define their strategic directions. Boards, principals and senior staff have had to develop and hone skills to plan and differentiate their own local curriculum, whilst contributing to national developments which will effectively prepare learners in Scotland's colleges for a future of prosperity, variety and choice.

The sector is supported by a number of leadership and development initiatives, which have been designed by a range of supporting partners. The primary provider of professional development for leaders in Scotland's colleges is *The Scottish Further Education Unit* (SFEU). The unit works in partnership with colleges to anticipate and identify the issues and challenges they may face. It provides a structure to support training in areas such as organisational development, learning and teaching, research, and project management for leaders at various levels and at various points in their career.

SFEU has recently designed *Scotland's Professional Enhancement Programme* (SCOPE). SCOPE is an innovative, four-stage programme, which uses a blended delivery approach. Developed through consultation with principals, middle managers and HR managers, the programme is focused on real issues and provides access to individual learning support throughout the programme. Key aspects of this programme include an online toolkit which addresses a wide range of management and leadership topics, as well as the identification of a *personal leadership challenge*. College principals themselves also have access to CPD through the *Principals' CPD Programme*, also provided by SFEU. Every college in Scotland is unique, with its own curriculum, partnerships, competitors, local economy, communities and learner profile. Therefore, every leader faces unique challenges. Through this programme, principals can access bespoke CPD to address their own personal development needs, as well as those required to lead their staff towards the college's unique vision.

**Every leader faces unique challenges.**



## What's happening in the CLD sector and what are the emerging priorities?

The Lifelong Learning Sector Skills Council is consulting on National Occupational Standards for leadership and management in the learning and skills sector. This covers the CLD and college sectors. The object is to develop new National Occupational Standards that accurately describe the skill-sets required of leaders and managers working in the lifelong learning sector, which could be used by employers to manage and develop their leaders and managers at all levels. Post graduate courses and masters routes as well as non-certificated courses focused on education and management are available from a range of providers and are accessed by some practitioners in order to improve their skills and knowledge.

## What are the professional development priorities for the CLD sector?

- The development of coherent CPD pathways to develop the leadership of staff at all levels.
- Opportunities to engage in skills development with leaders and aspiring leaders from other sectors.
- Developing the skills and expertise of volunteers.

### **Prioritising professional development**

A broad range of training and development opportunities were available for staff and volunteers. Training and development needs of staff and volunteers were effectively identified through regular support and supervision and systems were in place to collate this information from annual appraisals and use it to compile future training programmes. Staff accessed a range of corporate training opportunities which covered topics including risk assessment and personal safety at work. Training opportunities which covered CLD priorities were few, although staff had regular discussions about new approaches and policy within thematic area development groups. Most frontline staff had undertaken spotter and referral training and were making referrals to adult literacy colleagues as a result.

**HMIE Report, Community learning and development in the Pollok and Pollokshaws area, Glasgow City Council, September 2006**

## Key Message

Professional development can be specifically geared to developing the leadership and management capacity of staff.

Establishing a direct link between leadership development and establishment effectiveness is not straightforward. Having said this, it is important to begin to think about how we might evaluate the impact of leadership development work which takes significant investments of time and money. What effect is the investment having on the potential of an establishment to improve its performance and/or the effectiveness of individuals in taking on leadership responsibilities? A key principle emerging is that significant professional development programmes, projects or initiatives should be evaluated objectively with lessons learned and disseminated.

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## What type of professional development is most helpful?

We are beginning to see a shift from courses on leadership towards experiential development which takes place in the workplace. Some examples of professional activities that are being taken forward include the following.

- Learning 'on the job' through shadowing and team teaching.
- Coaching and mentoring experiences.
- Teaming up with another member of staff or organisation or establishment to exchange practice and ideas (at times, by buying in supply cover to allow staff to undertake peer observations or visits).
- Secondment opportunities.
- Opportunities for team teaching/team presentations followed by review and agreement on action points.
- 180° or 360° feedback to identify strengths, areas for development and aligned CPD opportunities.
- Being involved in chairing a working group or project or committee.
- Leading a development project.
- Attendance at leadership seminars, master classes or conferences.
- Attendance at agreed 'core' leadership and management courses in local CPD directories.
- Professional review and development which is effectively tied into a leadership framework such as the Standard for Headship in schools.
- Multi-agency professional development to share best practice and take forward the children's services agenda.
- Away days and retreats.

## Developing student leadership

In order to develop the capacity of learners to be independent in their learning, establishments are beginning to broaden pupils' experiences and achievements so they can become leaders of their own learning. The use of personal learning planning and ICT to promote independent learning has enabled more learners to lead their own learning. Equally, the development of the citizenship and enterprise agendas is playing a key role in developing entrepreneurial qualities, aligned to leadership potential. Here are some examples:

- student-led activities including student council/associations, contributions to working groups/programme team meetings, student learning and teaching forums and residential leadership courses;
- work experience placements including opportunities for some students to undertake these abroad;
- student-led surveys and reporting back findings to students and staff with clear action points for the future;
- educational and cultural exchange programmes;
- peer learning and training programmes; and
- student membership of key committees and strategic planning groups.

### Developing student leadership in a residential setting

Students successfully took on responsibilities such as assisting others with homework and projects. They had very good opportunities to develop their skills in team work and leadership through membership of the boarding and catering committees and in organising house activities. They raised money for a range of local and national charities. The rich variety of extra-curricular activities, including a wide range of sports, the performing arts and the combined cadet force provided excellent opportunities for students to develop their confidence and a broad range of achievements. Views of students were sought at weekly year meetings and the head of boarding met individual students to discuss their opinions of boarding. The head of student boarding reported to the Governing Council at each meeting.

**HMIE Report, St George's School, City of Edinburgh, January 2007**

### Key Messages: Section 7

#### Developing Pathways for Leaders

- Leadership cannot be left to chance - leaders need to learn how to lead.
- Professional development can be specifically geared to developing the leadership and management capacity of staff.

#### Self-evaluation Materials

Examples of self-evaluation/case study materials relating to this section can be found on the HMIE website: [www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk).

[www.hmie.gov.uk](http://www.hmie.gov.uk)

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