THE PRINCE'S
**TEACHING
INSTITUTE**

THE PRINCE'S CHARITIES

25-27 January

Madingley Hall

Headteachers' Conference

2015 Report

Contents

The hallmark of all Prince's Teaching Institute courses is that they are designed and run by teachers for teachers, and their purpose is to disseminate the best principles and practice in education that we have identified. From the first we have been convinced that subject knowledge and a passion for communicating it lie at the heart of effective teaching for all children, regardless of their background or ability.

Our work with headteachers began seven years ago in January 2008. We realised that however keen classroom teachers might be to work within the framework of a challenging subject-based curriculum, they would be frustrated if the head had quite different ideas about the educational direction of the school. We therefore invited a number of the most successful heads in the country, some of them from schools in the most difficult and disadvantaged environments, to come and share some thoughts with us.

We wanted to know what their success was built on and what really worked in their schools, so that we could see whether it might be replicated. Two of the main messages that emerged were, first, that basing the curriculum just on what is regarded as relevant or accessible is patronising and limits pupils' aspirations. There is therefore a moral imperative to give every child the challenge and the opportunity of acquiring powerful knowledge. Second, in order to realise their vision for the school, headteachers need freedom, and yet in the two decades following the introduction of the national curriculum the amount of central control increased.

Since 2010, there has been a marked change of policy direction, towards greater emphasis on subject knowledge and wider autonomy for headteachers. This has been reinforced in more recent reviews, such as that commissioned by the Sutton Trust which concluded that the essential element in 'great teaching' was 'deep subject knowledge'.

The courses that the PTI has subsequently been running for heads have therefore focused mainly on the leadership that is required, and should now with fewer constraints be possible, in order to give every child the benefit of enriching and challenging teaching. The programme for this 2015 Residential at Madingley was put together with this same end in view.

Although there was general agreement about the principles underlying good and effective leadership, it was recognized that the particular circumstances of individual schools may be quite different, so that a solution which works in one school may be utterly unsuitable in another. This is why there was so much interest among delegates in the PTI's Schools Leadership Programme, which is designed to explore by means of an extended action-based research project what leadership strategies in a particular context are most conducive to good teaching and learning.

On the evidence of the detailed feedback we have received, this course has been an outstanding success, particularly in terms of the value of the experience for heads and the impact it will have on their schools. Delegates were unanimous in saying that the PTI should run more of the same. We will do our best to oblige them.

Bernice McCabe

Bernice McCabe, Course Director
Co-Director, The Prince's Teaching Institute

The Meaning of Ethos

Dr Gavin Alexander, Fellow, Christ's College, Cambridge

Ethos is a Greek word that provides the root of 'ethics', the behaviour that society is comfortable with.

An institution like a school can develop an ethos of its own from the behaviour of its members, and an individual may seek to bring about a change of ethos by requiring different modes of behaviour. So ethos can come from the inside or the outside. It can come from the top down or from the bottom up.

To carry conviction, ethos should arise from established behaviour that you also believe in. It will comprise intellectual qualities as well as human ones. If a school gets its ethos right, it will produce citizens who not only act well but also think well and demonstrate virtues such as intellectual curiosity and compassion.

Headteachers in their discussions agreed that in order to sustain a culture of high achievement in schools, it is necessary to establish an ethos in which this is generally accepted. The role of leadership is paramount and includes these steps in the process:

Discussion: How best can we develop a culture of high aspiration in our schools?

Vision:

- Understanding the established ethos but being prepared to challenge existing norms where there is seen to be a need for change
- Resilience and integrity in sticking to your beliefs
- Not being distracted by management tasks

Articulation:

- Making the general principles particular to the context of the school
- Making it clear that it is better to aim high and fall short than to play it safe
- Making the ethos permeate every aspect of school life
- Celebrating all successes

Realisation:

- Setting the tone by personal example, both in academic and human terms
- Developing key staff to act as role models so as to generate a 'critical mass' of support
- Creating a community of feeling, a sense of the 'school family' where there is openness and trust
- Realising that change cannot be achieved overnight, nor solely by decrees from the school leaders; it takes time for everyone to 'buy in'

Developing a culture of high aspiration in a school in challenging circumstances

Sir Paul Grant, Headteacher,
Robert Clack School, Dagenham

Robert Clack School was transformed from dysfunctional to outstanding by value-centred leadership applied without compromise. The twin pillars it rests on are:

1) An academic curriculum that aims to deliver what children need to be successful adults: among other things, <u>C</u>onfidence, <u>H</u>ealth, <u>I</u>dentity, <u>L</u>ove, <u>D</u>ignity, <u>R</u>esilience, <u>E</u>steem, <u>N</u>urture.

2) An extracurricular programme designed to 'narrow that gap and build the person', including public speaking, performing arts and a wide range of sports.

As a result, the school has attracted funding for 900 extra places in the current year as well as sponsorship of many of its facilities by outside organizations (such as a Leisure Centre by Sports England).

The school aims to live up to its motto: *'For the brave, nothing is difficult'*.

PTI Schools Leadership Programme project

Leading school-based professional development to sustain outstanding teaching and learning

Simon Decker, Headteacher, and **Jeremy Shibli**, Assistant Headteacher, Rainham Mark Grammar School

Main aims of the Schools Leadership Programme Project 2010 – 2014:

- Middle school leaders to lead regular subject-specific in-school professional development to enable further improvements in the quality of teaching and learning
- A consistent focus on assessment for learning to be maintained
- All professional development to be recorded and evaluated against national standards
- Students' own research into the quality of learning to be used to improve school CPD

Implementation:

- Appointment of an Assistant Headteacher to lead teaching and learning
- Agreement on characteristics of outstanding teaching and learning in the school
- Making heads of department take on main responsibility as Leaders of Learning in their subject.
- Involvement of governors with links to departments
- Students' involvement in staff appointments and departmental reviews
- Coaching and mentoring for staff at all levels
- Outside support for subjects: PTI Residentials and financial backing for staff undertaking higher degrees

Impact:

- Rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted (2014), with a higher proportion of Outstanding teaching and less variation between departments
- Record Value Added
- Teachers at all levels leading CPD
- A culture shift achieved, with greater openness and trust and more sharing of knowledge and ideas throughout the school, principally through the creation of a Performance Management Moderation Committee

Education

Dr Gavin Alexander,
Fellow, Christ's College, Cambridge

The word 'education' is derived from two Latin words: *edŭcare*, meaning 'to rear or bring up', and *edūcere*, meaning 'to draw out', as of innate and natural qualities. Consulting a modern thesaurus for synonyms of 'education' will show how both of these shades of meaning have been developed, and a third added (from a different root), with the sense of instilling knowledge.

Effective school leadership

In the early 16th century the word was generally used to denote the formation of character, but then within a few years it came to acquire its modern meaning of a system of instruction in academic and non-academic subjects.

An anonymous treatise of 1675 (*A Model for a School for the better Education of Youth)* argues for a wide and varied curriculum, combining arts and sciences.

Matthew Arnold, from his extensive experience as a school inspector, quotes with approval the German John Comenius: *"The aim is to train generally all who are born to all which is human"*. English education, Arnold said, seemed designed only to equip children for functional purposes: *"it does little to touch their nature for good or to mould them."* whereas the *"prime direct aim* [of true education] *is to enable a man to know himself and the world"*.

Effective Leadership

Lord Wilson of Dinton, former Cabinet Secretary

Some general principles:

- *Leadership* is different from *management* (which is a matter of putting systems in place). Good managers do not necessarily make good leaders
- Leaders are not perfect and must find an individual style that accommodates both their strengths and their weaknesses
- Leadership matters; in a difficult and rapidly changing world people need and expect the support of their leaders

Some characteristics of good leadership:

- Having a clear view of what your job is
- Building a team that shares the same convictions
- Giving the people around you hope and self-respect
- Engendering trust
- Having the temperament necessary to concentrate on essentials, entailing if necessary a certain ruthlessness about excluding other matters

Personal qualities needed:

- An evident sense of humour and enjoyment
- Stamina
- Keeping up appearances, in the knowledge that all eyes are on you
- The ability to relax and get enough sleep

Dangers:

- Isolation - power distorts relationships and leaders need trusted advisers who will tell them things as they really are
- Overload - success attracts ever more work and leaders must be able to delegate and use their time efficiently

Discussion: What qualities are required for the many-faceted nature of effective school leadership?

Vision:

- Appreciation of the ethos of the institution and the ability to see what needs nurturing and what calls for change
- Clarity and consistency of aim and purpose; being true to yourself

Style:

Whether one's general approach tends towards the autocratic or the consensual, this has to be adaptable: principles tempered by pragmatism. As well as flexibility, desirable attributes include:

- Visibility and approachability
- Projection of a positive image; smiling and saying *"well done"* and *"thank you"*
- Awareness that your moods will determine the mood of the institution
- Openness and facility in communication

Actions:

- Delegate responsibility for teaching and learning to assistant heads
- Audit activities of the senior leadership team to ensure that maximum focus is maintained on teaching and learning
- Create opportunities to share good ideas and interests
- Recruit enthusiasts

Personal qualities:

Many of these are a matter of being aware of one's own strengths and weaknesses and sensitivity towards those of others. From these spring an ability and readiness to:

- Appreciate other viewpoints
- See and reward excellence
- Build a team that shares the vision but brings different skills
- Develop leadership in others
- Look after yourself and find ways of 'feeding the soul'

The impact of one-to-one tuition on closing the attainment gap

Mark Johnson, Headteacher, and **Fidelma Boyd**, Deputy Headteacher, St Angela's Ursuline School

Aims:

- To test whether the gap in attainment between pupil premium and non-pupil premium students is reduced by one-to-one tuition
- To improve upon levels of outstanding teaching in the school, using the "Leverage Leadership" model
- To develop further the school's work on literacy across the curriculum based on the research of Geoff Barton & David Didau

Implementation:

- Pupil premium students divided into two strands, one receiving one-to-one tuition, the other tuition in a group. It was found that students in the group did better overall than those receiving individual tuition; their attainment was on much the same level as their non-pupil-premium peers, and their confidence and enjoyment of the subject rose dramatically too.
- Instituting a formal programme of regular departmental reviews, including lesson observations, student work scrutiny, student focus groups, interviews with the Headteacher and line manager and the publication of a formal report. This process was supported by improved line management feedback and more directed CPD.
- Strategies to embed the idea that literacy is not a separate subject but an integral part of all good teaching and learning, e.g. more attention paid to the style and quality of verbal interaction between students and teachers, and greater use of students in peer and self-assessment.

Conclusion:

"There is nothing more beneficial and with potentially greater impact than a piece of detailed research on a school's own students and a school's own practice. "

Discussion: How can we ensure that our curriculum offer maximises all pupils' life chances?

Creating the culture:
- Heads and school leadership teams must ensure that every aspect of school life is related to the improvement of teaching and learning – but they can't do it all themselves
- Appoint champions at every level
- Recognize and promote excellent subject teachers
- Aim to build an atmosphere of trust where learning can thrive and where teachers and students are not afraid to look for support

Sustaining the culture:
- Ensure that staff professional development is subject-focused and personalised
- Insist on the constant pursuit of improvement in subject knowledge and teaching expertise, including peer coaching and the sharing of good practice
- Bring in subject experts from outside where necessary
- Hold regular faculty reviews and include in them student observations

Bernice McCabe	Chair, Co-Director of The Prince's Teaching Institute
Russell Hobby	General Secretary, National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT)
Emma Knights	Chief Executive, National Governors' Association
Jack Jackson	Principal, Launceston College, Cornwall
Simon Decker	Headteacher, Rainham Mark Grammar School, Kent
Tony Ryan	Headteacher, Chiswich School, Hounslow

Newly appointed heads are expected to have a solution for every problem. This is no longer reasonable or feasible. So how would you suggest that heads in this position set about achieving the cultural shift needed to create a more collegiate style of leadership?

- Schools in which the head is most comfortable with delegating to middle leaders are likely to improve most rapidly. Against this, if there is a real crisis, some heads will instinctively gather back into their own hands the powers they have distributed.

- It takes trust and courage to be prepared to relinquish part of your responsibilities, and there must be suitable training.

- You can mandate adequacy, but greatness has to be unleashed.

- Governors may expect a quick fix when appointing a new head, particularly if a school is in difficulties, but this is all the more reason to get the whole school community onside.

What should your priorities be in determining the best sort of professional development for your staff – and for you yourself? And what strategies would you recommend for achieving them?

- You need to identify people within the school with particular areas of expertise. Once you have persuaded them to share their ideas, you will find others coming forward with suggestions.

- Discriminating use of student voice - they see more of your staff teaching than anyone else and their observations may be helpful.

- There is a role for government in creating more space for proper professional development. At the moment the space tends to be filled with instruction in how to handle the latest changes in education.

- There is a need for a more regular programme of support and training for staff; not all schools can afford to sponsor teachers who want to add to their professional qualifications.

- There are special qualities about the best of British education, much sought after in the rest of the world, which do need better definition and closer research.

What are the principles that should determine the curricular (and extracurricular) provision in schools?

- It depends on the context. For a selective school where excellent results are expected, it would be the depth of challenge.

- A College of Teaching, if it becomes a reality, offers the opportunity for schools to be directed by evidence-based research, rather than political dogma. This would be part of a general move towards self-improvement, with the possibility of setting ourselves higher standards than any politician would dare to.

What personal attributes would you hope to find in someone with leadership responsibilities?

- Cheerfulness, even if it runs against the prevailing culture when you arrive. After a while, you will find everyone else around you is cheerful too, but be careful to project the mood you want to engender.

Leaders

Mark Johnson	St Angela's Ursuline School
Simon Decker	Rainham Mark Grammar School
Tony Ryan	Chiswick School
Jack Jackson	Launceston College
Liz Allen	Bright Futures Educational Trust

Attendees

Tracey Amos	Great Torrington School	Siobhan Lowe	Tolworth Girls' School
Jane Bailey	South Shore Academy	Michele Marr	Caludon Castle Business and Enterprise School
Andy Baker	Poole Grammar School	John McEachern	Sanders School
Sue Banks	Isambard Community School	Michael McKenzie	Alexandra Park School
Jane Beaumont	Copthall School	Doreen McNamara	Shooters Hill Post 16 Campus
David Benson	Kensington Aldridge Academy	Annmarie McNaney	Chesham Grammar School
Emily Boyle	Kensington Aldridge Academy	Eamonn Murphy	Astley Sports College
Catherine Brown	McAuley Catholic School	Gary Nelson	Wigan UTC Academy
Jackie Cahalin	Lancaster Girls' Grammar School	Huw Powell	Mary Immaculate High School
Zoe Cozens	Heathcote School	Patrick Rice	Cedar Mount Academy
Christine Dennington	Ernesford Grange Community Academy	Ron Skelton	Broadway Academy
Jodh Desi	Parkside Community College	Gillian Skerrow	Falinge Park High School
Caren Earp	Henlow Church of England Academy	Rebecca Smith	Manchester Creative and Media Academy
Jon Ford	Downham Market Academy	Mark Sturgeon	Aylesbury Grammar School
Stephanie Gill	Altrincham Girls' Grammar School	Roisin Walsh	Dormers Wells High School
Kim Johnson	Bradfields Academy	Maureen Wolloshin	Maidstone Grammar School for Girls
Paul Kilbride	Old Swinford Hospital		

The Prince's Teaching Institute

Bernice McCabe	Course Director & Co-Director, PTI; Headmistress, North London Collegiate School
Chris Pope	Co-Director, PTI
Oliver Blond	Academic Director, PTI; Headteacher, Roedean School
Martin Roberts	Academic Consultant, PTI; Former Headteacher, The Cherwell School
James Sabben-Clare	Academic Consultant, PTI; Former Headmaster, Winchester College
Barbara Pomeroy	Education Advisor, PTI; Former Deputy-Headmistress, North London Collegiate School

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