

SCEL Fellowship Programme

Area of Enquiry

**In what ways does  
participation in a local  
authority middle  
management network  
impact on primary  
school Principal  
Teachers?**

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**SCEL**

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This enquiry examines the need for professional learning for middle leaders in the compulsory education sector, and describes steps taken in one local authority to develop a Primary Principal Teacher Network. The report begins by outlining some of the national and local policy drivers for middle leadership development, before providing a rationale on effective networks in education. Next the report presents a brief analysis of data that has been gathered over the past six months on the professional development needs of Scottish middle leaders, before outlining a framework for—and describing the beginnings of—a locality network. Finally the report considers the potential of this practice to develop capacity across the system and reflects on my own learning.

The report is framed by the following questions:

1. Why develop a network for Scottish Primary Principal Teachers?
2. What do we know about the professional development needs of Primary Principal Teachers?
3. How has a network for Primary Principal Teachers been developed in one Scottish local authority?
4. In what ways might such engagement expand to develop capacity across the system?

## Dedication

“learn from a star

the meaning of light”

*Osip Mandelstam 1937*

For what it's worth, this enquiry is dedicated to

Karen Sinclair Sim

and

Victoria McMillan Bonham

*-and all of those Primary Principal Teachers who so selflessly serve their Scottish schools; not for glory, nor for money, but simply for a wish to do what's best for children, and their present and future communities.*

## Why develop a Network for Scottish Primary Principal Teachers?

The purpose of this professional enquiry is to promote empowerment, connection and capacity across Scottish education, through the development and implementation of a pilot middle management network.

### Policy Drivers

*Leadership is For Learning* (HMIE, 2007, p7) acknowledged the likely benefits of actions beyond the school setting in suggesting that ‘the most effective establishments...initiate networks and partnerships...’—but it was not until *Teaching Scotland’s Future* (2010) that such pathways were emphatically promoted, when it was argued that:

Scottish education needs to develop leadership attributes...as well as identifying and supporting systematically its future headteachers...the kind of extended professionalism advocated for all teachers will provide a much stronger pool of potential leaders.

(Donaldson, 2010, p79)

In ‘great to excellent’ case study schools (Mourshed et al 2010) focus shifts from the centre “to the schools themselves...introducing peer-based learning through school-based and system-wide interaction” (p20). A recommendation of the subsequent National Partnership Group’s review (2012) was that leadership be developed through participation in collaborative learning processes. For the newly formed Scottish College for Educational Leadership (2014), the cultural change required for this system-wide impact would be by developing a “capability perspective on leadership and creating the right conditions under which it can flourish” (p3). Further propelled by the *National Improvement Framework’s* drivers (Scottish Government 2016), these interrelated imperatives coming together at a national level have compelled local authorities to formulate specific responses. In 2015 my local authority’s leadership strategy group was formed to decide how this could best take place, explicitly aiming not just to develop the skills and knowledge of particular groups of educators, but also to provide increased network opportunities across the authority. However, as the *Leadership Opportunities* slide [Appendix 1] shows, the Primary Principal Teacher post was initially missing from this discussion.

Although *A Teaching Profession for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (2001) had posited the new primary Principal Teacher (PT) post as an explicit management post, it was expected that these PTs

would largely remain working 'under' Head Teachers (HT) and Depute Head Teachers (DHT). However, while the front-line leadership duties of PTs have since increased (with austerity-driven restructuring increasing the pupil threshold at which primaries are granted a DHT) arguably their professional recognition has not. I propose that PT networks might be one way of growing capacity in the system as required by the national and regional drivers above. It is this situation which prompted my local authority to support a notion that was initially borne of a wish simply to serve my own PT's professional learning and development: through creating a localised middle-management network, to be 'road tested' before the council strategy group consider 'rolling-out' the initiative across the authority.

### The educational argument for a network framework

Church et al (2002) suggest "informal networks have been the basis of family, community, and even politics for centuries"; they have also become a prevailing cultural paradigm, and the discourse of networks is ubiquitous, especially digital networks. It is important therefore to consider how these might work in an educational context. Fullan & Rincon-Gallardo (2016, p6) concede "the field is in a very early stage of building evidence...excitement about the potential of networks seems to be spreading faster than our knowledge about what makes them effective". As Mujis et al (2010) point out, there has been a lack of attention given to the theoretical basis of networking, and little attempt at definition:

Networking and collaboration have become increasingly popular in education recently, as the limitations of individual organizational approaches and external interventions become ever clearer. Many initiatives are currently taking place that encourage schools to develop networks...however, this movement has been largely unreflective. (p20)

'Networking' and 'collaboration' are regularly used interchangeably. Mujis' work, for example, at times collapses collaboration/networking concepts, though does attempt to outline a 'typology' of networks (2006). Networking and collaboration both appear to have a key role to play in education (McCormick et al 2010; Mujis et al 2010; Hadfield & Chapman 2009; Fullan 2006; NCSL 2006). I am choosing to focus on the network aspect, as I see that as a more useful framework for the intention of connection across establishments; and for me the most useful working definition of an educational network for this purpose is Hadfield's, who defines networks as: "groups or systems of interconnected people and organisations...whose aims and purposes include the improvement of learning and aspects of well-being known to affect learning" (2006, p5; cited by Mujis et al 2010).

A key theme of some of the literature seems to be that effective networking depends upon the generation of social capital. Networks appear to help in opening up horizons (Ballantyne et al 2006) and addressing the potential ‘myopia’ of working in an organisation that constructs its own reality: “networks get you out of your own narrow world...you gain ideas and perspective” (Fullan 2006). A “shared language” can be developed, creating a space which “allows schools to co-construct improvement around individual school needs” (Mujis et al 2011, p5). The prospect of success appears to be increased by the extent of shared “trust, mutual knowledge and informed challenge” (Jopling 2006).

The concept of social capital in educational network literature is a recurring one. The definition that best fits educational use of this term is that of Andriani: “the general idea of social capital is that relationships matter. In this sense, trust, cooperation and reciprocity...can have a positive impact” (2013, p2). The value of networking from a ‘social capital’ perspective appears to lie in its ability to harness and spread energy and innovation (Hargreaves 2004), with benefits accruing to both individuals as well as their organisations: “In the most successful examples of networking, social capital is both an individual and a collective good”. Fullan & Rincon-Gallardo (2016), for whom “effective networks can develop the power to turn educational systems into self-evolving, learning organizations”, make a systematic attempt to distil the essential features of effective networks. These features include social capital, and participation, also highlighted by McCormick et al (2010), who note that: “Participation is a source of identity, and learning to participate is to develop an identity” (p48). A key function of a network therefore, would seem to be that a professional space is created, where participation and the subsequent generation of social capital, are possible— and so these attributes should be used to inform decisions when setting up any network.

These intertwined key features—social capital that advances professional capital; participation that develops professional identity; a space that imparts professional status—are neither simple nor static (see e.g. Drew & Fox 2006). However, evidence does indicate that if we can increase the capacity of professional identity, value, and social capital in our system then we may increase the possibility of empowerment. Research into the networking possibilities around middle management frequently return to issues of professional identity (see e.g. Appendix 2, as well as literature referenced in previous section); and as the Scottish PT role has changed, so has a desire for this recognition.

In this opening section I have indicated how policy drivers appear to identify the system space in which a PT network might operate; and my review of some of the literature on educational networks indicates that such networks will be most effective if rich in social

capital since participating professionals are more likely to be better motivated, and in turn serve their communities more effectively. I will now explore what we can learn from PTs themselves about what structures or initiatives might best enhance their capacity.

## What do we know about the professional development needs of Primary Principal Teachers?

I issued an online survey in October 2016 to Primary Principal Teachers across 115 schools in my local authority, receiving 109 responses. This high percentage return rate might indicate a positive engagement with the focus of the questions and the opportunity to respond to the consultation. I devised a set of closed and open questions to generate quantitative and qualitative data to enable me to gather multiple perspectives as well as individual perceptions from particular circumstances. I engaged in thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006), through reading for popular responses, paying close attention to common phrasing, and grouping according to emerging patterns about perceived experiences (Lincoln & Cuba 2011). I also noted outliers' responses to ensure that all voices were represented (see Appendix 2).

The key themes arising from the analysis of the data are:

PTs were passionate about issues of professional identity and value.

*Especially PTs who are 'second-in-command': these respondents consider themselves, operationally, to be Depute Head Teachers—a view often shared by colleagues in school, but not perceived to be shared by education at large, either in terms of recognition, or in terms of pay. There is motivation to do a good job, but a common yearning that there be a wider valuing of that job.*

PTs noted that leadership development can be too dependent on circumstantial factors.

*Although many PTs appreciate the experiential fast-tracking that can come from working closely with the HT, there is acknowledgement that this is too fragile, dependant as it is on circumstances (culture or HT) within one's own organisation.*

PTs expressed frustration regarding the demands of the role and context, though tempered with some recognition of opportunity this sometimes affords.

*While it is acknowledged that stretched commitments and steep learning curves can give relevant operational experiences, it is also felt that these experiences cut authentic strategic time, are not linked outside of the school, and the ever-increasingly demanding nature of the experiences is not recognised.*

PTs expressed a desire to connect with peers outside of own school,

*PTs identify that what they currently perceive as the most impactful development opportunities ('experience in school' and 'own reading') are those least linked outside own experience and organisations, and clearly expressed a wish for links with peers outside of own immediate community.*

I propose that a network—carefully nurtured—has the potential to address some of these frustrations and desires. The literature, cited in the preceding section, appears to indicate that such a network could serve a triple purpose—recognising the key leadership role played by PTs (*and thereby giving them a professional value, strengthening professional identity*); creating a space for them to link outside their schools (*thereby increasing their social capital, encouraging strategic collaboration*), and better linking this strata of leadership with the rest of the system (*thereby aiding the authority's planning for succession*).

## How has a network for Primary Principal Teachers been developed in one Scottish local authority?

First I will explain how the local and national context appeared to align with my own motivation to create the space for me to trial a cluster PT Network. I began from a personal motivation—wanting to serve the professional learning and development needs of my own PT, someone I value and position as a co-leader, and for whom I want to make work and learning worthwhile. I also wanted to counter the notion of the PT as the forgotten post in the educational hierarchy. A notion enforced, for example, by Torrance & Humes (2015) who discuss the shifting discourses of educational leadership, recognise the limitations of heroic leader concept, and note the growing concept of distributed leadership, without mentioning the PT role. I would argue that the changes they discuss open up a space in which the PT role can be more clearly defined as an explicit leadership post. HTs in my cluster were

particularly aware of the issue, as the majority of the current nine HTs had been promoted from PT to HT with no DHT post in-between.

My local authority believed that a trial network had the potential to create a template that could promote a self-improving schools system, and was also keen to address succession planning—such networks could make this tier more visible, encourage system-wide leadership within the groups, and increase local authority knowledge of potential HTs, thus making an important contribution to succession planning.

Consequently, in late 2015 I sought a response from HT colleagues regarding the setting up a network for our PTs across the cluster. I was keen that neither I nor my school were perceived to own this development; power and agency should reside and develop within the group. I was less interested in HT buy-in than PT buy-in, and wanted to avoid any ‘contrived collegiality’ (Hargreaves 1994). Initial interest was high, yet early attendance was haphazard (Feb-April 2016). This possibly reflected an over-reliance on ‘voluntarism’ from a small pool of schools, committed attendees felt a richness was missing, and we re-strategised. The reasons for the halting start appeared to be: a mid-session start, where workloads already had momentum, and anything new was more likely to have been perceived as ‘extra’; agreed principles should have been established from the beginning, in order to bring clarity and understanding about expectation and structure; and recruitment should have been from a wider number of schools, to increase the possible number of attendees.

I therefore contacted more schools, within the locality, including denominational schools; and at a larger meeting in June we agreed a set of principles, a structure, and a direction for a 2016-17 network. My own role has mainly been to work closely with each chair to coordinate communication, guide structure, and keep the group connected with HTs or Headquarters when appropriate. Early feedback indicates an increase in positive relationships beyond individual schools, and a deepening of professional identity; I believe these have the potential to be a foundation for further confidence, capability and improvement within the system, and ultimately therefore on the fulfilling of potential in our children.

## In what ways might such engagement expand and how might capacity be developed at system level?

Although I instigated the pilot network prior to wider reading, research has enabled me to consider the most likely framework for success. On the possibility of scaling up, I would first of all highlight the conclusions of Fullan & Rincon-Gallaro (2016, p21): “networks represent a serious quality proposition for the future of education, and thus require deliberate cultivation and support...Effective action in networks does not just happen by bringing people together and encouraging them to get along...Setting into motion and sustaining an effective network is hard work.” Our network is at the ‘early’/‘developing’ stage (Jopling 2006); ‘key facilitators’



are just emerging, and more robust feedback will be provided after the first full year. Meanwhile, to address many of the needs of the profession at this level, as identified in the survey (e.g. 81% of respondents would be interested in a future PT network), and to maximise the initial outcomes as evidenced from the pilot group, I would recommend the ‘rolling out’ of PT networks across the authority. Deriving ideas from ongoing discussion with the pilot network, I would propose that future networks operate within a simple framework of core principles:

### **Timescale**

Securing interest, agreement and initial meeting by June, to set up for the session ahead, with interim review meeting set for mid-session.

### **Membership**

Voluntary, but with an intended session-long commitment. Maximum size of around 14 members on a locality basis; i.e. associate primaries of 2/3 neighbouring secondary schools.

### **Principles**

Devising a set of guidelines at the first meeting, agreed and owned by members, related to aims, confidentiality, conduct, communication, and anything else members hold important.

### **Structure**

Agreed operational procedures, including for chair, location, frequency and record-keeping—recommended rotating chair/location for first year, to generate social capital and common ownership. Selection of Link HT, who can support the group, communicate with HTs and HQ, and act as mentor as required.

This framework has the flexibility for customisation according to local needs. While staffing/cover capacity may preclude ‘school-time’ meetings, I would also recommend at least one HQ-based daytime meeting, in order to reinforce professional recognition, plus—in the longer term—a system-wide meeting with a representative from each network in order to review progress.

I am relatively confident that networks are a potential loci for system-wide improvement. In developing a better connected, professionally valued strata of the workforce, the ‘potential barriers’ may not be fully identifiable until more actions are underway, but if the ‘big ideas’ and ‘key drivers’ are used to inform aims which are “rooted in consideration of educational purposes, principles and values” (Drew, Priestley & Michael 2016) then PT networks can greatly enhance the primary school system. Research indicates that a network’s greatest chance of effectiveness is if it occupies a space where social capital can be generated. It

also seems to me that in the very act of creating this space—simply through a desire to serve and support—then there is another consequence: the bestowing of professional recognition, and therefore value and identity, and subsequently increasing the likely generation of professional capital that will enhance the system and deliver quality outcomes and experiences for children.

Teaching is ‘laden with emotional politics’ (Hargreaves 1998); although I presumed that my ‘interruption to practice’ might impact on actions, it actually appears to be impacting more on feelings—and in turn strengthening professional capital and identity, and impacting on capacity. This takes attentiveness:

*...school leaders who ‘step into the space’ to become involved in networks aspire to ambitious purposes and to effect change in ever-widening contexts. They have learnt to think and work beyond the confines of a single institution and are able to see how different parts of the system are inhibiting development, or how new models of practice could enhance it.*

(Ballantyne et al, 2006, p11)

Aiming to be non-interventionist, I underestimated the initial role of HT link, the ‘educational leadership’ rather than ‘institutional leadership’ that is required, and the “wrestling with the complexities of local context, asking better and deeper questions of themselves, of others and of the system” (Ballantyne et al 2016, p2). Undertaking this work has prompted me to begin to ask these questions. Novak’s (in Brighouse & Davies 2008) conceptual framework involves ‘inviting’ passionate leadership, and he notes an important concept—the process, the way we go about doing something, *is* the product in the making. When considering educational leadership, the setting up of networks cannot be simply externally imposed, or transposed from one locality to another.

*The passionate educational leadership that is being promoted here is different from business leadership, more than school leadership, and goes well beyond philosophical leadership...its primary motive is not to make money but to call forth and develop human potential....it attempts to bring that vision to life and life to that vision*

(Fullan, 2014, p41)

Referring back to my enquiry's initial conceptual underpinnings: in order to promote human flourishing\*, by cultivating empowerment, connection and capacity within Scottish education, then it is important to take an 'inviting' position towards leadership. The process is the product in the making, and therefore the interactions, the framing and the tone of how networks are set up is vital. Simply as one who serves, it has been a privilege to attempt to bring some life to the vision of an empowered middle management in Scottish education.

Additional note

\*“...*human flourishing*...”

I am deliberately using the language of Michael Fielding:

*“In helping young people and ourselves to learn joyously as well as effectively, we must remember that the enabling devices of systems and procedures are just that—they are the means which are to be judged by the quality of human flourishing they promote.”*

Aspirational concept underpinning all Thornlie Primary aims, and from:

Fielding, M. 1996 “Delivery, Packages and the Denial of Learning: Reversing the Language and Practice of Contemporary INSET” in *Developing Teachers, Developing Schools: Making INSET Effective for the School* (pp 18-33 Bradley, H., Connor, C. & Southworth, G. eds) London; Fulton 1996

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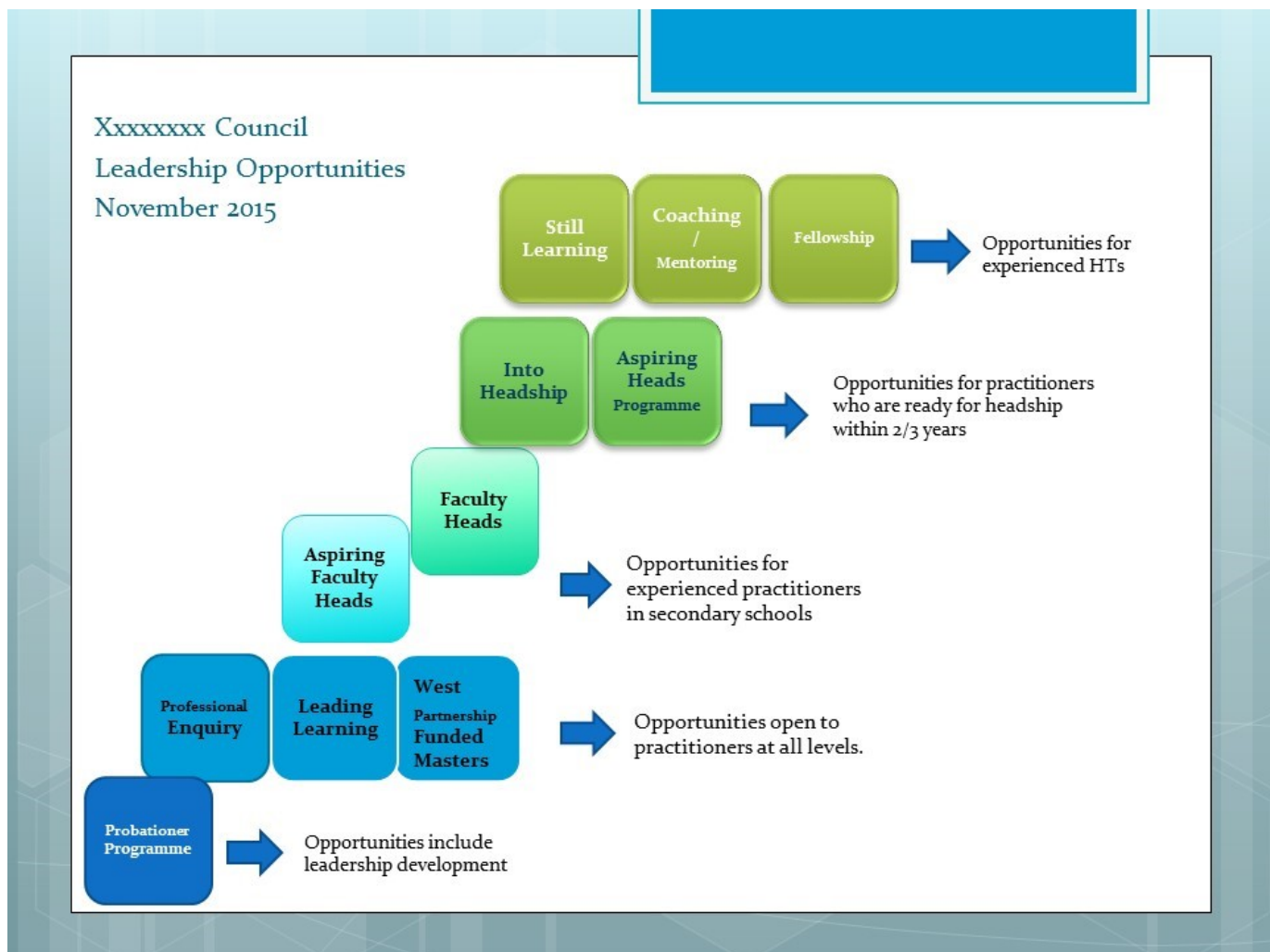
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## Appendix 1

Graphic from local authority PowerPoint, capturing great leadership opportunities available for staff and for leadership development.

However, Note provision for Faculty Heads, but no explicit references to Primary PT post. [subsequently being accounted for!]



## Appendix 2

Extracts from extended version of PT survey results

I issued an online survey (anonymous) to Primary Principal Teachers across our local authority.

*(To supplement this with richer data, I also interviewed 16 Primary Principal Teachers from across four local authorities. This was because I surmised that time-pressures would mean that most people filling in the survey would not leave comments. As there was so much comment in the survey itself though, I have only included quotes from the online survey. The interviews therefore are not included in the enquiry, though they do reinforce the findings of the survey, and indicate that these are common across authorities. The thematic analysis of results is ongoing. Further details are available from the author)*

### Appendix 2, Part A: initial thematic analysis of qualitative data

#### 1. PTs were passionate about issues of professional identity and value.

##### Evidence

- At a busy time of year (coming to the end of a term), in a session dominated by staffing issues, in a voluntary survey, there has been a massive response.
- A large majority of respondents have chosen to leave comments throughout, sometimes copious.
- In general, PTs with just the Head Teacher alongside them in the hierarchy leave the most details and comments

#### 2. PTs noted that leadership development can be too dependent on circumstantial factors related to the school.

##### Evidence

- Comments indicating that satisfaction is over-reliant on HT, for instance:
  - *My previous HT did not delegate and therefore opportunities to develop understanding of leadership were limited.*
  - *Few opportunities to develop as a leader offered in my own school.*
  - *Head Teacher stifles SMT and staff.*
  - *A supportive HT which encourages professional development,*
  - *Under new HT more opportunities have been available*
  - *I rely on my HT*
  - *My school is very supportive of my personal professional development and gives me many opportunities to apply these developments*

#### 3. PTs expressed extreme frustration regarding the demands of the role and context, though tempered with some recognition of opportunity this sometimes affords.

##### Evidence

- Comments
  - *Removal of tier of management has greatly reduced the opportunity for practical professional development*
  - *HT and myself very stretched with a role of 210*
  - *There are ever-increasing demands from the job*



- *I feel that since moving to school with no DHT I have been given more opportunity than ever to enhance my leadership skills and to develop professionally.*
- Comments focused on lack of time and space
  - *Have not had time to participate in leadership Courses*
  - *Current lack of teachers within schools is negatively impacting on the role of PTs in primary schools.*
  - *Currently, there is no cover to attend courses.*
  - *Lack of staff and class commitments make it difficult*
  - *Very limited time to carry out any management responsibilities*
  - *Unable to attend many courses due to staff shortages*
  - *There is no cover to attend courses.*
  - *Class teaching commitments take priority over development.*
  - *Would love to develop my career but restricted as never enough staff, you are fire fighting*
  - *Would love to develop further but opportunities that arise, i can rarely attend due to staffing and commitments within school.*
  - *Sometimes very hard to develop ideas, leadership opportunities as due to staff shortages have to cover classes.and playground supervision*

#### 4. PTs expressed a desire to connect with peers outside of one's own school.

##### Evidence

- By far the experiences perceived as having *most* impact are 'own reading' and 'experiences in own school'. These are the only two with a reported 50%+ rating of 'large degree of impact'. They are also the ones most likely to be solitary, and carrying the risk of the potential 'myopia' that limited social capital can bring.
- By far the largest consensus regarding any question is the 81% who would be interested in a PT network being available to them in 2017, followed by the 68% who would be interested in PT twilights. As twilights are more likely to be perceived as something 'done to' practitioners, then the greater percentage for networks is more likely connected with perceived greater agency
  - *Could be enhanced by some kind of network for NLC PTs, digitally or perhaps with meetings or twilights.*
  - *I feel it would be beneficial to have the opportunity to visit other schools and network with other PT's to share good practice.*
  - *There are not many leadership PD for principal teacher level*
  - *Very few opportunities on CPD Manager and budgets don't stretch to finance external courses.*

In examining only the responses which come from **schools with no DHT**, they are similar to above but even more emphatic : *the challenges of increasing demands, the wish for recognition and value, the reliance on HT/school culture for development, and the wish to connect outside of own environment.*

If the issue matters to them—and the evidence is that professional identity, being valued, and finding time and space to develop all clearly do—then PTs will give the time, commitment, and reflection. Growth is perceived as overwhelmingly within own school or reading, and—referring back to literature—this lack of connectedness is most likely to hinder capacity, slow growth, and obfuscate the clarity of any succession/leadership pathways, with development more likely to be non-uniform, and professional agency to be contingent. Such a context, I would argue, is ripe for the opportunity that could come from networking.

That this hasn't happened—in local authorities I have spoken to—perhaps reflects that only recently are we becoming aware of the increased *leadership* responsibilities at PT level, and also of the need for space

to be actively created and then nurtured, in order to allow PTs to lift their heads up, breathe deeply, reflect and think.

## Appendix 2, Part B: quantitative data

Survey issued to all Primary Principal Teachers in the authority.

October 2016; 109 responses, but survey closed at 100; anonymous.

Context: Of 120 primary schools, 79 have no Deputy Head Teacher.

	Yes	No
<b>Does your school have a Deputy Head Teacher?</b>	37%	63%

<b>To what degree have any of these impacted on your professional development as a leader/manager? (tick n/a if not undertaken)</b>				
	A large degree	A small degree	No impact	Not used
North Lanarkshire courses	36	48	6	9
Education Scotland courses	7	24	19	29
Education Scotland online material	41	43	9	6
SCEL materials/opportunities	9	15	7	59
University modules	21	20	10	48
Digital Networks (ie Glow groups, etc)	14	43	21	21
Own reading	65	30	3	1
Leadership development in own school	78	17	4	1
Leadership development from other provider	14	22	16	26

Comments left: 16 (254 words)

	Very	Partly	Not
<b>Overall, I am satisfied with the opportunities I have for professional development as a leader</b>	35	45	19

Comments left: 29 (609 words)

**What are the main benefits of being a Principal Teacher in a school with no DHT? (if applicable)**

Comments left: 61 (1272 words)

**What are the main challenges of being a Principal Teacher in a school with no DHT? (if applicable)**

Comments left: 69 (2632 words)

	Yes	No
<b>Would you be interested in a future Primary PT network?</b>	81%	19%

	Yes	No
<b>Would you be interested in twilight session(s) for Primary PTs?</b>	68%	32%

Any other comments: 41 left (1057 words)

## Appendix 2, Part C: extracts from extended ongoing interpretive analysis of qualitative data

These patterns are taken from the responses to the 'benefits and challenges of being a PT in a school with no DHT' and 'Any final comments' sections of the survey.

All PTs with no DHT in their structure appear to have responded.

All comments are quoted and spelled word for word; **bold font** is added by myself for emphasis; I haven't included all comments, but have tried to represent the most common themes proportionately. Where a comment is exceptional I have indicated that.

There is no doubt that these questions have called up much passion. Together, for me, the comments signal a cry for recognition and value, from a strata who feel their role is relatively underestimated and unknown, other than—sometimes—from their own HT and staff.

There is a clear sense of commitment and dedication, and an appreciation of opportunities that have often come quicker than expected, but also a frustration at an increased responsibility and frontline leadership that sometimes feels like it has been introduced by stealth, or inadvertently, rather than intended; and in the current operational context sometimes leaving a feeling of not being able to do as good a job as wished, due to being left to learn on the job, juggling many demands, and over-reliance on own school culture/HT, while being undermined by a lack of equitable public or professional recognition and value.

**Almost all respondents consider themselves operationally to be Depute Head Teachers** as do their HTs and staff teams, and this is continually pointed out either directly or indirectly

- *I am being given opportunities regularly to **deputise** for my head teacher in her absence. My role as manager/leader is very much whole school due to the fact there is no other senior manager.*
- **Deputise for HT** [several mentions]
- *I have **first hand experience of a DHT role** as that is currently my experience of being PT in two schools with cut DHT roles has been....I see no distinction, other than **I don't have a DHT salary**.*
- *I am doing **the job of dht with the title of pt***
- *As a PT in a school with no DHT I feel that I have added responsibilities and many opportunities to develop my leadership and management skills. I feel a huge sense of commitment to my school and therefore a desire to ensure that we are providing the best possible opportunity for our children to have success in their education. There have been many times when **I have deputised in the HT's absence** and this is improving my confidence and my ability as a manager*
- *More opportunities to be involved in opportunities that may otherwise **fall to a depute***
- **Deputising for HT** which developed leadership capacity and ability to lead and make informed decisions.
- **Usually seen as the DHT** or next point of contact in the HTs absence
- *Since the restructure of primary management; - Assumption from staff that **you are now undertaking the role of Depute***
- *This role is in short **a depute head teacher** on a principal teacher salary*
- *With the management restructuring that took place there is now more pressure on PTs to take on duties which would, in the past, have been **DHT responsibilities**.*

Subsequently, **time, task management, and over-large remits can lead to frustration**, especially, when PTs feel they have residual class commitments that more DHT roles don't.

- *A huge remit with **limited management time** to carry it out more and more being asked to undertake with no new time allocation and high expectations to deliver*
- **Time is limited** and priorities constantly change which can be **stressful** and difficult to juggle.
- *Time - I physically do **not have enough hours** in the day*
- **Work /Life balance is badly** effected
- *.It can have a **negative effect regarding the health and well being** of PTs*
- **I don't feel that I do everything justice** at times
- *The challenges are immense. I have **very little time** to take on the many duties that were once those of our DHT's*
- *I have no **time or energy** to take part in professional developments*

And at rock bottom are **some PTs who see no benefits whatsoever** alongside the demands:

- *No benefits and same workload applicable to a DHT*
- *No benefits and a heavier workload*
- *None, you have double the workload. You are given much more responsible and challenges*

However, this is counter-balanced by an even **greater number who do see this deputising as an opportunity**, contextualizing the steep learning in positive terms:

- *I have been **afforded many leadership opportunities** within my own school which probably would not have happened if a DHT had been in place. I feel that the experiences I have had over the past five years as PT in a school with no DHT have placed me in a strong position for furthering my career if opportunities for promotion arise*
- *Learn (hands on) about the **day to day management** of a school*
- *I have gained a lot more responsibility in my role as PT as we do not have DHT. I have been asked to lead things and take things forward and this has given me **a wealth of opportunities** that I may not have been given if there was DHT in the school*
- *There is potential to experience more responsibility and **have a larger impact** on the management of the school.*
- *You are given many **opportunities to develop your leadership skills** within the school*
- ***Greater opportunities** for whole school leadership and management roles.*
- *The range of **leadership opportunities and experiences available to you**. Possibly an extended degree of responsibility.*

This positivity is often expressed in terms of **the benefits of working closely with a Head Teacher**:

- *A **close working partnership** with HT [several mentions]*
- *Very much involved in **supporting head teacher with the running of the school** [several mentions]*
- *Ability to **work closely with HT**. Increased responsibility, steep learning curve, opportunity to learn from situations that arise.*
- *As a PT in a small school with no DHT, I am gaining **excellent management experience working closely with the HT***

This aspect of **development is often circumstantial** rather than strategic. Working closely with a Head Teacher is expressed as beneficial and developmental, but at times can also be expressed more directly in terms of its contingency and dependency:

:

- *Professional development and opportunities is **completely reliant on what your HT offers***
- *The **only support comes from my Head Teacher***

Overall, respondents are up for the increased responsibilities. They have entered on the leadership trajectory willingly, though recognising that this step up from class teacher—Principal Teacher—is now a much larger step than it used to be. The PTs are often acknowledged by HTs and peers as doing a Depute role; however, **a key factor in professional recognition is lacking--remuneration**, and although it is not the dominant factor for these workers, it is a common factor:

- *Principal Teacher yet on **scale 1 salary**.*
- *This role is in short **a depute head teacher** on a principal teacher salary*

- *The main challenges are that you can be expected to take on the roles normally given to a depute without having the **financial gain***
- *Doing the DHT job **without the title/salary** to reflect this.*
- *As a Professional person I do not want to see my school suffer as a result of having no DHT; main challenges are that I feel obliged to carry out a **DHT duties on a PT salary***
- *I feel that I have a level of **responsibility of that of a DHT**, I am in charge of the nursery, all aspects of SFL and the meetings and paper work that go along with that however, I am only being recognised as a PT and **only being paid for PT***
- *a shame **I don't have the title of dht or the pay!***
- *I have many DHT responsibilities within my remit. I feel that as such my **salary should reflect this.***
- *The PT then deputises for the HT and on top of this has a class commitment. If that's the case **PT should be paid accordingly too.***
- *More difficult to find a work / life balance. Pretty much carrying out a **DHT job without the pay!***
- *Previously been PT with no DHT you often deputise and have more responsibility, ie **do a DHT remit on a PT wage.***

The financial aspect is symbolic; it is more about I think this is clearly about **professional recognition and value:**

- *Although I enjoy and am grateful for the opportunity to deputise, I feel that **I do not have the authority** and authorisation to deal with some matters in full. I also sometimes feel that I do a very different job to PTs in a school with a DHT and this is **not taken into account...**, although my colleagues and HT are very aware of this.*
- *Often you do the remit of a DHT **without the title**. Some teaching staff can resent this and question your role as part of the SMT. As part of a management team you do what needs to be done for the children. It's never about what is your remit or what isn't*
- *PT expected to carry out the role of DHT and in some cases as a Head Teacher **without support from Head Teacher...** Young staff with potential to become PT lack access to opportunities to train and gain experience, and more frequently see the demands and expectations placed on PT's and therefore do not see it as rewarding and aspire to do job role*
- *I love my role, but **would like recognition for the job that I do** in a school with no DHT buffer.*
- *Since the management restructure **my role as Principal Teacher within my school has changed considerably**. As a young professional I aspire to continuing to develop and enjoy new challenges in my role. However, I feel that it is important in schools where there is no DHT role, **the role and job description of the PT must be evaluated** as it does not accurately reflect the increased management aspect that PTs are currently undertaking. **I think that it is important to feel valued**, especially when undertaking increased responsibilities on a permanent basis.*

For many, despite the extra time it could be seen as requiring, the **benefits of links outside of their own organisations** are clear and would be welcome:

- *I do understand that in my previous school (as PT) that I had very little leadership opportunities so **I would have welcomed the opportunity to gain knowledge and experience from other PTs in authority***
- *I think the **PT network sounds like an excellent idea** and I would be interested in being involved in it.*
- *It would be great to have courses readily available to help with some of the challenges in post of PT.*
- *At present, I feel there are **no development opportunities for PTs...** Meeting with fellow PTs in some way could address this.*

- *I benefit from there being two of us in my school, and think this benefit would increase if I could **work in some way with other PTs** across the area.*
- *I pursued a post graduate in Middle Leadership provided by Glasgow Uni, which was very useful. This should be offered more widely to current or aspiring PTs where possible.*
- *As a PT coming to the end of my career I think all of the above would be useful, as the role of PT is such a vital link between teachers and SMT and sometimes can be very challenging. **Support and advice from colleagues would be invaluable.***
- *A local HT has set up a **PT forum for the Wishaw locality schools - this is something which has been very well received and highly beneficial.** Having spoken to colleagues in other schools I am aware this is something they would certainly be interested in.*
- *I feel **PTs are well placed to work together to lead and implement development in areas** that would benefit North Lanarkshire schools and pupils.*
- *I miss having no one in my own position within my own school and would love to be in regular touch with **peers in the same position.***

Finally, some comments seem able to take a step back, see themselves in the context of a continuum, connect a number of the issues above, and recognise the value that **social and professional capital** may bring:

- *For three years I was a PT in a school which did have a DHT. I do feel that there are positive and negative differences in terms of responsibilities and developments, and I think that this can **depend on the culture of the school.** I think it depends on whether the PT wants to develop his/her professionalism in terms of aspiring to be a Head Teacher. I feel that personally it would be beneficial for PTs like myself, to have an external Mentoring/Coaching Programme (perhaps from DHTs/HTs) for PTs to provide support and build confidences within their role and remit. This may **enable PTs to make the transition from PT to HT at the right time,** since there are not as many DHT posts.*