

Leadership beyond a single institution

Identification of Next Practice field trials

Introduction

The DfES Innovation Unit and NCSL have worked with over 100 practitioners to identify ideas and possible field trials for Next Practice in leadership beyond a single institution. We committed to making these ideas open source – as we want a larger group than those we have met so far to consider implementing Next Practice.

Over the following pages, you will find details of how you can let us know your field trial ideas. We have also offered up a number of potential examples. They all focus on leadership beyond a single institution, but in different ways, and each relates particularly to one of the four domains of multi-service, 14-19, groups of schools and 'not school'.

These ideas have been generated through engagement with practitioners over recent weeks. This is not an exhaustive list of Next Practice in leadership beyond a single institution – indeed, we hope that what is written here will inspire you to develop your own models and ideas.

If, having read this material, you feel strongly that you would like to run a Next Practice field trial in leadership beyond a single institution in your locality, please talk to colleagues and write to us with a Statement of Intent.

The deadline for receipt of Statements of Intent is March 10th 2006.

Criteria for field trials

Over the coming months, we will be identifying approximately 10 locations across the country to deliver Next Practice field trials in leadership beyond a single institution.

We have selected four domains for these field trials. They are:

1. Multi-service
2. 'Not school'
3. 14-19
4. Groups of schools

Next Practice field trials in leadership beyond a single institution must:

- Embody ideas that offer radically different leadership than current practice
- Address a pressing local and national need
- Be likely to significantly enhance outcomes for young people
- Have key stakeholders prepared for the scale of change involved, with capacity both to implement this and to handle its consequences
- Involve innovative governance arrangements
- Be willing to co-design enquiry and evaluation arrangements and contribute to the learning for the wider system

We will identify Next Practice field trials using these criteria.

Identification of field trial sites

If you are seriously interested in field trialling one of the following Next Practice ideas, or an idea of your own, we would like to hear from you. There is no need to develop a detailed proposal at this stage. Rather, we would like you to indicate your interest by submitting a Statement of Intent to us by midday on **FRIDAY MARCH 10th 2006.**

Your **Statement of Intent** should include the following information and be no more than 2 pages of A4.

1. Name of key contact
Postal address, email and telephone number of key contact
2. Your Next Practice field trial idea for leadership beyond a single institution – a short statement of the compelling idea for your field trial.
This should clearly state the components of the **leadership Next Practice** – i.e. what leadership roles, structures or behaviours will be delivered that are radically different from current best practice?
3. What is the purpose of your next practice field trial – what do you hope it will achieve? What will be the difference in provision?
4. Which are the key stakeholders (named individuals and groups) whose commitment would be essential to the success of the field trial?
5. Three preferred dates (each ½ day) between 13th March and 13th April when you could be visited.

Statements of Intent should be emailed to next.practice@dfes.gsi.gov.uk.

All those who submit Statements of Intent which are judged to genuinely contain Next Practice in leadership beyond a single institution will be visited during the period of 13th March and 13th April 2006. These visits will be an opportunity for a member of the Next Practice team to discuss your ideas with you and your key stakeholders. It may be possible to combine the visit with a session you would like to run to engage certain stakeholders in your idea. We will do our best to make one of the three dates you identify in your Statement of Intent.

We will ask that all those who, having been visited, wish to proceed further, submit a **Formal Proposal** by **MAY 12th 2006.** We will give clear guidance on what the proposal should contain when we visit you. Final determination of field trial sites will be based on the extent to which the field trial proposal meets the identification criteria. Final decisions about field trials will be made public on 2nd June 2006.

The 'offer' to identified field trials

The DfES Innovation Unit will work with NCSL to provide the following support to field trials. The list is not exhaustive and we expect that different field trials will require different kinds of support.

- Access to a wider ideas pool
- Access to practice of interest
- Creative space (to incubate ideas)
- Safer space (to legitimate experimentation)
- Obstacle removal (e.g. Power to Innovate)
- Social capital and connection (between schools and beyond)
- Gateway to Departmental teams
- Confidence and moral support
- Resourcing to support the change and development process
- Real time learning and enquiry support
- Co-design of evaluation

Please note that the DfES is not necessarily endorsing any of the following examples at this stage. It will be important to demonstrate that appropriate accountability and systems are in place to ensure that all those affected, including parents and pupils, can have confidence in the field trials.

EXAMPLE ONE

The level and quality of collaborative leadership in a federation is radically improved by each headteacher taking on overall responsibility for a key area across all the federation schools.

In this scenario, an existing federation of 6 schools is able to build on the strengths of individual headteachers by giving them responsibility for the leadership and management of a particular area, e.g. attendance, CPD, student voice etc, across all of the 6 schools in the federation. They remain in post as headteacher of their own school, but relinquish responsibility and resource for key areas to other headteachers, and spend periods of time in other schools.

Strategic leadership for the federation is offered by an Executive Federation Principal, who does not have headship responsibility in any of the schools and does not need to be an educationalist. Each school retains its governing body, but a new Strategic Group, led by the Executive Federation Principal, is formed and holds the headteachers to account for the outcomes in the six agreed areas. Each headteacher also sits on the Strategic Group, which could draw in colleagues from the Local Authority or more broadly, as required.

In this model, there is stability in the leadership and governance of each individual school, but this is supplemented by a focussed and collaborative approach to particular aspects of provision across the federation of schools. It requires heads to relinquish control of some aspects of their schools' work, whilst giving them the opportunity to strategically manage a domain of activity beyond their own institution. Over time, the collaborative leadership across the federation is such that at any time the heads can be strategically deployed across the schools according to need.

The components of Next Practice in leadership beyond a single institution are:

1. Headteachers in a federation each take full responsibility for the leadership and management of a particular area across the federation. In doing so, they each relinquish responsibility for key areas to other headteachers and spend time in other schools.
2. The Executive Federation Principal, who is not attached to any one school, leads a new Strategic Group and holds the headteachers to account for outcomes in the agreed areas.

EXAMPLE TWO

A small cross-phase collaborative of schools seeks to make *Every Child Matters* a reality by re-designing their leadership structure and governance arrangements.

In this scenario, 4 schools in a locality acknowledge that they will only effectively meet the needs of all children in their community if they fully integrate their organisations through the establishment of a hard federation with a single governing body. It is based on the simple principle that more can be achieved together than alone.

By doing away with the traditional headteacher role, the federation harnesses a collective resource with which to re-design a fit for purpose leadership team which is drawn from education and beyond. An overall Executive Director is appointed to provide strategic leadership. They are supported by five Directors who lead on Business Strategy, Community, Inclusion, Teaching and Learning and Pupil Involvement and Choice. All these senior personnel work across all of the institutions.

The model allows for a single governing board to be appointed. Members are drawn from all areas of the community, business and other agencies, and include parents and pupils. The members hold the leadership team to account for the delivery of the five outcomes for all children in the patch.

In this model, the schools remain the central delivery mechanism for learning, but by combining resources and leadership can offer a more holistic and personalised approach to service delivery for all the children in the locality.

The components of Next Practice in leadership beyond a single institution are:

1. Across a federation of four schools, there are no traditional 'headteachers'. Instead, an overall Executive Director is appointed to provide strategic leadership and five Directors lead on Business Strategy, Community, Inclusion, Teaching and Learning, and Pupil Involvement and Choice. All work across all institutions.
2. A central governing board is appointed. The members represent the community and include parents and pupils.

EXAMPLE THREE

The leadership of a failing school is taken on by a small group of experienced headteachers drawn from the locality. They operate like a rescue unit – each individual bringing an area of expertise or specialism to deal with the identified problems in a relatively short space of time.

This scenario offers an alternative to the Executive Headteacher model. It assumes that there is untapped capacity in the system for dealing with failing schools in the form of effective and experienced headteachers, perhaps with expertise and capacity in their own school in a particular area, who would like to support local schools out of failure, but are neither interested in, nor have the capacity for, taking on a second headship.

In this model, it is an expectation that, in a given locality, all headteachers deemed effective and with capacity in their own schools would give time to supporting failing schools. The capacity of these headteachers and schools is brokered by the Local Authority, which, when faced with a failing school, negotiates a rescue unit to work in the school for a period of time designated by the new team.

Each head takes full responsibility for a specific area and maybe gives one or two days per week to the leadership of the failing school. Their focus might be on finance, CPD, recruitment, assessment, behaviour or attendance. An interim 'Head of School' would be appointed to deal with day-to-day school business. The Head of School could be an existing Deputy or Assistant Headteacher from the school itself, or seconded from another school, and would work directly to the rescue unit.

The rescue unit works with the school's Governing Body, helping to recruit an appropriate headteacher and building capacity in order that the improvements in the school can be sustained. This would almost certainly involve the recruitment of new Governors.

The components of Next Practice in leadership beyond a single institution are:

1. Headteachers in a locality jointly lead a failing school, each taking responsibility for a particular area for a period of time they designate. They spend time in the failing school and draw on the capacity of their own schools to support improvement.
2. This local capacity to deal with failing schools is brokered by the Local Authority and all effective heads are involved.

EXAMPLE FOUR

In a cross-phase, formal federation of schools, headteachers are released to focus solely on learning through the establishment of a new Strategic Board of Experts.

In this scenario, the role of headteacher is redefined as that of 'lead learner', taking responsibility for learning, student voice and student leadership. Heads no longer have to deal with finance, recruitment or outward facing issues as these become the responsibility of the Executive Head and expert 'governors' who oversee all the cross-cutting issues which effect the federation.

These experts are recruited for their knowledge and understanding in certain domains. They are almost certainly not educationalists, are paid a salary and, along with the Executive Headteacher, sit on a Strategic Board of Experts which has legal accountability for the outcomes of children in the federation.

Stakeholder groups are formed in all key areas, and it is the responsibility of the experts, including the Executive Headteacher, to ensure that, through these groups, the needs of all stakeholders, but particularly young people and their parents, are fully met.

Student voice and student leadership becomes a reality - young people have influence at the level of strategy and decision-making. Leadership and governance become part of the schools' curriculum and large numbers of young people have the chance to become members of stakeholder groups during their time in the federation.

The components of Next Practice in leadership beyond a single institution are:

1. Headteachers in a federation become 'lead learners' – taking responsibility for learning, student voice and student leadership. All other responsibilities become the responsibility of an Executive Head and expert 'governors'.
2. A Strategic Board of Experts is recruited. The members are selected for their expertise in particular areas and are paid a salary.
3. Stakeholder groups are formed in all key areas and include young people and their parents.

EXAMPLE FIVE

An established cross-phase partnership of seven schools commit to developing 'not school' provision for all their students. The new provision is governed and lead by a Strategic Board of parent and community educators and headteachers.

In this scenario, parents and community members lead and manage a personalised, 'not school', community based provision for all students in a locality. It is expected that all students will experience some of their learning within the community and not in school, with some students experiencing the majority of their learning in workplaces, community and voluntary organisations or at home.

The leadership of the 'not school' provision is through a Strategic Board made up from three headteachers and a number of expert, not school educators with experience of home schooling, e-learning and community placements. The Board determines the nature and extent of the 'not school' provision in accordance with student need. The co-ordination and day to day management of the provision is the full-time responsibility of one of the experienced not school educators.

The model provides an enhanced experience for all students presently receiving an entirely home-based or entirely school-based provision. Together, the diverse, extended leadership team have the experience and confidence required to design a blended approach for all students.

The components of Next Practice in leadership beyond a single institution are:

1. A new Strategic Board of headteachers and expert, not school educators oversee new out of school provision for all children across a partnership of schools.

EXAMPLE SIX

A large group of schools tackle SEN and behaviour challenges by drawing together local expertise and centralising leadership and accountability for this whole area through a new leadership structure and strategic governing body.

In this scenario, an existing partnership of more than 20 schools (special, secondary and primary) gives responsibility for two challenging issues, SEN and behaviour, to the highly effective special school in the collaborative and a newly formed strategic governing body.

In centralising the leadership and management of these areas, it becomes possible to establish coherent, cross-school approaches to and policies for; auditing need and the level of challenge posed by vulnerable pupils; data collection, analysis and presentation; CPD; and the deployment of resources and expertise. It is also possible to secure a shared commitment to inclusion and a related accountability structure.

All of the schools in the partnership have an SEN Governor. From these people a new strategic governing body is created and becomes accountable to the individual schools' governing body for standards in SEN and behaviour. The special school leading on these issues is accountable to this strategic body and each individual school is accountable to their own governing body for the implementation of the recommendations made by the special school.

In this model, leadership beyond the single institution is not about leading another institution, but about the leadership of challenges by experts across a large number of other institutions.

The components of Next Practice in leadership beyond a single institution are:

1. Special School headteacher leads all SEN and behaviour provision across 22 schools.
2. New strategic governing body becomes accountable for standards in SEN and behaviour for all pupils across the 22 schools.

EXAMPLE SEVEN

By establishing a new commissioning agency, a group of three secondary schools can offer coherent and highly personalised 14-19 provision for all their students.

In this scenario, the three secondary headteachers agree to hand over responsibility for 14-19 students to a new agency. At 14, students become the full responsibility of the agency, which designs and commissions, from the schools and other providers, a 14-19 offer on behalf of the students. The students become clients of the agency, which seeks to develop a personalised learning plan for each student. In this model, all resources follow the student and so are handed over to the agency.

The leadership of 14-19 provision for this body of students becomes the role of a Strategic Group, which oversees the agency and is accountable for the outcomes of students and the quality of the provision they receive. OfSTED, DfES and the Local Authority fully recognise this.

The Strategic Group includes the three headteachers, who work alongside senior representatives from Further and Higher Education, Learning and Skills, Chamber of Commerce, and with other business and community leaders. The make up of the Strategic Group is tailored to the local context and will need to be able to respond to the diverse needs of the student clients.

The components of Next Practice in leadership beyond a single institution are:

1. Headteachers of three secondary schools are part of a Strategic Group which oversees a new agency which co-ordinates 14-19 provision for all pupils across the three schools.

The heads work together and alongside senior representatives from Further and Higher Education, Learning and Skills, Chamber of Commerce, and other business and community leaders to ensure the quality of 14-19 provision across the schools.