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**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE INTER-CONNECTEDNESS OF TRUST,
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND
EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES IN ENGLISH SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is entirely my own work.

I declare that no material from this thesis has been used or published before.

I confirm that the thesis has not been submitted for a degree at any other university.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Adish Pan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Every research journey is an individual one, but none is possible alone or without the support of others. Every doctoral thesis depends on much more than the individual contribution of its author, and this one is no exception. It could not have been written without the immense help and support of many others. To all, I offer my profound thanks, even though I here single out for special mention just a few.

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I hope this thesis, for which the final responsibility is mine alone, goes some way to repay and do justice to the trust and commitment they have all so freely invested.

ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates potential connections between the development of social capital and education outcomes in English secondary schools, and particularly the influence of leadership on these.

The investigation is underpinned by four themes emerging from a review of literature as gaps in current knowledge:

- how social capital is activated and developed, and the role of school leadership;
- whether the development of social capital can be separated from socio-economic status;
- understanding the role of young people in relation to social capital in a school
- examining the balancing and reconciliation of competing stakeholder demands.

The resulting enquiry adopts a long-term case study approach, over two years, in three schools. It uses mixed methods, including semi-structured interviews with a range of internal and external stakeholders, attitudinal surveys, and scrutiny of relevant school documents. Drawing on grounded theory, the research methodology takes as its starting point each head's own perception of their intent, and seeks understanding of the process and effects of change in their context. The analysis is influenced by insights from complexity theory in rejecting simple models of linear causation, drawing instead on concepts of emergence, connectedness and feedback to aid understanding.

Empirical findings, whilst showing clearly the importance of context, also indicate some common strands of importance across each case. These suggest emergent new insights into the nature and place of students as leaders, blended models of connected leadership that extends beyond the school, and a more organic model of organisational growth. Those findings are crystallised into a possible theoretical model for a next stage of school improvement. This addresses the importance of families and communities in supporting the personal and social development of young people and enhancing their motivation for learning. These conclusions are, at this stage, necessarily tentative and opening up avenues for further enquiry, for which suggestions are offered.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Origins

My research begins in an unusual place. When I first encountered the intriguing story of the American township of Roseto (Gladwell 2008), it resonated with work I was undertaking for the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT). This involved creating a new leadership development programme for heads and senior school leaders built around the community role of specialist schools, and I had recently published a book about it (Groves 2008).

The close-knit Italian-American community of Roseto in Pennsylvania had become a focus of study for nearly 50 years, after it was noticed that heart disease was much less prevalent there than in the nearby similar community of Bangor. Wolf and Bruhn (1993), reviewing studies made of Roseto between 1935 and 1984, conclude that mutual respect and cooperation contribute to the health and welfare of a community's inhabitants, and that self-indulgence and lack of concern for others have an opposite effect. They find the characteristics of tight-knit community are better predictors of healthy hearts than low levels of serum cholesterol or tobacco use.

More recently, Holt-Lunstad et al. (2010), looking at data across 148 wider studies covering 308,849 participants, echoed that finding much more broadly, concluding that the influence of social relationships on risk for mortality is comparable with other well-established risk factors for mortality, and exceeds many.

The story of Roseto is illuminating both as a specific study over time of the significance of social capital and its impact on one aspect of human development, as well as in the unique circumstances which allowed that to happen. It thus reminds a researcher that looking outside the norm can reveal important insights for 'normal' practice, an understanding that has helped to inform the subsequent design for this research.

The starting point for my research lay in wondering whether there may be any parallels in relation to educational achievement to the health-related 'Roseto effect'. Could educational outcomes be influenced by changes in social capital in similar ways to their evident impact on health outcomes? If so, what forms does this influence take, how does it arise, and what might that impact be? Those questions may be particularly pertinent for English secondary schooling and related national policy, at this time when new questions are being raised about how well we are educating our young people for a globalised economy.

1.2 Significance in the present context of English secondary schools

1.2.1 Government policy from 2010

One of the first actions of the coalition government that took office in May 2010 was to change the name of the Department of Children, Schools and Families to the Department for Education (DfE). This gesture was intended to symbolise a renewed focus on the core business of teaching and learning. The subsequent White Paper (DfE 2010a: 8) stressed that: *“Our school system performs well below its potential and can improve significantly. Many other countries in the world are improving their schools faster than we are”*.

As part of this re-focusing of government expectation on schools, a number of inherited policies that suggested some wider role for schools in support of families and communities were changed. The distinct funding for the specialist schools programme, which required such schools to share skills and resources across their communities, was untagged; expectations around extended school provision were removed; and focus on the Every Child Matters agenda was reduced. At the same time, significant changes were made to the Academies programme inherited from the previous government, with the focus shifting from a mechanism for improving underperforming schools operating in very challenging environments to one which encouraged its adoption by outstanding schools. For some this is seen as a first step to the creation of national chains of school

providers, which may in turn raise questions of local accountability and collaboration (Hill 2010).

A raft of other changes include a focus on a narrower range of educational outcomes in terms of definitions of attainment for schools, with a stress on academic rigour in curriculum subjects and a much stronger emphasis on raw scores in learner assessment rather than contextualised value-added.

At the same time, nevertheless, there is also a very strong concern to ‘narrow the gap’ in terms of the impact of social disadvantage on education attainment:

“England has one of the highest gaps between high and low performing pupils and a strong relationship between social background and performance. 13.9% of the variance in performance of pupils in England could be explained by their social background, as compared to just 8.3% in Finland and 8.2% in Canada Too often in England it has been thought that there is a choice between an excellent system for the most able and one which serves the least able well; or else that in order to narrow gaps and expand the number who succeed, it is necessary to ‘dumb down’ the standards expected. But the international evidence shows that it is not so”. (DfE 2010b: 2)

The justification based on international comparisons makes use of OECD data (OECD 2010). In the 2009 round of tests of 15 year olds (PISA), England was 17th in reading, 24th in mathematics and 14th in science – ahead of countries like Spain, the USA and Italy, but still well behind, for example, Finland, Hong Kong and Canada. The argument is then made that the solution to this problems rests on improving the quality of teaching:

“All the evidence from different education systems around the world shows that the most important factor in determining how well children do is the quality of teachers and teaching”. (DFE 2010a: 9)

1.2.2 Counter-indications

The suggestion that schools may have some role in relation to building social capital might therefore be seen as going against the grain of much current national education policy. However, there are also at least three recent notable counter-indications that suggest the possibility of a closer connection between social capital and educational attainment than such government policy statements would suggest.

First, research published by the Audit Commission (2006) in England concluded that schools, particularly in the most deprived areas, needed to be proactive in building social capital in order to overcome socio-economic disadvantage and bring about school improvement. It argued that school improvement and renewal are inseparable issues from neighbourhood improvement and renewal, particularly in the most disadvantaged areas:

“The strong relationship between parental socio-economic circumstances and pupil attainment is longstanding, and clear at both school and pupil level. More deprived pupils, and schools with more deprived intakes, generally perform less well academically than more affluent ones, across all Key Stages. However, statistical trends indicate that in recent years there has been some narrowing of the attainment gap at school level, although at pupil level less progress has been made. This suggests that issues associated with local socio – economic circumstances are still acting as a brake on school improvement”. (ibid p.4)

The report concluded that, while schools are profoundly affected by their neighbourhoods, they equally have a key role in promoting cohesion and building social capital.

Second, UNICEF findings (2007) suggest a possible connection between children and young people's well-being and their learning. The summary table of international comparisons (Figure 1) suggests that countries in the top third of the table overall do comparatively well on 28 out of 42 dimensions and only one out of seven is in the bottom third in terms of educational wellbeing. Meanwhile countries in the bottom third overall only do comparatively well on 4 of 42 dimensions and none do well on educational wellbeing. This suggests there may be a closer interdependence between educational and other aspects of wellbeing.

		Dimension 1	Dimension 2	Dimension 3	Dimension 4	Dimension 5	Dimension 6
Dimensions of child well-being	Average ranking position (for all 6 dimensions)	Material well-being	Health and safety	Educational well-being	Family and peer relationships	Behaviours and risks	Subjective well-being
Netherlands	4.2	10	2	6	3	3	1
Sweden	5.0	1	1	5	15	1	7
Denmark	7.2	4	4	8	9	6	12
Finland	7.5	3	3	4	17	7	11
Spain	8.0	12	6	15	8	5	2
Switzerland	8.3	5	9	14	4	12	6
Norway	8.7	2	8	11	10	13	8
Italy	10.0	14	5	20	1	10	10
Ireland	10.2	19	19	7	7	4	5
Belgium	10.7	7	16	1	5	19	16
Germany	11.2	13	11	10	13	11	9
Canada	11.8	6	13	2	18	17	15
Greece	11.8	15	18	16	11	8	3
Poland	12.3	21	15	3	14	2	19
Czech Republic	12.5	11	10	9	19	9	17
France	13.0	9	7	18	12	14	18
Portugal	13.7	16	14	21	2	15	14
Austria	13.8	8	20	19	16	16	4
Hungary	14.5	20	17	13	6	18	13
United States	18.0	17	21	12	20	20	-
United Kingdom	18.2	18	12	17	21	21	20

Figure 1: Summary of 2007 UNICEF report card on child well-being in rich countries
Source: UNICEF (2007:2)

The data on which this table was based was generally collected prior to 2003.

Subsequent data published in 2013 (UNICEF 2013) showed an improvement in the UK's position on wellbeing. However this data was collected in 2010. It is not possible simply to conclude that the improvement was due to government policy initiatives, such as Every Child Matters, in the intervening years. What can be said with certainty,

however, is that the figures published in 2013 do not reflect the impact of the policy changes since 2010.

Thirdly, there is a growing critique of the statistical basis by which school effectiveness has come to be judged, yet the data this generates form the underpinning basis of many government policies. Gorard (2010: 756) argues that, overall, the field “*simply ignores (these) quite elementary logical problems, while devising more and more complex models comprehended by fewer and fewer people*”.

He continues by relating the statistical problem to a critique of current models for school effectiveness:

“School effectiveness is associated with a narrow understanding of what education is for. It encourages, unwittingly, an emphasis on assessment and test scores—and teaching to the test—because over time we tend to get the system we measure for and so privilege.... Further, rather than opening information about schools to a wider public, the complexity of contextual value-added (CVA), and similar models, excludes and so disempowers most people”. (ibid p. 759)

Whilst government policy does recognise and seeks to remove the potential limitations of CVA measures by removing these models completely, the reasons that gave rise to such approaches, in terms of recognising the differing context of schools and their young people, remain. Gorard’s key conclusion “*now largely unremarked by academics and unused by policy-makers, is that pupil prior attainment and background explain the vast majority of variation in school outcomes*” (ibid p. 761).

All the above context, of recent policy change and counter-indicators, suggests it might be a particularly apt time to try to understand more fully the ways in which social capital and educational outcomes may be connected and the influence one may have on the other.

1.3 My own research perspective

Any researcher who chooses, as they must, a topic of personal enthusiasm brings to their task the risk of a propensity for bias, and it is as well to acknowledge this at the outset. My interest in this area stems back to my own educational experience of a relatively privileged, and on one level successful schooling, but which felt to me totally disconnected from anything that seemed real or important. Ultimately the desire to change this for others was one of the most important drivers that led me into the education profession.

So I have long been aware of what I see as the peculiar disconnected nature of childhood and adolescence. The historian J H Plumb (1972) describes childhood as a European invention of the last 400 years. In 1980, reflecting on that observation as a young youth worker, I wrote:

“As a society we have both chosen and been forced by circumstance to progressively lengthen the period of dependence of our young in education or unemployment. We may

call adolescence a threshold before stepping out into adult life but we have shut it away from adult life in a place called school, as we once shut the insane in asylums. It is our standard remedy for superfluous groups". (Groves 1980:19)

My thinking has therefore held for a number of years at least two implicit assumptions: that links between school and ‘real world’ are good for young people, and that improving these will potentially have impact in terms of wellbeing and motivation and, through that, in turn on attainment. In part this research involves some examination of the validity of those assumptions. Making them explicit at the outset, I hope, will enable both myself and the reader to be aware that they are by no means givens, and may or may not prove to have some validity in practice.

1.4 Introducing the key concepts

In this section I introduce the key concepts that have given shape and focus to this research so as to set the scene for its specific aims. Those concepts are ‘*social capital*’, ‘*trust*’, ‘*stakeholder engagement*’, ‘*partnership and networks*’, and ‘*leadership*’. Each is considered in more depth in the subsequent literature review.

1.4.1 Social capital

The concept of social capital has received increasing attention in the development of social policy over the last decade by governments in many countries, stemming

particularly from the work of Putnam (2000), but also Coleman (1989) and Bourdieu (1986). For Putnam the core idea of social capital is that “*social networks have value ...and social contacts affect the productivity of individual and group*” (p.18). He goes on to say the term refers to “*connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them*” (ibid p.19).

None of these writers’ ideas are without problems. Lin (1999: 13) helpfully summarises her perceptions of these in a table (Table 1):

Issue	Contention	Problem
Collective or individual asset (Coleman, Putnam)	Social capital as collective asset	Confounding with norms, trust
Closure or open networks (Bourdieu, Coleman, Putnam)	Groups should be closed or dense	Vision of class society and absence of mobility
Function (Coleman)	Social capital is indicated by its effect in particular action	Tautology (cause is determined by effect)
Measurement (Coleman)	Not quantifiable	Heuristic, not falsifiable

Table 1: Lin’s analysis of issues associated with conceptions of social capital

Field (2008), reviewing the concept’s usefulness from an educationist’s perspective, highlights both its complexity and its slipperiness. He examines more closely the differences and problems in Putnam’s typology of ‘*bridging*’ and ‘*bonding*’ capital, that is relationships that are more inclusive or more exclusive, and considers the ‘dark side’

of both, the way they can contribute to what most would feel undesirable ends, for instance, successful terrorist groups. Roseto was a society of extremely strong conformity. Using the term ‘social capital’ therefore carries the unavoidable implication of a moral perspective and involves judgements of value. There will be inevitable balances to be struck between benefits and costs.

Notwithstanding such problems, Field, in a broad-brush review of the research literature, suggests: “*We can conclude with some confidence that there is a close relationship between people’s social networks and their educational performance*” (ibid. p.55). However his assertion, if true, is not without difficulty. It is unclear if that relationship is fixed or static, and whether or how it is susceptible to change.

1.4.2 Trust

The concept of trust forms a key element in Putnam's definition and understanding of social capital. For Khodyakov (2007), trust is a complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon. He offers a three-dimensional view of trust, which distinguishes between trust in strong ties (thick interpersonal trust), weak ties (thin interpersonal trust), and institutions (institutional trust). The overall composition and levels of trust in each dimension change over time and may not depend on each other. This ‘fluidity’ of trust, he argues, allows for its study not only as a variable, or as a continuum of low–high trust or trust–distrust, but also as a process.

Covey (2006:19) advocates enthusiastically the status and role of trust in personal and organisational life:

“When trust is high, the dividend you receive is like a performance multiplier ... In a company high trust materially improves communication, collaboration, execution, innovation ... In your personal life, high trust significantly improves your excitement, energy, passion, creativity and joy in your relationships”.

However, in the survey *National Accounts for Well-being in Europe* published in 2009 (www.neweconomics.org), the UK comes 20th out of 22 nations in terms of levels of trust. For the 16-24 age group, people in the UK reported the lowest levels of trust and belonging of anywhere in Europe – only Bulgaria and Estonia had similar levels of response.

In the context of education, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000: 551) note that:

“Schools play a special role in society, and, as such, understanding trust in relationships in schools is vital. Students must trust their teachers in order to learn. School personnel must trust one another in order to cooperate toward accomplishing a common goal. Schools must be trusted by the communities that sponsor and fund them”.

If this does not happen, then the energy of the organisation needed to solve the complex problem of educating a diverse group of students is diverted into self-protection, they argue.

Tschannen-Moran and Hoy go on to summarise four decades of research seeking to understand trust in schools, and highlight three areas where more understanding is still

needed: the relationship between trust and leadership, development of trust between staff, and the study of student trust. Their review of research was undertaken in 2000, but that finding is still echoed in more recent studies (Cosner 2009). Adams (2008: 49) suggests a need for longitudinal studies of trust in schools, and also, in an observation that helped shape this study, that:

“quantitative methods predominate in the literature and have carried us to this stage in our understanding of trust, but it is time for qualitative designs and mixed methods to add value to the growing evidence”.

Finally, Dietz and Hartog (2006) provide a wide-ranging collection of definitions of trust from their review of the literature. These are summarised in Table 2.

DEFINITION	SOURCE
<i>The conscious regulation of one's dependence on another</i>	Zand 1972
<i>The extent to which one is willing to ascribe good intentions to and have confidence in the words and actions of other people</i>	Cook and Wall 1983
<i>A state involving confident positive expectations about another's motives with respect to oneself in situations entailing risk</i>	Book and Holmes 1991
<i>The extent to which a person is confident in and willing to act on the basis of the words, actions and decisions of another</i>	McAllister 1995
<i>The willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control the other party.</i>	Mayer et al 1995
<i>The specific expectation that an other's actions will be beneficial rather than detrimental and the generalised ability to take for granted ... a vast array of features of the social order.</i>	Creed and Miles 1996
<i>Confident positive expectations regarding another's conduct in a context of risk</i>	Lewicki et al 1998
<i>... reflects an expectation or belief that the other party will act benevolently</i>	Whitener et al 1998
<i>A psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability (to another) based upon positive expectations of the intention or behaviour of another</i>	Rousseau et al 1998

Table 2: Definitions of trust: Dietz and Hartog (2006)

Reflecting on all these perspectives, I began to wonder if their frequent emphasis on *'the other'*, *'confidence'* in *'them'*, and *'expectation'* about *'them'*, was sufficient. The inherent passivity implied by these definitions indicates a possible weakness in the concept if taken in isolation. Might there be a need to give equal focus to some parallel notion of engagement, by which I mean something about one's own active contribution,

alongside mere trust in leadership to do what is expected of it? If so, what does that concept look like, and what are its implications? To address these questions, I adopted the term ‘stakeholder engagement’.

1.4.3 Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement is a term that has gained wide currency in the last decade, notably in the political arena, for example the Local Government Modernisation Agenda of the 1997-2010 Labour government and, perhaps, the Big Society idea of the subsequent coalition government, but also in the business world, where it connects with notions of corporate social responsibility and social reporting.

Greenwood (2007: 317-8), writing from a business world perspective, defines stakeholder engagement as *“practices that the organisation undertakes to involve stakeholders in a positive manner in organisational terms”*. She focuses attention on the attributes of the relationship, not simply the attributes of the organisation or the stakeholder, and argues that the process is both variously affected by the power relationship between the organisation and its stakeholders and morally neutral in the sense that its purposes can be either moral or immoral.

Greenwood helpfully charts (Figure 2) how the term is used in different ways in the business sector, and this may have transferability across to schools in understanding the

rationale for and way they engage with their range of stakeholders. These include staff, students, parents, employers, taxpayers, other education providers, and, however it may be defined, the local community. It should be noted that not all meanings in the table are positive ones, and it may be that the first seven of these, under the heading ‘responsibility’ have strongest resonance for this study.

Understandings of stakeholder engagement		
Engagement as a form of...	Engagement becomes a mechanism for...	Based on the ideas of...
<i>Responsibility</i>		
Fiduciary duty	Acquitting the moral duty of the firm	Evan and Freeman, 2004
Consent	Enhancing voluntary explicit consent, ameliorating unfairness	Van Buren III, 2001
Corporate governance	Allowing stakeholders access to decision-making, enhancing stakeholder voice	Freeman, 1984 Van Buren III, 2001
Participation	Allowing stakeholders to participate in the firm	Arnstein, 1969
Fairness	Fulfilling the obligation to stakeholders	Phillips, 1997
Cooperation	Enhancing trust-based cooperation	Peccei and Guest, 2002
Accountability	Enhancing the accountability of the firm	Gray et al., 1996
<i>Managerialist</i>		
Unitarism	Encouraging unity of values, suppressing dissent, discouraging informal communications	General managerial literature
High-commitment HRM	Eliciting employee contribution, becoming an ‘employer of choice’	Peccei and Guest, 2002
Non-financial accounting	Measuring and valuing non-financial, intangibles of the firm e.g. intellectual capital, social capital	
Strategic management	Managing the firm in response to the interests of the stakeholders	Freeman, 1984
Continuous learning	Involving stakeholders so that the company can continuously learn and improve	Sillanpaa, 1998
Legitimisation	Legitimising the firm to its stakeholders	Deegan, 2002
Risk management	Deflecting criticism	Deegan, 2002
<i>Social control and construction</i>		
Trust-distrust	Substituting for trust or mitigating distrust	Swift, 2001
Managerial capture	Enhancing managerial control	Owen et al., 2000
Social construction	Constructing an image of the firm	Livesey and Kearins, 2002
Fatal remedy	Undermining democratic goals by attempting to control the immeasurable and making it rational and objective	Power, 2004
Knowledge appropriation	Transforming stakeholders’ tacit knowledge to explicit knowledge	Kamoche, 2006 Power, 2004
Immorality	Suppressing moral instinct	Bauman, 1993

Figure 2: Greenwood’s analysis of understandings of stakeholder engagement

Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (2004: 59) note:

“The concept of engagement [in schools] has attracted increasing attention as representing a possible antidote to declining academic motivation and achievement. Engagement is presumed to be malleable, responsive to contextual features, and amenable to environmental change”.

They suggest researchers have seen school engagement as a multi-faceted concept. By this they mean that it is variously seen as behavioral engagement, which they suggest encompasses doing the work and following the rules; emotional engagement, which includes interest, values and emotions; and cognitive engagement, which incorporates motivation, effort and strategy. But, importantly, they argue these three facets have not often been linked together in research and their inter-relationship capitalized on in a meaningful way.

1.4.4 Networks and partnership

Gray (1989: 5) defined collaboration as:

“a process through which parties who see different aspects of a problem can explore constructively their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible”.

Others have described collaboration as a process that enables independent individuals and organisations to combine their human and material resources so they can accomplish objectives they are unable to bring about alone (e.g. Kanter, 1994; Mayo, 1997).

I will use two terms to describe different approaches to collaboration: partnership, by which I mean more formal arrangements to collaborate with those who are not already key stakeholders, and networks, by which I mean looser and less formal collaboration across a wider span.

Van Aalst's (2003: 33) definition of networking is a helpful starting point in describing the forms networks may take:

"The term "networking" refers to the systematic establishment and use (management) of internal and external links (communication, interaction and coordination) between people, teams or organisations ('nodes') in order to improve performance".

Partnership, on the other hand, *"is an idea with which anyone can agree, without having any clear idea what they are agreeing about"* (Guest and Peccei, 2001: 207). Again, in the words of the American comedian, Fred Allen:

"It is probably not love which makes the world go round.... but rather those mutually supportive alliances through which partners recognise their dependence on each other for the achievement of shared and private goals".

Dhillon (2009) points to the importance of an understanding of partnership by suggesting that networks and networking are significant dimensions of partnership but the effectiveness and sustainability of a partnership depends not just on the quantity of contacts in a network but also on the quality of such connections in terms of the power influence and trustworthiness of the individuals concerned. He suggests: *"the contested*

concept of social capital provides a useful theoretical frame for understanding the basis of sustainability in education partnerships” (p.701).

Hands (2010: 203), in a qualitative study of two Canadian schools, found numerous possible benefits of wider partnerships for schools, although she may in part be referring to networks as defined above:

“Partnerships with community organisations and citizens not only provided students with academic resources and additional learning opportunities, but ... expanded students’ networks and increased their social capital. By meeting and interacting with citizens in their community, students developed relationships ... and subsequently had access to information, learning and occupational experiences, and opportunities to establish trustworthiness. Partnerships also promoted an awareness of the need for community participation among students”.

Lasker, Weiss, and Miller (2001:182) helpfully use the term “synergy” to describe effective partnerships. They feel there is a lack of a definition of “*the mechanism that enables partnerships to accomplish more than individuals and organizations*” and seek ‘*a pathway through which partnership functioning influences partnership effectiveness*’. Synergy is the concept with which they seek to fill the void. The combined perspectives, resources, and skills of each organization in the partnership create synergy, which then creates a new entity that is greater than the individual components.

1.4.5 Leadership

There is one further significant feature to pick out from the story of Roseto. The leadership of the parish priest, Rev. Pasquale de Nisco, was crucial in forging and sustaining the social networks and trust which underpinned Rosetan life in its early days (Bruhn and Wolf, 1979: 13-20). When he reached Roseto in June of 1897, he found a disorganised, disparate group of Italian immigrants clinging to their land, but knowing little English and almost nothing of their new country. There was no coordination of effort and no appreciation of the responsibilities of citizenship. He set up spiritual societies and organized festivals. He gave out seeds and bulbs and by practical example encouraged the townsfolk to clear the land and plant the long backyards behind their houses. The town came to life. Rosetans began raising pigs in their backyards and growing grapes for homemade wine. They built schools, a park, a convent and a cemetery. Small shops, bakeries, restaurants, and bars opened, and more than a dozen factories sprang up making blouses for the garment trade.

Drawing on international research, Barber and Mourshed (2007) concluded that without an effective head teacher it is unlikely that a school will have a culture of high expectation or strive for continued improvement. However, far less attention has been paid within education to the role of leadership in creating and sustaining social capital, what sort of leadership that requires, and how leadership can effect change in those

areas. Arguably, more work has been done in relation to understanding the linkage between leadership and social capital in the business world than in education.

Maak (2007), for example, argues that business leaders have to deal with moral complexity resulting from a multitude of stakeholder claims and have to build enduring and mutually beneficial relationships with all relevant stakeholders. This he terms 'responsible leadership':

“Key to responsible leadership is the ability to enable and broker sustainable, mutual, beneficial relationships with stakeholders, to create stakeholder goodwill and trust, and ultimately a trusted business in society”. (p.331)

The responsible leader *“acts as a weaver of stakeholder relationships and as broker of social capital in pursuit of responsible change”* (ibid. p.340).

From a school perspective, Sergiovanni (1998) proposes the notion of pedagogical leadership as the pre-eminent component, greater in significance than what he terms bureaucratic, visionary or entrepreneurial leadership, in bringing improvement to schools. Pedagogical leadership *“invests in capacity building by developing social and academic capital for students and intellectual and professional capital for teachers”* (p. 38).

In Sergiovanni's view, community-building is a powerful way for school leaders to develop capital. The value of capital generated as schools become communities is more

important in determining a school's success than are its physical and financial assets. He maintains:

“Pedagogical leadership develops capital by helping schools become caring, focused and inquiring communities within which teachers work together as members of communities of practice”. (ibid. p.38)

Thus he sees both the leadership and development of the school as a community, as well as the leadership and development of the school in the community, as necessary – and neglected – parts of school effectiveness, and concludes:

“When students have access to social capital they find the support needed for learning. But when social capital is not available, students generate it for themselves by turning more and more to the student subculture for support”. (ibid. p. 39)

Hargreaves (2001) also criticises traditional models and understanding of leadership and school improvement, arguing they largely ignore what he terms *“the impact of the moral excellences, and the underpinning social capital, on the optimisation of intellectual capital”*. He cites by way of example the common description of a headteacher’s leadership as *‘purposeful’*, finding it worryingly bland:

“It is not any purpose that matters: the nature and perceived legitimacy of the goals involved is critical to the purposefulness that a leader demonstrates. Moreover, leadership is concerned with the means of realising the goals, both their efficiency and morality, not only the goals themselves”. (p.491)

The common elements in all these various descriptions of leadership include a sense of moral purpose, as well as the quality of relationships that leaders who build social

capital require, and which they have the ability to foster and promote on a range of competing fronts. There is something distinctive and additional in these accounts of leadership which, the advocates suggest, needs much greater focus in our understanding of leadership, but is also the key to achievement of better outcomes.

1.5 Aims and purpose

Building on these ideas, this section summarises the process of developing the aims and purposes developed for this research.

1.5.1 Defining the focus

Through my initial reading and thinking around the key concepts described above, and their relationship to each other, I began to form a picture of how, in the context of the right sort of leadership, the various components of trust, engagement, and partnership (or, less formally, networks) might come together around the core integrating concept of social capital.

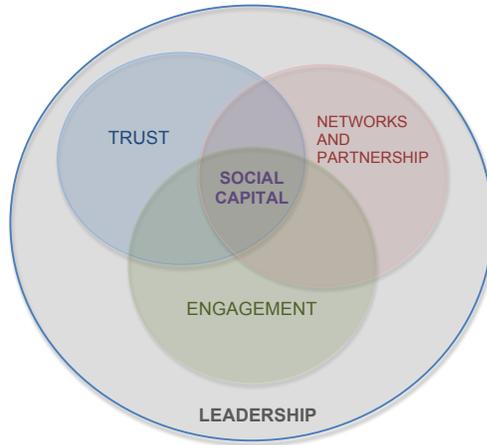


Figure 3: Initial analysis of relationship of key research themes

I therefore set out to test and illuminate the relationship and significance of such an emerging model to school improvement in English secondary schools. In particular, I was interested to examine how any potential for impact on educational outcomes comes to be realised and the role that school leaders, in particular, must play to secure any benefits.

It was, at this stage, a fairly simplistic model, and I wanted to look to develop it further as the work proceeded to reflect the place of the school, of learning in and out of school, and of the school as a model of a community, as well as the linkage to outcomes.

As explained in Chapter 2, the approach taken has been designed to pay particular attention to areas where this introductory exploration, and in particular the literature

review that follows, suggested a need for further research to gain understanding, most notably:

- the role of leadership in activating and developing social capital among stakeholders;
- whether the development of social capital can be separated from socio-economic status;
- the nature and effects of social capital in relation to children and young people in a school;
- the process of balancing and reconciliation of stakeholder interests.

1.5.2 Key research questions

As a result of this initial exploration, detailed further in chapter 2, the key research questions on which this study is based, were formulated as:

- How do school leaders look to build trust and engagement within their schools and across their schools' wider communities? (RQ1)
- What effects do levels of trust and engagement have upon schools and their wider communities? (RQ2)
- To what extent do levels of trust and engagement within schools and across their wider communities influence their educational outcomes? (RQ3)

1.5.3 The sites chosen for this research

Five English secondary schools were initially approached as potential sites for this research. They were chosen because the headteachers of each had been a recent participant in the SSAT Community Leadership Programme I was directing at the time, and had indicated, as part of that involvement, their intention to develop community engagement as a central element of their school improvement strategy. Each head was therefore personally committed to, and at an early stage in implementing, a strategy for community engagement by which they sought to build social capital within and around their school so as to improve educational outcomes. It could be argued that, because these school leaders have such an inbuilt investment and commitment, they are outliers in this regard compared to the majority of schools. But, as the Roseto experience illustrated, looking outside the norm can reveal important insights for normal practice.

In the event, three school leaders responded positively to the invitation to participate. Their three schools all have different contexts, communities, and histories, broadly summarised in Table 3 below. Each has been given an anonymised name. A fuller introduction to each and their context is given later in chapter 3 on methodology, and in the case study of each school in Chapter 4.

SCHOOL	CONTEXT	STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT	LEADERSHIP
Ashtree	Established school with new identity serving dispersed deprived city communities	Journeying from satisfactory to good	Head appointed in 2006 to lead school out of local authority cause of concern
Birchgrove	New school in a new town, no established community, broadly middle class	Journeying from good to outstanding	Head in post since 2009
Chestnut	New academy formed from a failing school, serving deprived post-war council housing estate	Journeying from special measures to satisfactory	Head appointed in March 2010 to open the new academy

Table 3: Overview of the three schools chosen as research sites

By studying, over an extended period of time, the execution and impact of the change strategies adopted by the three school leaders in these settings, the resulting study aims make a distinctive contribution to the knowledge base with regard to both leadership and school improvement, and the significance of social capital and stakeholder engagement for both.

1.6 Overview of the thesis

This concluding overview sets out the way the resulting thesis is structured:

1. Introduction

- Demonstrates the importance and relevance of the research.
- Introduces the research themes and puts forward the overarching research questions.
- Gives an overview of the thesis structure.

2. Literature Review

- Presents the findings of initial and subsequent reviews of literature in relation to identified key concepts
- Identifies gaps in understanding to inform the research aims and objectives.

3. Methodology

- Explains how the research was designed and the issues investigated.
- Justifies the methods chosen.

4. The Case Studies

- Sets out the research findings of each of the three school case studies.
- Identifies distinctive themes arising from each case study context.

5. Discussion and Analysis

- Makes a comparative analysis of the themes arising from the three case studies to develop understanding and explanation in response to the overarching research questions.
- Repositions these findings into the literature to show contributions to knowledge.

6. Conclusion

- Draws out implications of findings to offer a fresh model for understanding the processes observed that can have wider application for school improvement.
- Synthesises the findings to demonstrate the critical purchase and implications of the thesis.
- Evaluates the research process.
- Makes recommendations for further investigation.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The basis of this review

Chapter 1 proposed three research questions (RQ1, RQ2, RQ3) as the focus for this research and introduced five core concepts, an understanding of which is considered crucial to any consideration of those questions. This chapter sets out the findings of a review of literature associated with those core concepts and identifies where an investigation based on the research questions may be able to offer a particular contribution to existing knowledge.

2.1.1 Conduct of the review

Burton et al. (2008: 29) maintain that '*conducting a high quality review of existing ideas is probably the most important element of any successful research study*'. Traditionally, such a literature review is undertaken at the commencement of the study to see whether the answer to the research question in hand already exists. However, inductive approaches, such as grounded theory, advocate a more gradual exposure to literature (Corbin and Strauss 2008). They argue that while an initial consideration of literature should be undertaken prior to the first exploratory phase of fieldwork to identify areas of focus and for questioning, this should be far from exhaustive to avoid potentially skewing the focus for the work that follows.

That is the course chosen for this research. An initial review using Warwick University Library WebPro and electronic databases, particularly IngentaConnect, Informaworld, JStor, EBSCOhost, and SAGE Online, as well as Google Scholar, ensured some familiarisation with the extent and range of work and started to highlight where there may be gaps. The results were managed using EndNote software.

A further review was undertaken at the mid-point of the research period, particularly to take account of aspects that were emerging from the first tranche of data collection, and another at the end of the data gathering period to reflect further on findings and to consider their wider significance.

In addition to the five core concepts outlined in the Introduction, the review included a range of methodological enquiries, particularly around the measurement of social capital. The results of these methodological enquiries are described more fully in Chapter 3.

The majority of this work was completed between August 2009 and April 2010, and revisited in summer 2011 and summer/autumn 2012 to seek out any relevant materials that had subsequently been published. In total, 222 reports, publications, articles and other sources were reviewed.

2.1.2 Criteria for inclusion

The basis for inclusion as evidence in this literature review has been determined using four main criteria:

a) Currency

Although much of the interest around the core concepts is comparatively recent, the roots of ideas such as social capital go back at least thirty years and the history of their development has been well traced (e.g. Cavaye 2004, Field 2008). I have therefore tried to focus in the main on more recent results from the last decade.

b) Relevance to education

All five concepts are much more broadly based in terms of their origin and relevance than simply within the field of education. They have been particularly studied within the field of business, and I have been mindful of the opportunities for positive cross-fertilisation of thinking, whilst also maintaining a clear focus on that work which has been done within the field of education as having particular relevance to this study.

c) Relevance to the English secondary school context

There have been a number of countries where studies have emerged with relevance to the five concepts in an education context, most notably America, but Canada, South Africa, and Australia also stand out. Although studies from England have been favoured where relevant, the insights that might be gained

from relevant cross-cultural studies have not been ignored

d) Connection to the research questions

The final criteria has placed focus on content most pertinent to the three proposed research questions, looking in particular for where there may be relevant gaps in current knowledge.

2.1.3 Structure of the review

The five core concepts introduced in Chapter 1 have been used both as the basis for the various searches undertaken and to provide the structure for the next sections of this chapter. Those five concepts are:

- a) **social capital** – the overarching concept whose impact in school terms this study hopes to understand. (Section 2.2)
- b) **trust** - the first key component of social capital (Putnam 2000) (2.3)
- c) **stakeholder engagement** – reflecting, but going beyond, the element of reciprocity Putnam and others have associated with trust (2.4)
- d) **networks and partnership** – the second of Putnam’s key component of social capital (2.5)
- e) **leadership** - the prime means by which the Roseto study suggested social capital might be developed (2.6)

The sequence of consideration of these core concepts is deliberate, working out from the central concept of social capital as illustrated in Figure 3 (p.25), through key components of social capital, to the principal driver of leadership. The analysis that follows builds on the initial understandings set out in the Introduction and brings together results from all stages of the literature review. Each section aims also to identify where there may be gaps in existing understanding on which this research could help to shed some light. These are drawn together and summarised in section 2.7.

2.2 Social capital

It was noted in the Introduction that the central concept of social capital, which had such influence on health outcomes in Roseto and so which lies at the core of the research questions, is a slippery and value-laden construct. It has nonetheless exerted a considerable influence on thinking and national policy development, over the last twenty years in particular. This is because it has been seen as a key characteristic of all communities. It is variously described as: a product of durable networks of individuals (Bourdieu & Passeron 1977); resources available to strong family or community social organisations (Coleman 1988); and a crucial characteristic of healthy civic society (Putnam 2000).

Field (2008:1) summarises its essence in this way:

“The theory of social capital is, at heart, most straightforward. Its central thesis can be summed up in two words: relationships matter. By making connections with one another, and keeping them going over time, people are able to work together to achieve things that they either could not achieve by themselves, or could only achieve with great difficulty. People connect through a series of networks, and they tend to share common values with other members of these networks”.

Meanwhile, West-Burnham et al. (2007) offer a summary of the characteristics of communities with high social capital (Figure 4).

Characteristic	Definition
Shared social norms and values	A clear consensus about the moral basis of community where principles are known, shared, understood and acted on
Sophisticated social networks	Clear and rich lines of communication with shared language, a common vocabulary and high quality dialogue
High levels of trust	Openness, consistency and reliability
High civic engagement	People are good citizens; they vote, stand for election and participate in the civic community
Symbols and rituals	A sense of identity which is celebrated through shared ceremonies and events
Interdependence and reciprocity	A high level of caring and sharing; people ‘look out for each other’
Volunteering and community action	People join in clubs, societies and charities that feature prominently in community action

Figure 4: Summary of characteristics of communities with high social capital
Source: Flint (2011:7); Adapted from West Burnham et al. (2007)

As with this list, most statements about social capital stress its positive value, because, as discussed in the Introduction, the concept is inextricably interwoven with values and moral purpose. It has been linked beneficially to educational achievement (e.g. Coleman 1988, Goddard 2003), democracy (e.g. Putnam 2000) economic opportunities (Granovetter 1985, Gittel and Thompson 2001), reduction in criminal activity (Sampson 2001) and health (Cattell 2001; Ferlander 2007).

Unsurprisingly, though, such a concept has also attracted criticism. For some, it adds nothing not already known (Portes 1998), while for Fine (2001:155) it is a "*chaotic, ambiguous, and general category that can be used as a notional umbrella for almost any purpose*".

Robison et al. (2002), whilst highlighting multiple and conflicting definitions of the term among social scientists and wondering about the utility of the 'capital' metaphor, argue these problems have arisen because the uses and applications of social capital have wrongly been included in its definition and suggest their preferred definition to overcome this:

"Social capital is a person's or group's sympathy toward another person or group that may produce a potential benefit, advantage, and preferential treatment for another person or group of persons beyond that expected in an exchange relationship".
(ibid. p.6)

This definition is adopted as the working basis for the present study because it captures both individual and group perspectives and places these in the context of more complex relationships. The phrase '*beyond that expected*' seems particularly helpful in directing attention to added value.

However, tensions are still implicit even in this definition. Edwards et al. (2003) argue any use of the term social capital tends to obscure rather than illuminate the effects of structural inequalities and relations of power. This results in a conservative reading of the social world, particularly the family, so limiting the value of the concept in social research. This issue of power and equality in relationships is a further important warning to tread carefully in any use of the concept of social capital, as now defined, and I shall return to a more detailed consideration of it in the section of this chapter on leadership (2.6).

Part of the difficulty with both the concept and its use could stem from the fact that we are still in the relatively early stages of understanding and researching it (Field 2008). What social capital perhaps brings to social theory is an emphasis on relationships and values in explaining structures and behavior. It is not necessary to argue that it is the only factor at work for that perspective to be valid, but if that is the case, then it is necessary to consider both the way social capital interacts with other variables as well as the construct itself.

Ferlander (2007) distinguishes two different forms of social capital: collective and individual. On the one hand, social capital concerns elements at the collective level of communities, workplaces or neighbourhoods (e.g. Putnam 2000). On the other, social capital refers to resources at the individual level (Bourdieu 1986, Portes 1998, Lin 2001). Ferlander, writing as a health professional, suggests that many studies have tended to stress collective definitions of social capital at the expense of individual perspectives, and that even with those studies which consider the individual perspective, most have focused on individual trust and participation in formal associations, and less on resources embedded in social networks. Networks are significant elements of social capital for Ferlander, which she then further characterises according to the direction of ties within them, and the levels of formality, strength and diversity they display. This leads her to categorise network ties in terms of those that operate horizontally or vertically, formally or informally. All of these may also be seen as weaker or stronger. This range is considered further in the discussion of networks in section 2.5.

This distinction between collective and individual social capital is in addition to the more common distinction, developed by Woolcock (2001), between bonding, bridging and linking forms of social capital. Bonding capital here refers to more ‘*exclusive*’ forms of social capital, a form of ‘*sociological superglue*’ that reinforces identity and strong in-group loyalty, while bridging capital is more akin to ‘*WD-40*’. It is ‘*inclusive*’ and acts as a lubricant to bring people together across greater social distances, while

linking capital reaches out to unlike people in dissimilar situations. For those, such as Edwards et al. (2003), who stress the importance of understanding power and inequality, bonding social capital operates as a resource for poorer, ethnically homogenous communities, protecting them from market inequalities, but potentially also providing, richer, exclusive communities with the means to consolidate their advantages. Bridging social capital can offer ways of building trust across different communities, reducing inequalities between communities and facilitating social mobility.

While Ferlander's differentiation between collective and individual social capital can be a helpful analytical tool, it is not necessary to prioritise one over the other. Both could have a part to play in gaining a full understanding of the concept and its role. Of greater significance here may be her observation that the great majority of research into social capital has focused on examining the concept in relation to adults. Comparatively few studies have addressed children and young people and those that have mainly concentrate on adolescents. Even here data is often collected from parents or teachers acting as proxies for young people (e.g. Goddard 2003). This is a significant weakness which the design of the present research must take into account.

Schaefer-McDaniel (2004) draws attention to the type of participation that may be involved for young people in a community. For example, young people may be forced

to participate in community service or attend church because their parents, teachers or other role models require them to do so. Participation is then not voluntary, but coerced. In terms of social capital, she suggests, it is more relevant to explore children's voluntary participation in organisations, which is then an outcome of social capital not a component. That of course poses particular questions when considering schools, where attendance is compulsory, although having a positive attitude to learning is much more voluntary.

The motivation of children and young people for school and schooling cannot be divorced from the social fabric in which it is embedded (Weiner 1990). Osterman (2000), in an integrative review of the literature, considers the need for students to experience belonging in the school community. She concludes that there is a range of evidence to suggest that children who experience a sense of relatedness perceive themselves to be more competent and autonomous, and have higher levels of intrinsic motivation. They have a stronger sense of identity, but are also willing to conform to and adopt established norms and values. These inner resources, in turn, predict engagement and performance.

Although she finds the research in the context of schools is less extensive than that based in the family, its findings generally appear strong and consistent. Students who experience acceptance at school are more highly motivated and engaged in learning and

more committed to school. These concepts of commitment and engagement are closely linked to student performance, and more importantly, to the quality of student learning. Those students who experience a sense of relatedness behave differently from those who do not. They have more positive attitudes toward school, classwork, teachers, and their peers. They participate more in school activities, and they invest more of themselves in the learning process. They have a stronger sense of their own social competence, and they are more likely to interact with peers and adults in positive ways.

Other literature reviews (e.g. Booker 2006) echo this broad finding of connection but also endorse the limited understanding provided by research so far of its significance in a school context. However, if a sense of belongingness is indeed important for school students, then Osterman's final point contains a warning of direct relevance to the present study:

“Unfortunately, many of the changes necessary to satisfy students' needs for belongingness involve drastic changes in the cultural values, norms, policies, and practices that dominate schooling, particularly at the secondary level”. (p. 360)

Her comment suggests the consideration that it may not be possible to define success and outcomes simply in terms of current criteria for school improvement, and this will be given further consideration in the discussion and analysis of findings in Chapter 5.

In England, Stevens et al. (2007), in a study of two London secondary schools, reinforce the finding that school contexts do matter. They found the actions schools took were important across all the dimensions of social capital and illustrated the inter-relationship between the elements of social capital discussed earlier. They also found students felt more part of a school community when they felt safe, accepted and supported, and when they were being treated fairly by staff and students. However, schools could achieve this in different ways: one school, with its “strict” ethos and structures, seemed to generate more academic support; the other generated more socio-emotional support and close and supportive relationships between students. They also found that white boys from lower socio-economic backgrounds had the lowest levels of social capital, while white girls had the lowest levels of socio-psychological resources.

The inter-relationship of school context and social capital is further reinforced in research published by the Audit Commission (2006), based on fieldwork observations and interviews in 12 locations in England. This concluded that schools, particularly in the most deprived areas, needed to be proactive in building social capital in order to overcome socio-economic disadvantage and bring about school improvement because the nature of community and neighbourhood are seen as such fundamental factors to a school’s success.

Goddard (2003) found that American schools characterised by high levels of social capital had higher pass rates for their students in state-mandated assessments of mathematics and writing, although he could not find a strong statistical correlation for citizenship, reading and science. Despite much work on the effects of social capital within education, Goddard points to an ongoing need to examine how social capital develops as opposed to more studies of its effects, and to understand whether and how it can be developed independent of socio-economic status.

The link between social capital and socio-economic status, and to what extent the two can be separated, is important. If the one is simply a reflection of the other, it lends support to Fine's view that the use of the concept adds nothing significant. In addition, our tools of measurement to detect any relationship may not be adequate. Edwards et al. (2003: 21) comment sharply, "*socio-economic variables remain central to educational attainment, but this is a point that tends to get lost among the identification of 'new' processes in complex multi-level multivariate analyses*". This criticism of statistical devices such as contextual value-added, strongly argued by Gorard (2010), was discussed in the Introduction (p.8).

John (2005) reports on a panel survey of 1,249 15–17 year olds in 27 English schools, testing whether social capital, both at the individual and at the school level, tends to

increase grades and examination performance. His analysis concludes that individual-level trust and voluntary action improve pupil performance, defined as GCSE examination success, but that the parental networks of some young people, particularly those from low socio-economic status families, have negative rather than positive consequences, in particular through the negative aspects of bonding social capital, as exemplified in gang culture. Thus, John suggests, closed networks may only be advantageous in education if combined with positive attitudes towards study, perhaps through the norms of more highly educated and high socio-economic status (SES) families. He concludes:

“Social capital is thus not a simple good, nor has universal benefit—much depends on the context, the social good in question and the type of social capital that is available. Rather than being an independent factor, the impact of social capital is intimately bound up with the processes that generate inequalities in societies”. (p. 652)

Schaefer-McDaniel (2004) tries to construct a synthesis of theoretical frameworks around social capital in relation to young people, comprising three elements: social networks/interactions and sociability; trust and reciprocity; and sense of belonging. Criticising adult-led constructs, which place emphasis on the quantity of interactions that an individual experiences, she argues that, in child development, it is the quality of relationships that is more important. This insight is particularly pertinent to the first two research questions (RQ1, RQ2), which ask how leaders build trust and engagement, and how trust and engagement affects schools and wider communities.

She goes on to highlight two further areas where there is insufficient research into variables affecting social capital. The first concerns how individuals of different genders, ethnicities, and cultures experience and view social capital. The second is that research on social capital has primarily focused on poor communities, while the role of social capital in wealthy communities has been ignored. The research design needs to take some cognisance of this.

An important question lies at the heart of this discussion of the variables that may interact with social capital and the limitations in our understanding of these in relation to schools and education: to what extent is social capital something that is a given, fixed and static? If it is, then its value as a construct may be limited because it is not susceptible to intervention. However, that is a very deterministic argument which makes any understanding of social progress problematic. If social capital is not fixed, if, in fact, it is susceptible to change, then it becomes crucial to understand how it is developed or activated, and how the effect of positive social capital is then fostered and the effect of negative social capital is diminished (RQ2).

2.3 Trust

The concept of trust is a key component in most understandings of social capital, including the definition preferred to guide this research (p.37). This review considers

trust initially from the perspective of organisational development theory, before turning to inter-personal dimensions and more specifically to what is known of its operation in schools from the education research literature.

Like the over-arching concept of social capital, trust is a strongly value-laden construct. The various definitions of trust considered in the Introduction illustrate that there has been a sustained period of interest in the role of trust in research into organisational development in particular, although the findings may lack overall coherence (McEvily et al. 2003).

Dirks and Ferrin's (2001) review of the literature points to two distinct means through which trust generates benefits for an organisation and its members. The dominant approach recognises the direct effects that trust has on such important organisational phenomena as communication, conflict management, negotiation processes, satisfaction, and performance (both individual and unit). A second, less well-studied, perspective points to the enabling effects of trust, whereby trust creates or enhances the conditions, such as positive interpretations of another's behaviour, that are conducive to obtaining organisational outcomes like co-operation and higher performance.

Pirson and Malhotra (2007) argue that research on organisational trust has not distinguished between the potentially varying bases of trust across different stakeholder groups, such as employees, clients, or investors. They propose a framework that distinguishes among organisational stakeholders along two dimensions: intensity (the power of which might be high or low) and locus (that is, trust that might be directed internally or externally). Their framework also seeks to identify which of six potential antecedents of trust (benevolence, integrity, competence, reliability, transparency, and identification) will be relevant to different types of stakeholder. They test the predictions of this framework using survey responses from 1,296 respondents across four stakeholder groups (investors, employees, clients and suppliers) from four different organizations, and find that different antecedents of trust are relevant for different stakeholder types, supporting the validity of their intensity and locus dimensions.

This echoes the analysis of Khodyakov (2007) referred to in the Introduction, who also stresses the multi-dimensional nature of trust. There is one important consequence of these two analyses in relation to this study. It is essential to understand that these different processes, operating in different ways for different stakeholder groups, will be happening simultaneously, not in isolation from each other, within any organisation. The resulting dynamic is therefore extremely complex.

Echoing Ferlander's (2007) account of social capital above, trust can be viewed both from individual and collective perspectives. Bottery (2003) proposes a normative hierarchy of four types of trust, connected but sequential, all of which may exist both at the interpersonal as well as at the meso (organisational) and macro (societal) level. He characterises these as:

- **Calculative trust**

This is its most basic form, and is an inevitable part of people managing everyday risk or uncertainty based on personal calculation of risk. It involves calculation of a range of uncertain or unknown factors in a situation leading to a decision whether or not to grant trust. Bottery characterises this form of trust using the metaphor of the logician.

- **Practice trust**

Engaging in continued interaction increases the amount of knowledge about a person or organisation, allowing more accurate calculations of trustworthiness, at the same time allowing promises made to carry more weight and building a stronger ethical foundation for the relationship. His chosen metaphor is the gardener.

- **Role trust**

This form of trust emphasises the ethical component of trust, through which individuals can be trusted quickly to fulfil their role because of known shared ethical foundations. This is the metaphor of the professional.

- **Identificatory trust**

Trust at this level has developed to involve a level of intensity of inter-personal relationship not found at other levels and of necessity applicable to only a very limited number of relationships. It draws on preceding elements but involves emotional commitment. The chosen metaphor is of a group of musicians (not individuals) playing together.

Trust is thus seen as a developmental process, both in terms of complexity of calculation and in addition in ethical and affective modes of functioning. Bottery concludes:

“the integration of macro trust by the individual into their view of life is not performed in some rational utilitarian calculative way; it is instead a long-term, deeply existential process, more felt than reasoned, but one which underpins much of the individual’s confidence in the rightness of the world” (p.256).

This is a further very helpful pointer to the complexity of interaction between individuals and organisations, including schools, and to the research challenge in trying to understand the development and effects of trust through the research questions. It is, though, important also to note the observation of Morrow (2002) that elements of trust and reciprocity located at the neighbourhood (collective) level may not have much relevance to young people, who instead locate trust and reciprocity in individual or group close relations, perhaps gangs for some, rather than in neighbourhoods per se. In other words, the balance of focus for social capital may be different when considering young people as compared with adults. A further consequence relevant to the present

study would then be the need to include young people directly, not just their parents or teachers, in any research in this area. This has not commonly happened.

Seashore Louis (2007) notes that trust has an effect on organisational (meso) outcomes in a variety of settings, but the process by which trust becomes an active ingredient in change is less well studied. She highlights three variables related to leadership that may warrant further investigation as significant enhancers of trust. They are:

- perceived influence over how decisions are made;
- a sense that decision makers take stakeholder interests into account;
- an agreed and objective measure of the effects of implemented decisions.

All three may not need to be present at all times, and the presence of even just one may be regarded by teachers as evidence of trustworthiness. However, the absence of all three appears to breed mistrust. She suggests most studies that address trust largely ignore distrust, noting also that it is, for example, entirely possible to have misplaced trust, or trust invested in an unworthy object, as well as too much trust.

In an influential study of high performing elementary schools in Chicago, Bryk and Schneider (2002), drawing on a 10-year city-wide body of quantitative and qualitative data on school improvement allied to longitudinal case studies of 12 high schools, found

a high correlation between the levels of trust in a school and its capacity to improve.

Schools with a high level of trust at the outset of a programme to improve maths and reading had a 1 in 2 chance of improving. Schools with relatively low levels of trust had only a 1 in 7 chance of improving.

Schools in the latter category that did improve made significant gains in their levels of trust as a pre-requisite to raising attainment. Bryk and Schneider identify '*relational trust*' as the key driver in this improvement. It is perhaps most akin to Bottery's role trust, and they pinpoint it as having the following key components:

- **Respect** – recognising the integrity of all of those involved in a child's education and their mutual interdependence.
- **Competence** – professional capability and the effective discharge of role and responsibility.
- **Personal regard for other** – mutual dependence and caring leading to a sense of interdependence and reciprocity.
- **Integrity** – consistency, reliability and a clear sense of moral purpose

In other studies, the presence of trust has been found to be beneficial in areas such as student achievement (e.g. Goddard 2003), leadership success (e.g. Hoy et al. 2006) and positive inter-personal relationships (e.g. Hoy and Sabo 1998). Similarly, writers such as Hargreaves (2003) have highlighted the contribution trust between peers plays in the

sharing of good practice and learning between professionals. Cosner (2009), in a study of 11 American school principals, found they all regarded the cultivation of collegial trust as a central feature of their capacity-building work and school improvement agendas.

There is also some emerging evidence that trust matters in facilitating student learning, although it is limited. In America, Mitra (2009) reports two linked studies, the first a 3-year embedded case study in a large comprehensive San Francisco high school, and the other a multiple case study which tests these initial findings in 13 other high schools.

Her conclusion is clear-cut:

“In all the successful youth-adult partnerships in this study, youth valued mutual respect and responsibility as the key difference in the relationships within their youth-adult partnerships, as compared with most of their other interactions with adults”. (p. 415)

Drawing on this evidence, she writes of the need for a shift in youth-adult relationships and proposes some strategies that may contribute to bringing about such change.

Although all of the examples developed in these case studies relate to activities that lie outside the formal school curriculum, some of the implications may be transferable, as this comment from a young person in Mitra’s study hints:

“I’m closer with the staff now because I feel like I can talk to them now. The teachers will understand where you’re coming from and why you feel like this”. (p. 431)

Moloi et al (2010), in a study of three high-performing South African secondary schools, found mutual acceptance to be the primary condition for successful pedagogical dialogue. *“From the data it is evident that the teachers and learners ... are equally prepared to accept each other unconditionally” (p. 484).* By this, the researchers mean that teachers expects learners to give their very best and learners expect teachers to give their very best. As a result, learners voluntarily submit to the authority of their teachers and show continuous goodwill towards them. Both teachers and learners are equally committed to the latter’s academic success. Trust here is, significantly, reciprocal, and it is both voluntary and earned.

Yet, overall, comparatively little still seems to be known about the structural, cultural, and individual characteristics of teachers and schools that promote mutual trust with students (Tschannen-Moran 2004). These unknowns include the nature of teacher and student values and norms that may foster mutual trust; which teaching styles may be more or less conducive to the development of mutual trust; and the nature of any community factors that might be linked to levels of student trust.

The emphasis on mutuality and reciprocity in student-teacher relationships highlighted in all three examples above may provide an important clue to deeper understanding. Much research about trust appears to see it as something predominantly passive on the

part of those giving it. The definitions of trust collected by Dietz and Hartog (2006), highlighted in the Introduction and drawn from different writers between 1972 and 1998, all share frequent emphasis on ‘the other’, ‘confidence’ in them, and ‘expectation’ about them. But this in itself seems insufficient to describe the multi-layered and reciprocal notion that has begun to emerge from this review of more recent literature. A full understanding may need an equal focus on some sense of engagement, not mere reciprocity. This implies something about one’s own active contribution, alongside mere trust in leadership to do what is expected or to respond to that. If that understanding is correct, it would then be equally true for all the stakeholders in a school - parents, staff, students, and the wider community.

2.4 Stakeholder engagement

The various understandings of stakeholder engagement mapped by Greenwood (2007), and set out in the Introduction, stem originally from a concept first used in a 1963 internal memorandum at the Stanford Research Institute. It defined stakeholders simply as *"those groups without whose support the organisation would cease to exist"*.

Post, Preston, and Sachs (2002: 19), among many who pick up from this lead, expand the definition in their development of stakeholder theory:

"The stakeholders in a corporation are the individuals and constituencies that contribute, either voluntarily or involuntarily, to its wealth-creating capacity and activities, and that are therefore its potential beneficiaries and/or risk bearers".

The theory behind these definitions began as a response to the belief that the owners of shares in its stock should be the prime beneficiaries of an organisation's activities. That is, the company should be run in such a way as to maximise the wealth of shareholders. Stakeholder theory, on the other hand, suggests that there is a multiplicity of groups having a stake in the operation of a firm, all of whom merit consideration in managerial decision-making.

Phillips (2003) seeks to provide a moral foundation for stakeholder theory. He makes a distinction between normatively and derivatively legitimate stakeholders. Normative stakeholders are those to whom the organisation has a direct moral obligation to attend to their well-being. They provide the answer to the seminal stakeholder query: 'For whose benefit ought this organisation to be managed?'. Normative stakeholders in a business context might typically be financiers, employees, customers, suppliers, and local communities.

By contrast, derivative stakeholders are those groups or individuals who can either harm or benefit the organisation, but to whom the organisation has no direct moral obligation

as normative stakeholders. This latter group might include, for example, competitors, activists, terrorists, and the media. The organisation is not managed for the benefit of derivative stakeholders, but, to the extent that they may influence it or its normative stakeholders, managers are obliged to take account of them in their decision-making.

Phillips (1997) also proposes a "principle of stakeholder fairness", based on the philosopher Rawls' theory of justice. His principle states:

“Whenever persons or groups of persons voluntarily accept the benefits of a mutually beneficial scheme of co-operation requiring sacrifice or contribution on the parts of the participants and there exists the possibility of free-riding, obligations of fairness are created among the participants in the co-operative scheme in proportion to the benefits accepted”. (p. 57)

Importantly, this principle of stakeholder fairness indicates that obligations exist. It also identifies which parties are to be included in the discourse on the legitimacy of norms. The principle is not, however, used to derive the norms themselves. In addition, fair distribution of value does not mean an equal distribution.

Most studies that have made use of comprehensive stakeholder models are supportive of a positive relationship between managing for stakeholders and business performance (e.g. Berman et al. 1999; Hillman and Keim, 2001; Sisodia et al. 2007). Harrison et al. (2010) suggest that although companies that adopt a ‘*managing for stakeholder*’

approach have achieved some sustainable competitive advantage, the effect is neither universal nor fully understood. Summarising the state of the evidence, they conclude that, while there is some empirical support for a positive relationship between managing for stakeholders and performance, the underlying reasons need further testing.

A number of factors appear to limit success. These factors include over-allocating value to stakeholders, an inability to measure value created using accounting measures, a lack of ability to translate knowledge into value-creating opportunities, measuring value-creation over too short a time-frame, and the potential for opportunism.

It is now necessary to consider whether the ideas and analyses underlying stakeholder theory that emanate from its business origins have any relevance in developing an understanding of stakeholding, and the mutual roles, rights and responsibilities of stakeholders, in the context of schools. The notions of voluntarism, cooperation, proportionality and mutual benefit, contained in Phillips' principle of fairness, seem here particularly significant to explore.

Schools, like businesses, are charged with creating value, albeit a much more complex notion of value than merely finance. This may perhaps be on behalf of their country, if state funded, or perhaps fee payers in the private sector. In considering the relevance

of business insights, and the definitions and principles behind them, for school stakeholding, it will be necessary to be aware of a number of questions. Who are legitimate stakeholders in their enterprise? What duties attach to the role, and are they different for different stakeholders? What does the school owe its stakeholders? What is the source or justification of those responsibilities? And are there moral duties of any sort that might take precedence?

With these questions in mind, there are four groups who might be considered as likely stakeholders in schools most directly; parents, students, staff, and perhaps some broader category, which, as a catch-all for the moment, will be termed the wider community. The literature review now considers each of these groups in turn.

2.4.1 Parents

Parental choice has been a watch-word for successive UK governments, as evidenced, for instance, in the 1992 White Paper ‘Choice and Diversity’ and the 2005 White Paper ‘Better Schools for All’, where it is seen as a key policy objective in terms of parental involvement in schools and a driver in school improvement. Most often, though, choice may mean, in practice, a parent expressing a preference for a child to attend a particular school, a purchasing decision, perhaps akin to buying a company product or deciding at which supermarket to shop. This concept of choice of school is in itself complex

(Bradley and Taylor 2010), but the notion of stakeholding as outlined above would look for more than one moment of purchasing decision in the relationship between parent and school.

There is a wide-ranging literature which considers the ways in which parents and schools engage with each other. All share a view that it is a through a deeper form of engagement than a single act of choosing that parental engagement makes a difference. Desforges and Abouchar (2003), conducting an extensive international review of the research literature looking at the impact of parental engagement on learner achievement, report on 160 specific articles or reports, concluding:

“Research affords a clear model of how parental involvement works ... In essence, parenting has its influence indirectly through shaping the child’s self concept as a learner and through setting high aspirations”. (p. 5)

Harris and Goodall (2007), reporting on case studies in 20 English schools, equally affirm that parental engagement in children’s learning is a powerful contributor to raising achievement, but make an important distinction between the notion of engagement in learning as opposed to involvement in schooling.

Desforges and Abouchar’s findings suggest differences between parents in their level of engagement are associated with social class, poverty, health, and also with parental perception of their role and their levels of confidence in fulfilling it. The extent and form

of parental involvement is also strongly influenced by family social class, maternal level of education, material deprivation, maternal psycho-social health and single parent status and, to a lesser degree, by family ethnicity. Parental involvement is also strongly positively influenced by the child's level of attainment: the higher the level of attainment, the more parents are involved. It may be the relationship between these two factors is a good example of a virtuous self-reinforcing circle. Finally, it appears the extent of parental involvement diminishes as the child gets older, but, significantly for this present study, is strongly influenced at all ages by the child themselves taking a very active mediating role.

They conclude that the research consistently shows that parental involvement in the form of '*at-home good parenting*' has a significant positive effect on children's achievement and adjustment, even after all other factors shaping school attainment have been taken out of the equation. '*Good parenting*' here includes:

- the provision of a secure and stable environment,
- intellectual stimulation,
- parent-child discussion,
- good models of constructive social and educational values,
- high aspirations relating to personal fulfillment and good citizenship,
- contact with schools to share information,
- participation in school events,
- participation in the work of the school,
- participation in school governance.

Harris and Goodall (2007: 287) draw the implication that parents need to be seen by schools as integral to the learning, and need to know that they matter in this way.

Therefore, schools need to provide guidance and support to enable that engagement to happen, with the home as the focus.

However, a 2011 IPSOS MORI study for UNICEF UK (IPSOS Nairn, 2011), following up the 2007 UNICEF report highlighted in the Introduction (p.7), which showed the UK at the overall bottom of comparator countries in terms of children's wellbeing, suggests the problem does not just lie with schools. This study, based on detailed interviews with 250 children aged 8-13 in England, Sweden and Spain, paints a complex picture of the relationship between well-being, materialism and inequality across the three countries.

It concludes:

“Children want time with their parents, good relationships with their friends and lots of stimulating things to do. In the UK, we find parents struggling to find time to be with their children or to help them participate in sporting and creative activities, but instead feeling compelled to purchase consumer goods which are often neither wanted nor treasured. Whilst we see all of these dynamics in Spain and Sweden, the pressure to consume appears much less and the resilience much greater than it is in the UK”. (p. 6)

In American schools, the work of Epstein and followers has been particularly influential in defining and researching what they have moved away from calling '*parental involvement*' and have come to call more broadly '*school, family and community partnerships*'. Epstein (1995) articulates six components of engagement, which she

conceives of as overlapping spheres of activity:

1. Parenting

This means helping all families establish home environments to support children as students.

2. Communicating

This includes designing effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school learning programs and children's progress.

3. Volunteering

This encompasses recruitment, training, work, and schedules to involve families as volunteers and audiences at the school or in other locations to support students and school programs.

4. Learning at home

This means involving families with their children in learning activities at home, including homework and other curriculum-linked activities and decisions.

5. Decision-making

This involves including families as participants in school decisions, governance, and advocacy through PTAs, school councils, committees, and other parent organisations.

6. Collaborating with the community

That is, identifying and integrating resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development.

A range of research practitioners, (e.g. Sanders 2001, Deslandes 2006), has examined this model in practice, developing its research base. Reviewing progress, Epstein et al. (2009), like Desforges and Abouchaar previously, identify the central role students play in the success of the model: “*Studies indicate that students are crucial for the success of school, family, and community partnerships*” (ibid. p.8.).

Christenson and Sheridan (2001) also contend that the literature supports the conclusion that “*families are essential, not just desirable*” to the educational success of their children. They indicate that policies addressing family involvement are often lacking in schools, and that programs that do exist are often “*viewed as an appendage rather than an integral part of school practices*” (p .58). They recommend an approach to family involvement that:

- 1) focuses on the relationship;
- 2) recognises that collaboration is an attitude and not just an activity;
- 3) creates a vehicle to co-construct the bigger picture about children’s school performance and development;
- 4) shares information and resources;
- 5) establishes meaningful co-roles for the partners.

More recently, Goodall and Vorhaus (2011) reviewed 1200 studies, mainly from the UK, focusing particularly on interventions aimed at supporting parental engagement and which also offer evidence on educational outcomes. They found an increasing number of the general features of parental engagement strategies are supported by evidence derived from high quality research. As a result, they identified four key features of effective engagement:

- ***Planning***

By this, they mean parental engagement must be planned for and embedded in a whole school strategy, including: a planning cycle; a comprehensive needs analysis; the establishment of mutual priorities; ongoing monitoring and evaluation of interventions; and a public awareness process to help parents and teachers understand and commit to a strategic plan.

- ***Leadership***

By this, they mean effective leadership of parental engagement is essential to the success of programmes and strategies, often led by a senior leader, although leadership may also be distributed in the context of a programme or cluster of schools and services working to a clear strategic direction.

- ***Collaboration and engagement***

By this, they mean active collaboration with parents and should be pro-active rather than reactive, sensitive to the circumstances of all families, recognise the contributions parents can make, and aim to empower parents.

- ***Sustained improvement***

By this, they mean parental engagement strategy should be the subject of ongoing support, monitoring and development, sustained support, resourcing and training, community involvement at all levels of management, and a continuous system of evidence-based development and review.

The challenges to success they also identified include parents' own perceptions of school and personal barriers, and suitable experience, knowledge and sustainability from the school side.

In summary, both the significance of parental engagement, but more particularly for this research some notion of parents as stakeholders with some mutual roles and responsibilities, emerges clearly from the research literature. Associated with this is a clear focus on the significance of home, and of the role and agency of students themselves. However, Foster (2005) adds a note of caution. Reporting two case studies, she highlights a mismatch of expectations and understanding:

“Although the principal and teacher respondents believed attempts were made to include parents and students in the goal-setting and decision-making in both schools, students and parents overall felt excluded from the important work of leadership for school improvement”. (p.50)

She concludes there is little empirical study of how these members perceive their role and participation in leading and influencing school success.

2.4.2 Students

Thomson and Holdsworth (2003), from an Australian perspective, helpfully identify five major ways in which the phrase ‘student participation’ has been used in policy terms:

1. Participation meaning being physically present at school, measured through attendance and retention data. Policy measures focus on truancy or interventions against early school leaving as responses to perceived deficits in school presence.
2. Participation meaning being involved in school and taking part in school activities and in lessons. Here the term works like the notion of engagement and as the opposite of alienation.
3. Participation meaning involvement in formal school decision-making: this can range from being consulted occasionally by staff, to formalized student councils and forums, to representative places on school committees.
4. Participation meaning initiating, deciding and acting in the school and beyond the school boundaries. In schools, such activities are often spoken about as 'active citizenship' through which students engage with the school and/or classroom as a polity, and with community organizations and local government.
5. Participation meaning community or social activism and 'organising'. This participation does not often feature in official policy texts, but does sometimes find a place in schools as projects concerned with human rights, the environment, social justice and local, state or national issues. It also extends to political action and resistance, as in the engagement of school students in school-sanctioned and unsanctioned protests against, for instance, the invasion of Iraq.

This account has many similarities with other analyses (e.g. in America, Finn (1989)). However, there appear to be significant problems in schools achieving even the lower levels of participation. Willms et al. (2009) suggested that, in Canadian schools,

intellectual engagement falls during the middle school years and remains at a low level throughout secondary school. This pattern is also reflected in student attendance, which falls from the age of 11 to 18. Another large-scale study of over 350,000 students in 40 states conducted by Indiana State University in 2009 (National Study of Student Engagement) found that:

- 98 per cent of students feel bored at school at least some of the time.
- Two-thirds of students feel bored every day.
- Half of students have skipped school.
- A quarter of students feel unchallenged by lessons.
- A fifth of students have considered dropping out.

Meanwhile, in research undertaken for the UK government Gilbey et al. (2008) report that 10 per cent of British students claimed they 'hated' school, and that this is evident in disproportionate levels amongst students from poorer backgrounds. The latest figures from PISA (OECD 2013), using data collected up until 2010, are perhaps a little more encouraging for the UK, suggesting only about 5% of 15 year olds think school has been a waste of time, one of the lowest figures of OECD countries, although a much more significant 20% think school has done little to prepare them for life after school.

Whatever the difficulties associated with student engagement, there has been a developing research interest into what has been termed pupil, learner, or student voice (Cook-Sather 2006). In England, this notion, particularly articulated by Rudduck (1999), has provided a key focus for thinking about student engagement. Much of the attention given to this has come from the perspective of school improvement and been justified in those terms. Flutter (2007) suggests the basic premise of pupil voice is that listening and responding to what pupils say about their experiences as learners can be a powerful tool in helping teachers to investigate and improve their own practice, while Rudduck (2003) argues that this approach can be an important catalyst for change by encouraging teachers to explore, and to think about, what happens in the classroom:

“Evidence from various projects we have worked on suggests that hearing what pupils have to say about teaching, learning and schooling enables teachers to look at things from the pupil perspective—and the world of school can look very different from this angle. Being prepared—and being able to see the familiar differently and to contemplate alternative approaches, role and practices—is the first step towards fundamental change in classrooms and schools”. (p. 141)

Rudduck and Fielding (2006: 133-134) reviewing the scope of work on this theme suggest that school improvement is probably the dominant justification for consultation and participation in the present performance-dominated climate. However, Ranson (2000) links student voice to the idea of the school as a democratic community, the confidence that young people can develop in such a setting, and their agency in helping improve the conditions of learning. He thus places voice in the context of the ‘*remaking of communities*’, both within and beyond school, suggesting that what voice offers is the

opportunity for young people to discover and affirm personal perspective and also to learn to cooperate and to negotiate:

“While much public policy focuses upon the skills young people will need to enter and survive in the labour market, less emphasis is accorded to the significance of encouraging them to find the voice and practices of cooperative agency indispensable to flourishing within a democratic civil society”. (ibid. p.263)

Echoing themes about the limitations of current secondary school structure that have already emerged in other sections of this literature review, Rudduck and Fielding also note:

“Being able to ‘have a say’ on things that matter to you is important but the implications of ‘finding a voice’ are greater; they engage with issues of personal identity. Some students are aware of the difficulty of finding your own voice within the traditional organisation of large schools”. (ibid. p. 224)

Thomson and Gunter (2006) further categorise the distinctions between the two understandings of the purpose of student voice, at the same time breaking down the notion of voice into three components (Figure 5). The issue of power, highlighted here in the phrases *‘if teachers choose’* and *‘students have a right’*, complicates the idea of student engagement perhaps more than any other stakeholder group because of the role that a school has in loco parentis, and the relative immaturity of students. It might be argued that part of the very raison d’être of schools and the staff who work in them assumes such immaturity as its starting point. Rudduck and Fielding nevertheless suggest student voice initiatives require that we review our notion of childhood and the *‘ideology of immaturity’* surrounding it (ibid. p. 225).

	1. Standards and improvement discourse	2. Rights discourse
(a) Consulting pupils	1(a) Students can, if teachers choose, provide information for local interpretation of national policy. This is desirable because it is likely to lead to more effective change	2(a) Students have a right to be involved in locally determined activities with/against policy. They can expect suggestions they make to be heard and acted on
(b) Pupils and school self evaluation	1(b) Students can, if teachers choose, be involved in local interpretation with/against national policy. This is desirable because it is likely to lead to more effective change	2(b) Students have a right to be involved in locally determined activities with/against policy. They can expect suggestions they make to be heard and acted on
(c) Pupils as researchers	1(c) Students can, if teachers choose, be involved in local research for local interpretation with/against national policy. This is desirable because it is likely to lead to more effective change	2(c) Students have a right to determine the nature, scope and conduct of research they do, and to be involved in making recommendations and be involved in their implementation

Figure 5: Analysis of main understandings of student voice.
Source: Thomson and Gunter 2006

The distinction between the school improvement line of justification and the democratic, personal development line of justification serves to highlight a tension that exists in relation to all stakeholder groups. It poses the question ‘on whose terms is the engagement sought and established?’

The answer could be the ‘school’, however this term is understood, or the stakeholder, be that the student, or indeed the parent, or the member of staff. The purpose of engagement may simply be viewed as to further the purposes of the organisation, or secure greater compliance with those purposes, or it may instead be to help shape those purposes and the organisation along with them.

Fielding (2006) offers a four-fold typology for examining the way schools use student voice, relating it particularly to the functional and personal dimensions of their organisation. He captures this in a table (Figure 6).

Schools as impersonal organizations	Schools as affective communities	Schools as high performance learning organizations	Schools as person-centred learning communities
<i>The functional marginalizes the personal</i>	<i>The personal marginalizes the functional</i>	<i>The personal is used for the sake of the functional</i>	<i>The functional is used for the sake of the personal</i>
<i>Organizational type</i> Mechanistic organization	<i>Organizational type</i> Affective community	<i>Organizational type</i> Learning organization	<i>Organizational type</i> Learning community
<i>Characteristic mode</i> Efficient	<i>Characteristic mode</i> Restorative	<i>Characteristic mode</i> Effective	<i>Characteristic mode</i> Morally and instrumentally successful
<i>Student voice</i> Restricted formal consultation making current arrangements more efficient	<i>Student voice</i> Ambient listening fostering closer understanding of those involved	<i>Student voice</i> Wide-ranging formal + informal consultation to make current arrangements even more effective	<i>Student voice</i> Wide-ranging formal + informal engagement to enhance the development of wise persons

Figure 6: The interpersonal orientation of organisations
Source: Fielding (2006)

He then focuses on two of these responses in particular, the ‘high-performing’, in which the personal is used for the sake of the functional, and ‘person-centred’, where the functional is used for the sake of the personal (*p.302*). His distinction is at root about a school’s motivation for adopting student voice, and whether this is done for particular kinds of adult purposes, for instance whether it is more to enhance the school’s effectiveness or reputation, or whether it is more to help young people develop as “*good persons*” (*p. 307*).

It is clear that the understanding of student voice developed so far does not necessarily illustrate commitment to disperse and distribute leadership processes or to include students as agents of educational leadership. However, once data-gathering in the research study schools had begun, it was evident that in each of them there was a distinct language and practice developing in relation to student engagement and voice which was best captured by the term ‘student leadership’. As a result, this became a significant focus of enquiry in the second year.

There is a very limited research literature around this term, although it is possible to argue its origins go back to the prefect system introduced at Eton College in the sixteenth century, later modified into a more humane and democratic form by Arnold at Rugby School (Curtis and Boulton 1964). Lavery and Hine (2012) argue that the involvement of the school principal is the central catalyst for the development of student

leadership, and indeed the particular model adopted, but that this might take a variety of practical forms along a spectrum from direct personal involvement to indirect support of other staff who develop and support student leadership programmes.

Student leadership can involve various approaches from formal elections and representations through which students engage in formal decision-making to less structured means through which student leadership practices diffuse and extend beyond schools to engage with the community (Mertkan-Ozunlu and Mullan 2007, Lilley 2010). It is also notable that commitment to student participation in decision-making does not often appear to demonstrate commitment to student leadership training and very few schools provide any type of formal leadership training for students (Funk 2002).

2.4.3 Staff

Macleod and Clarke (2009), in a review for the UK government, found more than 50 definitions of employee engagement. Reviewing these, they emphasise the importance of reciprocity in any understanding, and conclude:

“We believe it is most helpful to see employee engagement as a workplace approach designed to ensure that employees are committed to their organisation’s goals and values, motivated to contribute to organisational success, and are able at the same time to enhance their own sense of well-being”. (p. 9)

Macey and Schneider (2008) are critical of the lack of rigorous research to support the benefits claimed for employee engagement, maintaining that much of the relatively limited research base lacks a clear conceptual framework. They argue that across the range of definitions used, the common elements are that it is a desirable condition, has an organisational purpose, and connotes involvement, commitment, passion, enthusiasm, focused effort, and energy. The concept thus includes both attitudinal and behavioural components, the antecedents of which are located in the conditions under which people work, and the consequences of which are thought to be of value to organisational effectiveness.

Much of the evidence about staff engagement in education research begins from the perspective of leadership. The models of transformational leadership, participative leadership, distributed leadership, and teacher leadership all address in some degree the issue of staff as stakeholders and their engagement in that capacity.

Gunter (2001) states that transformational leadership is about building a unified common interest between leaders and followers. She and Allix (2000) both attribute this concept to Burns (1978). Leithwood et al. (1999) provide a definition of this transformational model of leadership:

“...(it) assumes that the central focus of leadership ought to be the commitments and capacities of organisational members. Higher levels of personal commitment to organisational goals and greater capacities for accomplishing those goals are assumed to result in extra effort and greater productivity”. (p.9)

Participative leadership, however, is concerned primarily with the process of decision-making. The approach supports the notion of shared or distributed leadership and is linked to democratic values and empowerment. Participative leadership is thought to lead to improved outcomes through greater commitment to the implementation of agreed decisions. It is thus justified on the basis both of increasing school effectiveness and accordance with democratic principles.

Participative leadership may also be conceptualised as ‘distributed’. Neuman and Simmons (2000) argue there should be a move away from ‘single person’ leadership to an approach that stresses collaborative decision-making:

“Distributed leadership calls on everyone associated with schools ... to take responsibility for student achievement and to assume leadership roles in areas in which they are competent and skilled” (p.10).

Copland (2001) makes a similar point in claiming that participative leadership has the potential to ease the burden on principals and avoid the expectation that the formal leader will be a ‘superhead’.

For Harris (2003), teacher leadership essentially refers to the exercise of leadership by teachers, regardless of position or designation. Teacher leadership is centrally concerned with forms of empowerment and agency that are also at the core of distributed leadership theory (e.g. Gronn 2000; Spillane et al. 2001).

Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) see teacher leadership as having three main facets:

- leadership of students or other teachers: e.g. facilitator, coach, mentor, trainer, curriculum specialist;
- leadership of operational tasks: keeping the school organised and moving towards its goals, through such roles as Head of Department, action researcher, member of task forces;
- leadership through decision-making or : e.g. membership of school improvement teams, membership of committees; instigator of partnerships with business, higher education institutions, or parent teacher associations.

Harris (2003: 316) summarises the analysis made by Day and Harris (2003). This suggests that there are four discernible and discrete dimensions of the teacher leadership role:

1. The translation of the principles of school improvement into the practices of individual classrooms.

2. A focus on participative leadership, where all teachers feel part of the change or development and have a sense of ownership.
3. The mediating role in which teacher leaders are important sources of expertise and information. They are able to draw critically upon additional resources and expertise if required, and to seek external assistance.
4. The forging of close relationships with individual teachers through which mutual learning takes place.

She goes on to suggest:

“The implications arising from putting the word ‘teacher’ in front of ‘leadership’ ... (imply) a fundamental redistribution of power and influence within the school as an organisation. This ‘distributed form’ of leadership has important repercussions for the way in which organisational change is understood, enacted and secured. It implies that teachers have the agency to lead change and to guide organisational development and improvement”. (p.322)

York-Barr and Duke (2004), however, conclude:

“Empirical literature reveals numerous small-scale, qualitative studies that describe dimensions of teacher leadership practice, teacher leader characteristics, and conditions that promote and challenge teacher leadership. Less is known about how teacher leadership develops and about its effects. In addition, the construct of teacher leadership is not well defined, conceptually or operationally”. (p. 255)

Meanwhile, Leithwood and Jantzi (2000), in a replication study of survey data drawn from 1818 teachers and 6490 students, provide a greater note of caution:

“Results of this study are consistent in many respects with evidence provided by other large-scale, quantitative studies of principal leadership effects. To date, however, there have been very few large-scale quantitative studies of teacher leadership effects. So the representativeness of our findings concerning such effects remains to be tested by others. Advocates of teacher leadership may find these results disappointing, however. They do not confirm the beliefs of such advocates, or the implications typically drawn from qualitative studies of teacher leadership”. (p. 429)

Indeed their research leads them finally to question the whole concept of teacher leadership as conceived in the literature. They conclude by suggesting it may devalue both the status of teaching and the concept of leadership. One might add that it also tends to assume that teachers are the only staff of significance in a school.

Whatever way the debate about terminology moves forward, all the various models have in common an understanding that organisational effectiveness requires staff who display, to use Macey and Schneider’s phrase, *“passion, commitment and involvement”* (p.7).

It is one of the tasks of leadership to create the climate in which that can happen.

2.4.4 Wider community

There is a considerable literature devoted to the definition of community. Raphael-Reed et al. (2008: 6) note that the term:

“...may refer to a sense of identity and belonging, to a set of social relationships with a common purpose or to a group of people with a common geographical and/or

organisational location. In the latter case there may be a sense of attachment to place but not of common identities or purpose. Indeed communities may be multi-layered, conflictual, or contested in a number of ways”.

The latter point is an important reminder for this study to note. Community is in no way a simple or painlessly positive concept. However, the broader problem of definition need not detain us long, for it is possible, for the purposes of this study, to be quite pragmatic. The Labour Government in 1997 introduced an expectation for English secondary schools designated as specialist schools – by 2010 this amounted to around 90% of all secondary schools – that a proportion of their budget should be spent on working with their community. The specification of this term included primary schools, other secondary schools, businesses, parents and local groups. In other words it was for the school to define and justify what community meant for them within certain broad parameters. That is the approach adopted in this study.

The two most recent small-scale studies of what this meant in practice within specialist schools, and its impact, were those undertaken by Raphael-Reed et al. (2008) and Dyson (2011). The earlier study found the evidence of impact on either the school or its defined community was essentially qualitative rather than quantitative, but notes that benefits to both constituencies were reported by both the school and community respondents to the research in each of the five secondary schools investigated. Dyson makes the point that understanding the impact of individual initiatives a school

undertakes may need a long time to have full effect. This also needs to be understood in terms of their contribution to the school's broader long-term over-arching aims.

In America, Sanders (2001) found less evidence at that time for the benefits of community engagement than existed for parents, although there were positive indicators. Henderson and Mapp (2002: 24) reviewing 51 studies published between 1995 and 2002 echo this finding:

“Taken as a whole, these studies found a positive and convincing relationship between family involvement and benefits for students, including improved academic achievement. The relationship holds across families of all economic, racial/ethnic backgrounds and for students of all ages. Although there is less research on the effects of community involvement, it also suggests benefits for schools, families and students, including improved achievement and behavior”.

Ainscow et al. (2012:14) reviewing a series of studies they have carried out over twenty years argue that in order to ensure a sound education for every learner, it is necessary to complement within-school developments with efforts that link schools with one another and with their wider communities. This is consistent with the case argued by Muijs (2010: 891) that:

“...even if we found all the factors that make schools more or less effective, we would still not be able to affect more than 30 percent of the variance in pupils' outcomes. It has therefore become increasingly clear that a narrow focus on the school as an institution will not be sufficient to enable work on more equitable educational outcomes to progress... Interventions will need to impact more directly on pupils' environment and life chances”.

2.5 Networks and partnership

Implicit in the previous consideration of stakeholder engagement is some notion of collaboration between stakeholders and the organisation in which they have a stake. However, the relationship between stakeholders and organisations is at root very direct, whilst collaboration can run much wider. So it may best be understood if used in relation to those whose relationship with an organisation or school is not one of stakeholding. The extent of social networks is a further key component of Putnam's concept of social capital (see p.11). The two forms this might take were defined in the Introduction to this thesis (p.19) as networks (informal) and partnerships (formal).

Coleman (2012) notes that partnership working has become commonplace between schools, and with other agencies, over the last 40 years. Similarly, Hill (2007) shows how changes in government policy have resulted in a variety of perspectives on collaboration during this time, ranging from a context of prescribed cooperation and mutual reliance during the 1970s, to one of competition and mutual suspicion during the 1980s and 1990s. From 1997 to 2010 a greater and more consistent commitment to partnership working formed the central strategy in each of the then Labour government's flagship initiatives. Indeed partnership working represented the defining theme in the 2009 Education White Paper (DCSF, 2009), which identified collaboration as critical to promoting student well-being and increasing the efficiency of schools' operations in

general. For Hopkins (2009), this shift towards partnership working represents the defining trend in schools in the 21st century.

Van Aalst's (2003) definition of networking, adopted in the Introduction (p.19) to describe less formal approaches to collaboration, highlights the range and scope of the network concept. It can apply at both the personal, team and whole-organisation levels. It encompasses both internally and externally facing links. It is dynamic in the sense that network links must be established, used and maintained to be effective.

Muijs et al. (2010a) distinguish three broad goals of inter-school networks, matched against different time-frames, and illustrate activities associated with these in a table (see Figure 7). They also highlight evidence of benefits of networks between schools and other organisations, most commonly from social care, youth work and health sectors. In addition to time frames, Muijs also points to other variables that can affect the nature of school networks, notably, geographical spread, density, external involvement, power relations and interestingly, the issue of voluntarism. This last point raises the question whether partnership is something that can be imposed, as when, currently, the DfE informs a failing school that it will have to find an academy sponsor, or indeed an outstanding school that it needs to partner a less successful school.

Goals	Activities		
	Short term	Medium term	Long term
School Improvement	Partner school shares system to target D/C ¹ borderline pupils.	School leaders support each other by sharing data and openly discussing approaches to school development. Leaders are available for support when necessary.	Schools develop joint accountability systems, collegial leadership approaches, and sustained support networks that draw in any new leaders in the network.
Broadening opportunities	Partner schools put on a joint exam preparation day.	Partner schools develop some shared courses, offering specific vocational courses in each partner school to all pupils in the partnership.	Partner schools develop joint curriculum planning systems, with development done collaboratively.
Sharing resources	Teacher brought in from other school for Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) inspection.	Teachers regularly help out in other network schools, with swapping and peer teaching common.	Joint appointments made to the network, schools collaboratively plan recruitment and succession.

Notes: ¹Pupils who are currently working at the level of a D grade but may be able to achieve a C grade in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) exams at the end of compulsory schooling in England. This is important for schools, as grades A*-C are seen as a "good" pass and treated as such for accountability purposes.

Figure 7: Goals and activities of school networks with examples in each cell drawn from the authors' research: Muijs et al (2010a)

Looking at schools internally, Penuel and Riel (2007), in a study of change in 23 Californian schools, found that the nature and quality of networks, and the extent of trust within and between, all play an important role in making change happen. The effects of wider networks and partnerships are seen by some researchers (e.g. Hands 2010, Deslandes 2006) as having significant potential for school improvement. Muijs et al. (2010a), though, are more cautious. They argue research findings taken globally suggest

differential effects in different areas. The evidence, they find, is strongest (but moderate) that collaboration can widen opportunities and help address vulnerable groups of learners; moderate that collaboration is effective in helping solve immediate problems; and modest to weak that it is effective in raising expectations.

Other doubts are expressed by Huxham and Vangen (2005), who describe the potentially frustrating nature of collaborative working in their concept of '*collaborative inertia*'. They conclude that collaboration is a seriously resource-consuming activity, only to be considered when the stakes are really worth pursuing. Weiss et al. (2002) describe how organisations often implicitly strive to retain their autonomy, and how shared or collaborative working may therefore inevitably be seen as a potential threat. Lank (2006) highlights how the notion of partnership is often used imprecisely to describe relationships that are more akin to those of customer–supplier than those of 'true' partnership. Sullivan and Skelcher (2002) suggest partnership working can also be viewed as a mechanism for increased surveillance, as partners act as a check for each other's activity and further scrutinise their actions. Thus the issue of power, again, is an implicit, and possibly under-explored, issue within collaborative working, but one which is fundamental to the relative success or failure of partnership working.

2.6 Leadership

The theme of leadership is one that has arisen in all the preceding sections of this chapter. It has also been linked to recurring themes of power and relationships. The study of Roseto suggested it is a key influence in the development of social capital. To lead is to act. The nature and direction of those actions determine the quality and effectiveness of that leadership, but that action is also determined by the context in which it takes place.

It has become commonplace to assert that the context for organisational leadership in general, and thus school leadership as well, has been through, and may still be in the midst of, a paradigm shift. Placid, relatively predictable and static worlds of yesterday have been replaced by complex, turbulent, interdependent, global knowledge societies (e.g. Friedman 2005). Changes in areas such as information technology, globalisation, and fluid demographic structures have created a social and organisational fabric that is diverse, interrelated, and dynamic in nature.

Higgs (2003) argues for a model of leadership which is relevant to this context of complexity and change that all organisations face in the early twenty-first century. He suggests it only emerges when the measure of effectiveness is changed from organisational success to the impact of the leader on followers and on the building of

capability. His argument for such a shift is underpinned by moving the dominant organisational logic from a Weberian rational/analytical one to a logic that acknowledges emotional considerations.

Faris and Outcalt (2001: 14) summarise the nature of the change they see having taken place as being one where:

“we have moved from the industrial notion that leadership is inherited by the few to the emerging post-industrial imperative that everyone has inherited the mutual responsibility of leadership”.

This echoes Bornstein and Smith (1996: 218), who assert:

“leadership is now understood by many to imply collective action, orchestrated in such a way to bring about significant change while raising the competencies and motivation of all those involved”.

The picture emerging here echoes the various descriptions of leadership considered in the Introduction where common elements also include the quality of relationships that leaders who build social capital require, as well as their sense of moral purpose. There is, in all these various accounts, an emphasis on forms of leadership that are emotionally intelligent and responsive to others, on leadership viewed as a practice rather than a role.

However, Southworth (2000), reviewing understanding of education leadership at the turn of the millennium, suggested that such thinking had not yet translated into the reality of school leadership in English schools, which he found to be based upon a set of

traditions which circumscribe the role as individualistic, proprietarial, pivotal and powerful. Where leadership is shared with others, he argues, this was largely contingent upon the headteacher's preferences and thus just a concession granted to others.

Southworth suggests that this tradition of hierarchical assumptions about power relations and organisational positions mirrors exactly power relations in the classroom, where the teacher is the pivotal player, and her or his exercise of control and authority sets the tone for all else that happens. Furthermore, these two cultures of school organisation and the classroom mutually support each other. The assumptions about power in both mirror each other.

Stakeholder views of leadership may also to some extent further reinforce this picture. Odhiambo and Hii (2012), albeit in a study based on just one Australian school, found that stakeholders (by which they meant teachers, students and parents) understood that school principals have power that comes with their role, saw this as legitimate in being able to improve and maintain a school's effectiveness, and valued this.

Yet, the impact of the role of the headteacher is perhaps not quite as strong as these dominant models suggest. Leithwood and Riehl (2003), summarising what was then known about successful school leadership in America and Canada, conclude that school leadership is most effective when focused on teaching and learning, is necessary but not

sufficient for school improvement, and can take different forms in different contexts.

Bell et al. (2003), in a review of the evidence for the impact of school headteachers on student outcomes, drawing on eight studies from six countries, found that the effect of headteachers on outcomes was largely indirect. It was mediated through the work of teachers, the organisation of the school, and relationship with parents and the wider community. They suggest that leadership that is distributed among the staff might be more likely to have an effect on the positive achievement of student outcomes. This view has also been supported by other researchers (e.g. Harris et al. 2007, Gunter 2001).

Since Southworth's review was undertaken, the concept of distributed leadership in relation to schools has gained significantly in currency and been the focus of much theoretical and empirical investigation, although one of the early advocates of this period argues that its roots go back much further and it is the heroically informed understanding of leadership of the preceding decade or so that may in fact be the aberration (Gronn 2008).

In a study for the National College of School Leadership, MacBeath, Oduro and Waterhouse (2004), set out to explore what 'distributed leadership' meant to school heads and teachers and what concrete forms it took 'on the ground'. They identified six

differing forms of distribution of leadership, which they termed:

- **formal**, that is, the handing out of roles or responsibilities within the hierarchy;
- **pragmatic**, that is, ad hoc, perhaps in response to an external event or workload;
- **strategic**, that is, distinguished by goal orientation, for instance a carefully considered approach to new appointments;
- **incremental**, that is, a progressive lessening of top-down control;
- **opportunistic**, that is, it is coming from the bottom up, is taken rather than given;
- **cultural**, where the emphasis is switched from individual leaders to a community of people working to a common end.

Whilst each of these different manifestations of leadership may be appropriate at a given time and in a given context, the study argued that the most successful leadership would convey an understanding of all of these different expressions of ‘distribution’ and would be able to operate in each mode as appropriate to the situation and to the stage of development of the school.

Gronn (2009) takes the notion of fit and context a stage further, refining his own view of the importance of distributed leadership, to suggest the possibility of hybrid leadership as a new model. In this emerging understanding, different kinds and degrees of both individual-focused and distributed patterns of leadership co-exist, at times sequentially and at times simultaneously. He thus envisages:

“a constantly shifting leadership mix and configuration, the overall composition of which should be understood as adaptive or emergent response to wider environmental or immediate situational challenges that are specific to that context”. (p. 20)

Harris and Spillane (2008: 33) also take a more measured view of the concept of distributed leadership arguing it is a diagnostic and design tool which offers *‘a lens on leadership practice within schools and between schools’*. Youngs (2009) is another to suggest that some critique is needed at this stage, and raises concerns in particular that parallel developments in the field of leadership, such as relational leadership, are being ignored and that power relations are under-emphasised.

Leadership, however it may be understood, is not necessarily confined to the school itself. It has increasingly been necessary to have an equal focus on collaborative working beyond the school, as a range of successive government policies have promoted it in one aspect or another (Hill 2007). This is notwithstanding the equal drive of successive governments to promote competition between schools beginning with the Education Reform Act 1988.

Mongon and Chapman (2012) locate collaboration and partnership directly within the model of what they term high-leverage leadership, drawing on Senge’s (1990: 64) description of leverage as *“small well-focused actions that produce significant and*

enduring improvements". Their nine-point framework is based around three key leader roles;

- **navigation**
by which they mean securing the vision, setting a direction and nurturing development;
- **management**
by which they mean organising, problem-solving, creating order and providing consistency; and
- **partnership**
by which they mean modeling partnership (internally and externally), and treating partners with equal esteem and deep respect.

They suggest all three roles need to be carefully linked in leadership practice.

Coleman (2011) argues that collaborative leadership has been a very under-researched area. Drawing on a series of interviews in 49 schools, he finds the demands of collaborative leadership are markedly different from those associated with traditional models of leadership. He therefore proposes, a multi-dimensional, blended model of leadership, which draws on elements of other models and involves reframing perceived dichotomies implicit within and between these approaches, as potential areas for synergy and complementarity. The five elements of this model (Figure 8) include a much stronger emphasis on the inter-personal and the intra-personal dimensions than the understandings of leadership considered so far, but, as Coleman also points out, little is known about what such approaches mean in leadership practice.

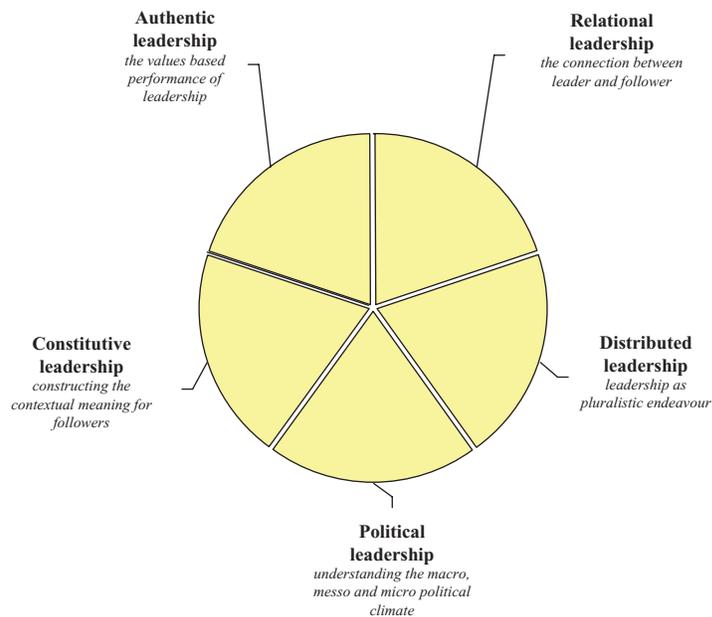


Figure 8: Components of a blended model of leadership Source: Coleman (2011)

Those elements are contained within the concepts of relational and authentic leadership, which are both relatively recent developments at an early stage of conceptual development, although much older in their origins (Walumbwa et al. 2008, Uhl-Bien 2006). Some have suggested relationships - rather than authority, superiority, or dominance - are key to new forms of leadership (e.g. Drath 2001). But all leadership is necessarily relational. A leader with no followers cannot be a leader almost by definition. It is the nature and quality of those relationships that is key, as well as their purpose. That does not mean relationships are unimportant in any consideration of leadership - far from it – but it is to argue they are one vital component amongst several.

Cowsill and Grint (2008) argue against the preeminence of either a relationship-oriented or task-oriented focus on behaviour for leaders, suggesting not only that such a distinction has little empirical support, but that it distorts the fundamental point of leadership which they define as “*collective mobilisation to achieve some collective goal*” (p.190). They propose that a more useful division is between upward-looking (towards the goal) and downward-looking (towards followers) behaviour on the part of leaders, their choice of terminology perhaps partly reflecting their military context, on the basis that “*leadership without a task is irrelevant and leadership without followers is a contradiction in terms*” (p.194).

Authentic leadership focuses on self-awareness and the understanding by leaders of who they are and what they believe (Gardner et al. 2005). It also stresses the need for leaders consistently to reflect their values in their actions (Avolio et al. 2005). The effect of this is to develop respect, trust and empowerment among followers (Fry and Whittington 2005). Chan et al. (2005) describe how a greater connection between values and behaviours reduces dissonance for the leader, and draw attention to the importance of performance in the leadership role. Authentic performance represents an ongoing interaction between leader and follower. However, although each performance is distinctive and unique, expectations for it are informed by broader understandings of the role and its associated responsibilities. While a leader’s authentic performance reflects

their personality and values, it must also adhere to wider social expectations associated with the role if it is to be perceived as such.

Coleman's five-fold collaborative leadership model helpfully connects a range of existing leadership theories, although, interestingly, in ways that might arguably be applicable whether it is outward-facing, beyond the school, or inward-facing, within the school. Indeed the demands of authenticity would suggest the need for a cohesive and consistent approach to leadership across all aspects. That is not to deny that there may be, as Coleman suggests, different skills or demands made by collaborative working.

In summary, then, it seems increasingly clear that no one leadership theory, or perhaps combination of leadership theories, necessarily captures the essence of leadership required in complex times in full, though each can contribute to an understanding of the qualities and skills that effective leadership requires in different contexts. What emerges from this review consistently, however, is the significance of understanding the practice of leaders, particularly in fostering relationships and reconciling paradox and the importance of vision and values in setting direction. Those are all central to the development of social capital.

2.7 Implications from the literature review in terms of focus for this research, gaps in understanding and the research questions

Leithwood and Jantzi (2000) comment that:

“Most areas of inquiry touching on school effects have proceeded through an initial phase of enthusiastic advocacy, followed by a phase of largely qualitative research in small numbers of exceptional cases aimed at better understanding the phenomena, to a more mature phase which includes quantitative testing of effects on a large scale. This third phase always is hard on the initial advocates, because effects are very difficult to produce on a large scale, and even more difficult to detect quantitatively”. (p. 429)

The evidence reviewed above across all themes consistently suggests that, in the main, research into schools’ community engagement is currently, at best, in the second of these phases, and that is where the present study will be located. There have been examples of enthusiastic advocacy of the benefits of forms of engagement based on particular examples (e.g. Hands 2010), but formal empirical evidence is more limited, perhaps reflecting the complexities of the themes behind the research questions. This present research aims to contribute to furthering understanding in two ways: firstly, by maintaining a breadth of focus in specific situations where there has been defined commitment to developing social capital through engagement; and secondly by taking as long-term a view as is possible within the constraints of part-time doctoral research. This understanding helped shape the formulation of the research questions.

The initial phases of the literature review helped to highlight a number of gaps in understanding identified by other researchers and noted in the course of this chapter.

These are brought together here into four key issues, which have in turn helped to clarify the focus for this research and shape its eventual design.

a) How social capital is activated and developed among stakeholders

The most significant of these themes is perhaps the need to know more about how social capital is activated and developed among stakeholders (e.g. Goddard 2003). The role of leadership is seen as the key to this understanding, but it is suggested that traditional models of school leadership may not be adequate to understand this. This may be because more complex and hybrid understandings of leadership, rather than single models, are needed in any case in the real world of schools. It may also be because there is a need for greater focus on inter-personal and intra-personal elements than has been recognised in some understandings of leadership effectiveness. It is therefore important for this study to seek an understanding of leadership practice and probe the ways leaders look to build trust and engagement among the range of stakeholders. Accordingly, the first research question has been formulated as:

How do school leaders look to build trust and engagement among the range of stakeholders? (RQ1)

b) Whether the development of social capital can be separated from socio-economic status

It is possible to accept that social capital is a value-laden construct without undermining its potential significance. However, the dangers of viewing social capital through the lens of socio-economic status are highlighted by a number of researchers in the context of schools (e.g. John 2005). It is easy to elide cause and effect, and make assumptions about the way socio-economic groups may behave, whilst ignoring issues of wider social and economic inequalities.

It therefore seems important for this research to include schools facing different socio-economic contexts in order to investigate to some degree what differences and similarities exist, whether schools can exert an effect which is independent of, rather than reflective of that context, and, if so, the forms that may take. With this in mind, the second research question has been framed as:

What effects do levels of trust and engagement have upon schools and their wider communities? (RQ2)

c) The role of young people in relation to social capital in a school

The literature review has also highlighted the difficulties of viewing social capital as a phenomenon that is unrelated to age and maturity (e.g. Schaeffer-McDaniel 2004). There

has been only a limited interest from research generally in examining social capital directly in relation to young people and insufficient recognition that social capital for youth may have different forms and emphasis from adult social capital (e.g. Morrow 2002). It is also clear that the involvement of students is frequently identified as a critical success factor by those who have examined parental engagement and community partnerships. Fredericks, Blumenfeld and Paris (2004), having reviewed a wide range of evidence, conclude that, although much has been learned, the potential contribution of the concept of school engagement to research on student experience has yet to be realised. This leads them to call for richer characterisations of how students behave, feel, and think. It is therefore important that this research design looks for ways to hear directly from young people and to include their views and perceptions.

d) The balancing and reconciliation of competing demands and expectations

There is an inherent danger of an implicit assumption of positive connotation within words like trust and engagement. But the literature review has highlighted a lack of consideration of mistrust (Seashore Louis 2007), and has continually returned to questions about purpose and ends, not just means. Any argument for increasing engagement of any stakeholder group needs also to address questions about whose interests are being considered and on whose terms engagement is pursued.

There are many potential goals a school could pursue and so the scope for conflict within and among school stakeholders is arguably very considerable. The way in which school leaders meet, balance and reconcile these demands and expectations is an important, relatively unexplored component of research around social capital in schools. This research design will therefore need to be alert to the culture and processes at work, and probe the potential inherent tensions through careful triangulation of evidence.

Because state-funded schools and their leadership sit at the nexus of such a potentially wide range of competing demands, expectations and hopes, particularly in terms of the outcomes for young people they are able to secure, the third research question has been framed as:

To what extent do levels of trust and engagement within schools and across their wider communities influence educational outcomes? (RQ3)

Each of the four issues identified above has informed the formulation of the research design, shaped the detail of the questions with which this research sets out to engage, and influenced the choice of methodology. It is to the choice of methodology, and its rationale, attention now turns.

3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes:

- the challenges confronting this research;
- the methodology adopted as a result;
- the rationale that lay behind this choice;
- the design issues that were encountered;
- the solutions that sought to address these.

3.1 The challenges for the research methodology

The chosen research questions for this study and the thinking behind them were identified and explained in the Introduction as:

- How do school leaders look to build trust and engagement within their schools and across their schools' wider communities?
- What effects do levels of trust and engagement have upon schools and their wider communities?
- To what extent do levels of trust and engagement within schools and across their wider communities influence their educational outcomes?

The literature review then identified some of the principal issues and knowledge gaps that may be associated with these questions. They encompass both the process of

leadership and the outcomes of leadership in relation to social capital. Both are necessary and interdependent elements. Together they present three main problems that the chosen methodology for the research must find ways to address. These are:

- The problem of defining educational outcomes.
- The problem of measuring social capital.
- The problem of causation.

3.1.1 The problem of defining educational outcomes

A key test of any school leadership lies in the educational outcomes that result (e.g. Robinson et al. 2008). However it does not follow that the only legitimate outcomes are those contained in a particular set of national accountability measures. Clearly these ‘formal’ outcomes have a very important place. They are also strongly defined by the current school inspection regime and the government policy which helps to frame that. This in turn has led research interest to focus heavily on a limited range of outcomes, especially literacy and numeracy (Day et al. 2009: 15).

But these may not be the only indicators of an educated young person equipped to take their place as an active worker and citizen. Other informal outcomes may be at least as important for the research to capture. Such outcomes are less easy to measure since they are not knowledge-based or skill-based. They include elements of personal and social development and of preparation for adult and working life, as well as attitudes to

learning. But there is no agreed definition of how this is constituted. Friedman (2005: 303-4), to cite one example from America, claims creativity and passion combined are of greater importance both for the learner and for the economy than standard 'intelligence'. However, that appears from the text to be simply a personal conclusion on his part. Meanwhile, in England, advocates of a broader-based understanding of educational goals have included a diverse range of proponents, including Robinson (2011), the RSA Opening Minds Curriculum (Candy 2011), and the Confederation of British Industry (CBI 2012).

Silins and Mulford (2002), in their study of 96 secondary schools in South Australia and Tasmania, identified, as particular wider outcomes, pupils' academic self-concept, participation, and engagement. Their findings suggested engagement was a direct predictor of retention in education, but only indirectly influenced achievement, whilst academic self-concept was not a predictor of engagement, retention or achievement.

However, this is also more than a purely academic question. The possible relationship between formal and other less formal educational outcomes is illustrated neatly, in real life, in an article that appeared in the Daily Telegraph (4.12.2011) regarding the opening of a new Morrison's store in Salford (Figure 9). I use this illustration both because of its topicality at the time of writing and because it found its way into mainstream press reporting. As with Friedman's equation, one implication of the story conveyed by this

article is that the young people's lack of confidence, self-esteem, and experience of the adult world holds back their ability to acquire and apply the skills needed to make their way in the world.

This article also introduces another set of factors influencing educational outcomes - the impact of family context, aspiration and the experience of unemployment. So it may be there are possible 'community' factors, which lie beyond the school but which can affect both the formal and informal educational outcomes of a school, and which may, to some degree, also be susceptible to influence through a school's engagement with its communities.

Morrisons, Britain's fourth-biggest supermarket with 135,000 employees, found that many of its applicants in Salford, Greater Manchester, lacked even the basic skills needed to stack shelves and serve customers. While some had a poor grasp of maths and English, others lacked simple skills such as turning up on time and making eye contact. Norman Pickavance, the human resources director of Morrisons, said: "Many of the people were just not job ready. They lacked a lot of confidence and social skills. It is quite clear the education system has failed them. "Whatever the environment has been at school, it has not been conducive to instilling basic skills. It is a crying shame."

When Morrisons drew up plans for a new store in the employment black spot of Ordsall, Salford, it promised to give jobs to local youngsters. Of the 210 staff who will start work when the store opens tomorrow, half left school with not a single GCSE to their name. Morrisons sent back 150 of them for three to six months of remedial training including refresher courses in literacy and numeracy. Some learnt customer service skills at Salford College while others were sent to Create, a social enterprise where "excluded" individuals practice working in a not-for-profit café and call centre.

Garry Stott, the chairman of Create, said: "Can these people read? Yes, they can. Can they write? That's more of a challenge. With maths most people have the basic skills but they struggle with the confidence to use it". He said the main problem was school-leavers whose parents and grandparents had never worked and lacked the aspiration to work. He added: "It is too simple to say it is because of the failure of the education system. It's more complex than that. But when I left school, many of my contemporaries were kicked out of the door on Monday morning by their Mum and Dad and told to go to work. For whatever reason that is not happening".

Government figures show that in 2.5 per cent of households in north-west England, no adult has ever worked – the highest in the country after inner London.

Figure 9: Daily Telegraph 4.12.11

The methodology for this research will therefore need to consider all three elements – those formal educational outcomes considered important in terms of national accountability measures, those informal outcomes concerned with personal and social development that may lie outside these indicators and are not, and possibly should not be, formally assessed, as well as those factors that may lie outside the school, but over which the school may be able to exert some influence beyond its core purposes. This

influence may in turn affect both the formal and informal outcomes it can achieve with students.

3.1.2 The problem of measurement of social capital

If we assume it is possible to understand and define some outcomes which may flow from a school's focus on enhancing social capital, even if they are not universally agreed, it then becomes necessary to be able to measure, in some way, the levels of social capital that might exist and whether these change in any way over time.

Significant work has been undertaken over the last decade, particularly by government agencies around the world, in trying to find ways to measure social capital. These include Australia (Onyx and Bullen 1998), the World Bank (Krishna and Schrader 1999, Grootaert et al. 2002) and Canada (Franke 2005), as well as the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in the UK (Harper and Kelly 2003). All share considerable common ground as well as differences of approach and focus.

Onyx and Bullen identified eight key areas for measurement, in addition to demographic information, and developed a set of questions for each. Their main categories cover:

- Attitudes (value of self)
- Trust / perceived safety
- Participation in the local community
- Reciprocity
- Personal empowerment
- Diversity / openness
- Relations within the workplace
- Attitudes to government

The World Bank Social Capital Assessment Guide provides an extensive toolkit comprising a Community Profile and Asset Mapping Interview Guide, a Community Questionnaire, a Household Questionnaire and Organizational Profile Interview Guides, while Franke's Canadian framework (Figure 10) focuses on networks at both an individual and a collective level.

Elements of Social Capital to Be Measured		Individual Social Capital	
		Interpersonal Networks	
Presence of Social Capital	Structural Properties of Networks	Size of network	Number of persons with whom one maintains different types of relationships: intimate friends and family, less close friends and family, simple acquaintances, neighbours, work colleagues, etc.
		Density of network	Level of interconnections between network members
		Diversity of network	Heterogeneity of the socio-economic status of network members
		Frequency of contact	Number and length of contacts between network members
		Intensity of contact	Strength and nature of a relationship in terms of emotional investment (weak – strong)
		Spatial proximity of network members	Network members who meet face to face on a regular basis
Functioning of Social Capital	Network Dynamics	Mobilization of networks: Conditions of access to resources	Presence or absence of alternative solutions, feelings of dependency, difficulties with asking for assistance, evaluation of the limits to the capacity for assistance, etc.
		Mobilization of networks: Gap between perceived and mobilized resources	Expectations about available support/resources and questions on the support/resources actually received
		Relational competency and conditions of social integration	Relational skills and effects of life-course events
		Norms and rules internal to the network	Norms: cultural and ethical dimensions of relationships (e.g., trust, belonging, tolerance, inclusion, etc.) Rules: reciprocity, symmetry, equality, transitivity
External Context in which Social Capital Operates	Structures and institutional arrangements	Formal/informal arrangements which help/hinder the development of relationships and social integration	

Collective Social Capital	
Intra-Organizational Networks	Inter-Organizational Networks
Number of members in an organization	Number of partners in a network
Level of interconnections between members of an organization	Level of interconnections between partners in a network
Heterogeneity of the socio-economic status of members of an organization	Heterogeneity of the organizational partners in a network
Number and length of contacts between members of an organization	Frequency of communications between the organizations and number of networking activities
Strength and nature of working relationships within the organization	Strength and nature of the relationships between organizational partners
Organizational members who meet face to face on a regular basis	Network partners who work in the same geographic area
Autonomy and interdependence of organizational members	Autonomy and interdependence of partner organizations
Expectations about available support/resources and questions on the support/resources actually received	Expectations about available support/resources and questions on the support/resources actually received
Stability of intra-organizational relations through various events that mark the organization's evolution	Stability of inter-organizational relations through various events that mark the collective project's evolution
Quality and democratic aspect of interactions, openness, and respect of actors, common perception of issues, confidence in the contribution of each member of the organization	Quality and democratic aspect of interactions, openness, and respect of actors, common perception of issues, confidence in the contribution of each of the partner organizations
Formal/informal arrangements that help/hinder the interactions between members of the organization	Formal/informal arrangements which help/hinder the creation and functioning of inter-organizational partnerships

Figure 10: Properties of forms of social capital
Source: Franke 2005

Meanwhile in the UK, ONS developed the common framework for collection of data about social capital shown in Figure 11 (Harper and Kelly 2003). Their intention was that these questions should permeate all relevant data gathering undertaken by ONS and be capable of being extracted to develop a broad understanding of levels of and changes in social capital nationally.

Dimension	Examples of indicators
Social participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of cultural, leisure, social groups belonged to and frequency and intensity of involvement • Volunteering, frequency and intensity of involvement • Religious activity
Civic participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptions of ability to influence events • How well informed about local/national affairs • Contact with public officials or political representatives • Involvement with local action groups • Propensity to vote
Social networks and social support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency of seeing/speaking to relatives /friends/neighbours • Extent of virtual networks and frequency of contact • Number of close friends/relatives who live nearby • Exchange of help • Perceived control and satisfaction with life
Reciprocity and trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust in other people who are like you • Trust in other people who are not like you • Confidence in institutions at different levels • Doing favours and vice versa • Perception of shared values
Views of the local area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Views on physical environment • Facilities in the area • Enjoyment of living in the area • Fear of crime

Figure 11: UK Social Capital Measurement Framework. Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS)

None of these models were created or tailored specifically for education or schools.

Caldwell (2004) takes a slightly different tack in offering schools a set of self-

assessment questions to consider in relation to their social capital, set out in Figure 12.

1. Which individuals, organisations, agencies and institutions in the public and private sectors, in education and other fields, including business and industry, philanthropy and social entrepreneurship, would be included in a mapping of current partnerships of a kind that generate resources to support the school? Resources are defined broadly to include money, expertise, information, technology, facilities, and goodwill. What is the total value, expressed in monetary terms, of this support? It is acknowledged that reasonable judgements rather than objective measures will be involved in this determination.
2. Has there been a systematic mapping of resource needs in areas of priority in learning and teaching and the support of learning and teaching? Has there been a parallel mapping of resources in the wider community that can help meet these needs? Have links been made with individuals and organisations that can help identify and mobilise support? Has a plan for gaining that support been prepared?
3. Does the school draw from and contribute to networks to share knowledge, address problems and pool resources?
4. Have partnerships been developed to the extent that each entity gains from the arrangement? Does the school assist each of its partners to measure outcomes, achieve transparency, improve accountability, and gain recognition for its efforts? Are partnerships sustained?
5. Is there leadership of these efforts in the school? Have resources been committed and have roles and responsibilities been determined, where leadership is distributed?
6. Does the schools and the networks of which it is part receive support at system level to assist in efforts to build social capital?
7. Is there appreciation at the central level that it is but one of several agencies of support for schools and networks of schools, and that its chief role in the years ahead is to ensure that this support is of the highest standard?
8. Is the school co-located with other services in the community and are these utilised in support of the school?
9. If co-location does not exist, have plans been made at the system level for initiatives in the future that reflect a whole-of-community approach?

Fig 12: A protocol for gauging social capital in schools. Source: Caldwell (2004)

But these questions hardly constitute a tool for measurement. By contrast in America, Goddard (2003) used a standardised scale of 11 items (Figure 13) administered to teachers, but, significantly, not to young people themselves or their parents, to assess levels of social capital around schools and its impact on formal outcomes.

Social Capital Scale Items	Strongly <i>Disagree</i>				Strongly <i>Agree</i>	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Teachers in this school have frequent contact with parents						
Parental involvement supports learning here						
Community involvement facilitates learning here						
Parents in this school are reliable in their commitments.						
Teachers in this school trust the parents						
Teachers in this school trust their students						
Students in this school can be counted on to do their work						
Students are caring toward one another						
Parents of students in this school encourage good habits of schooling						
Students respect others who get good grades						
The learning environment here is orderly and serious						

Figure 13: 11-point Social Capital Scale - Source: Goddard (2003)

Notwithstanding the various frameworks just discussed, there is considerable disagreement about the possibility, desirability and practicality of attempts at measuring social capital. Collier (2002) argues that social capital is difficult, if not impossible, to measure directly, and that for empirical purposes the use of proxy indicators is necessary. For him, social capital has constructs that are inherently abstract and require subjective interpretation in their translation into operational measures. These will invariably be indirect surrogates of their associated constructs. Callahan (1996) takes a

similar view, suggesting that while it is hard to measure social capital directly, it can be inferred from its powerful effects.

Furstenberg (2006:106), however, warns of the explosion of interest in social capital being accompanied by a rush of unreflective measurement, and finds many researchers relying on “*makeshift measures crafted from secondary data sources rather than tailored measures intended strictly for social capital*”. A further caution, significant for this study, is sounded by Harpham (2002: 14): “*The fact that adults’ social capital should not be used as a proxy for children’s social capital is only slowly being recognized*”. Whiting and Harper (2003: 5) argue that different measures may be needed for young people, suggesting; “*qualitative research indicates that young people have higher levels of social capital compared to the standard quantitative indicators*”. As a result, young people's civic and social participation may be underestimated, leading, for instance, to perceptions they are only consumers and not producers of social capital, because the social capital indicators used in national surveys are not sufficiently attuned to them.

Morrow (2002) focuses on distinctive approaches to looking specifically at social capital among children and young people. She sees social capital as flowing from combinations of social networks and sociability, trust and reciprocity, and a sense of belonging or place attachment, but argues that it is necessary to:

“explore the meaning and nature of these components from the perspectives of the research participants, rather than ask children to answer a set of pre-existing (adult-centred) questions about ‘social capital’”. (p. 11)

She therefore used a wide range of open-ended questions and approaches for her investigations, for example:

- Structured methods, asking children and young people:
 - Who is important to me and why?
 - What is a friend and what are friends for?
 - Where do I belong?
 - What do I do when not at school?
 - Aspirations for the future
- Visual methods, asking children and young people to:
 - Photograph places that are important to them and describe why
 - Draw maps
- Group discussions
 - Use of and perceptions about their town and neighbourhoods

So it seems important for the methodology of this research to draw, where possible, on established indicators, but also to recognise the potential limitations of their applicability both to schools, in general, and children and young people, in particular. Cavaye (2004:13) also identified the following issues in the measurement of social capital that remain unresolved, and of which the methodology in this research will therefore need to be mindful in its particular context:

- A clear understanding of the context and purpose of the measurement of social capital;
- Understanding the limitations of evaluation and measurement, and ensuring that the interpretation of measures is held within these limitations;
- The practical mechanics of gaining community feedback;
- Benchmarking vs. measures of incremental change;
- Dealing with qualitative information, diversity, variation and complexity;
- The nature and rigor of indicators;
- The interpretation and use of measurement information;
- How evaluation itself can contribute to fostering social capital.

3.1.3 The problem of causation

Even if there is some clarity about the range of outcomes reasonably sought, and an understanding of how it might be possible, albeit difficult, to gauge changes in social capital, one final challenge remains. Is there is a way to talk with any degree of confidence about whether there is some linkage between educational outcomes and changes in levels of social capital?

My reading around complexity theory encouraged me to think more carefully about the idea of causation and to have the confidence to move beyond simple models of causation. Cohen, Manion and Morrison's (2007: 33-4) account of the emerging paradigm of complexity theory initially encouraged me to explore this approach further, in part because of its relative newness as a paradigm and the comparatively unexplored

possibilities within it. Its emphasis on a holistic approach, which is multi-dimensional and multi-causal, seemed to fit the reality of both schools and of community interaction. Morrison elsewhere (2008: 22) cites Fullan's remark that "*change equals learning; learning is a central element in both complexity theory and education*". This is an intriguing connection, but, equally, there is also limited methodological experience on which this research can draw in pursuing it.

The definition of complexity offered by a major exponent of its role in organisational theory, the Santa Fe Group (1996), provides a helpful starting point in understanding its relevance further:

"Complexity refers to the condition of the universe which is integrated and yet too rich and varied for us to understand in simple common mechanistic or linear ways. We can understand many parts of the universe in these ways but the larger and more intricately related phenomena can only be understood by patterns - not in detail. Complexity deals with principles and with emergence, innovation, learning and adaptation". (Cited by Battram (1998:14))

Three key concepts highlighted in this Santa Fe definition – emergence, connectedness, and feedback - seem highly resonant for both community and school development.

Morrison (2008: 22) suggests that:

"Schools exhibit many features of complex adaptive systems, being dynamical and unpredictable, non-linear organizations operating in unpredictable and changing external environments. Indeed schools both shape and adapt to macro- and micro-societal change, organizing themselves, responding to, and shaping their communities and society (i.e. all parties co-evolve)".

Mason (2008) suggests that one of the most important insights of complexity theory is the notion of emergence which implies that, given a sufficient degree of complexity in a particular environment, new (and to some extent unexpected) properties and behaviours emerge in that environment. The whole becomes, in a very real sense, more than the sum of its parts, in that the emergent properties and behaviours are not contained in, or able to be predicted from, the essence of the constituent elements or agents. He sees the most important insight of complexity theory with regard to educational change is that new properties and behaviours emerge not only from the elements that constitute a system but from the myriad connections among them, which multiply exponentially when the scale is right. The part played by positive feedback is crucial in this process. Whilst the circumstances that give rise to feedback may have been random, self-reinforcement leads to lock-in of a particular phenomenon through a process of autocatalysis, that is, where the product of the reaction is itself the catalyst for that reaction.

However, the concept is not without problems. Wallace and Fertig (2007:53) conclude that complexity theory offers little more than '*modest potential as a convenient metaphor*' because the origins of complexity theory in mathematics and natural science do not readily translate across to the human social world. Bottery (2012), in response, accepts their caution against too ready a transference of ideas from the natural to the

human world and acknowledges that description of conditions cannot lead to prescription of action. However, he goes on to suggest that the one valid prescription may be against too much certainty in understanding the outcome of events.

In terms of the present research methodology, the implication of this discussion is perhaps best captured by Davis and Sumara (2008: 34), who argue that:

“One must ‘level-jump’, that is, simultaneously examine the phenomenon in its own right (for its particular coherence and its specific rules of behavior) and pay attention to the conditions of its emergence (e.g. the agents that come together, the contexts of their co-activity, etc.). This ... stands in stark contrast to the individual-focused emphases of imported frames anchored in behaviorist psychology or constructivist epistemology ... such emphases might make sense in the context of a laboratory or a one-on-one engagement, but they are simply inadequate for the multi-layered, intertwining happenings of a real-time classroom”.

3.2 Influences on research design

In reflecting on these three problems, definition, measurement and causation, three significant influences came together to help give final shape to the research design. This was also, in part, the result of grappling with understanding the meaning and relevance of research paradigms.

3.2.1 Paradigms

The Oxford English Dictionary defines the Greek word **paradigm** as “*a typical example or pattern of something; a pattern or model or scheme for understanding a phenomenon*”. Much of its modern understanding in research stems from the work of the science historian, Kuhn (1962), who argued that practitioners in a discipline hold a common body of beliefs and assumptions, a shared conceptual model that governs activity in that field. Moreover, the advance of knowledge, he argues, often occurs when established paradigms are challenged and break down.

However the applicability of paradigms to social science research has been contested.

For instance, Eckberg and Hill (1979: 935), writing of sociology, argue:

“What we often actually find is research modeled upon no other research at all, upon a short, soon-extinguished line of research, or upon a single theorist's speculations If a problem is considered important, it is never solved at all, but serves as a point of contention among variant perspectives”.

There is a sense in which this might ring true as an account of past debates between proponents of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies in education research. But that time may be past. Gorard (2010b) is forceful in arguing that the schismic classifications of qualitative and quantitative work are unjustifiable as paradigms, and pointless in practice. Instead he advocates:

“... the development of a research community where all methods have a role, and a key place in the full research cycle from the generation of ideas to the rigorous testing of

theories for amelioration ... We (should) have more methodological independence, away from the crutch of established paradigms and the designs that go along with them". (p.14)

3.2.2 Mixed methods approaches

The case for a pragmatic approach to research design is not new (e.g. Hammersley 1992). Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004: 23) argue strongly the general case that:

"Investigators who conduct mixed methods research are more likely to select methods and approaches with respect to their underlying research questions, rather than with regard to some preconceived biases about which research paradigm should have hegemony".

Alongside this, Vyronides (2007) emphasises particularly the need for pragmatism and mixed methods in addressing measurement and understanding of social capital.

However, mixed methods approaches do not constitute a single alternative (Brannen 2005). The methods chosen may be a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods, a mix of quantitative methods or a mix of qualitative methods. The relationship and inter-connection between the various elements chosen need to be carefully considered and clearly understood (Lingard et al. 2008: 460).

This might be achieved through a number of techniques. In my initial planning, I saw three as being of significance for the research design envisaged here:

- (a) **triangulation** (that is, seeking convergence and corroboration of results from different methods and designs studying the same phenomenon);
- b) **complementarity** (that is, seeking elaboration, enhancement, illustration, and clarification of the results from one method with results from another method);
- (c) **development** (that is, using the findings from one method to help inform other methods).

3.2.3 Case study

The possibility of a full longitudinal study of development in chosen schools was rejected at an early stage because of the time and scale that would be involved, and associated problems such as sample mortality and control effect. A repeated cross-sectional study appeared more feasible, but also not without difficulty. It would be easier to manage within the time, less likely to suffer control effects, and potentially more likely to secure cooperation. But it could be less effective in identifying individual variations, and establishing causal relationships between variables. Sampling is complicated, and problems may arise with selection effects. In consequence, a case study approach was finally favoured, but with a longer inbuilt time frame, returning to each site several times.

So, alongside the importance of mixed methods, the second influence on research design has been to understand the role of case study within a developing methodology. Robson (2002: 178) follows Yin in describing case study as:

“a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence”.

A case study approach may be particularly effective in helping to understand any cause and effect because it deals with real contexts (Cohen, Manion, Morrison, 2007: 253). Bassegy (1999: 47) defines case study as *“a study of singularity conducted in depth in natural settings”* (p.47). This can lead to what he terms ‘fuzzy generalisations’ as opposed to ‘scientific’ ones (p.53), but which he argues can be no less valuable for that.

However, potential strengths of case study in relation to my intentions must also be balanced against the possible impact of observer bias and the difficulty in generalisation. Flyvbjerg (2006: 221), nevertheless, argues strongly for the value and validity of case study, making two key points which align closely with Bassegy’s view:

“First, case study produces the type of context-dependent knowledge that research on learning shows to be necessary to allow people to develop from rule-based beginners to virtuoso experts. Second, in the study of human affairs, there appears to exist only context-dependent knowledge”.

3.2.4 Grounded theory

A final major influence on the research design lay in considering the potential of using grounded theory, focusing in on the data and allowing theory to emerge using structured analysis.

The history of grounded theory has also had some characteristics of schism and a consequent demand to take sides. Onions (2006: 8) provides a useful summary of the main camps, which he defines as 'Glaserian' and 'Straussian'. This can be found in Table 4.

Such a dichotomy feels false and unnecessary. Urquhart (2001) emphasises two key beliefs of grounded theory: (a) the researcher has to set aside theoretical ideas; and, (b) the concepts are developed through constant comparison. This has attraction in offering a strategy for undertaking research which is flexible yet systematic and coordinated. However a Ph.D student cannot start a research study without some pre-existing study, assumptions and theoretical ideas.

‘Glaserian’	‘Straussian’
Beginning with general wonderment (an empty mind)	Having a general idea of where to begin
Emerging theory, with neutral questions	Forcing the theory, with structured questions
Development of a conceptual theory	Conceptual description (description of situations)
Theoretical sensitivity (the ability to perceive variables and relationships) comes from immersion in the data	Theoretical sensitivity comes from methods and tools
The theory is grounded in the data	The theory is interpreted by an observer
The credibility of the theory, or verification, is derived from its grounding in the data	The credibility of the theory comes from the rigour of the method
A basic social process should be identified	Basic social processes need not be identified
The researcher is passive, exhibiting disciplined restraint	The researcher is active
Data reveals the theory	Data is structured to reveal the theory
Coding is less rigorous, a constant comparison of incident to incident, with neutral questions and categories and properties evolving.	Coding is more rigorous and defined by technique.
Two coding phases or types,	Three types of coding
Regarded by some as the only ‘true’ GTM	Regarded by some as a form of qualitative data analysis (QDA)

Table 4: Comparison of ‘Glaserian’ and ‘Straussian’ approaches to grounded theory – Onions (2006)

This is a tension, but Charmaz (2006), a committed grounded theorist, cites with approval Henwood and Pigeon's phrase '*theoretical agnosticism*' (p.165) in encouraging a more pragmatic view. She views research as a journey of discovery and the methods chosen as governed by fitness for purpose in response to emerging data and understanding. This fits the approach being proposed here.

There is, though, some potential conflict to resolve between case study and a grounded theory approach. Yin (1994: 28) states '*theory development prior to the collection of any case study data is an essential step in doing case studies*', thus appearing to override a key grounded theory principle. Fernandez (2004), however, provides examples to suggest that, in the right circumstances, a combination of case study and grounded theory, whereby theory develops largely from study of the data, can be particularly productive. He suggests three conditions for this. Although originally developed by Benbasat et al (1987) in the field of information systems, all are applicable to the study proposed here:

1. The research can study a natural setting, learn the state of the art, and generate theories from practice.
2. The researcher can answer the questions that lead to an understanding of the nature and complexity of the processes taking place.
3. It is an appropriate way to research a previously little studied area

It may be argued that these conditions could apply equally to a simple case study approach. The reality, of course, is a spectrum of possible approaches from ‘pure’ grounded theory, not possible in a doctorate thesis, to ‘pure’ case study. The approach adopted here seeks to begin with understanding the chosen starting points and intentions of the case study subjects and to build data collection and analysis from this. To that extent it is located, significantly but not completely, towards the grounded theory end of the spectrum.

3.2.5 Summary of research approach

In developing my resulting methodology I have thus tried to be both pragmatic and coherent. It draws on these three elements, each of which seemed to have something particular to offer to the research questions identified:

- The flexibility of a mixed methods approach, matching here a predominantly qualitative approach, with elements of quantification to try to ensure an appropriate focus on outcomes.
- The opportunity provided by case study to focus in on understanding process in context.
- The working protocol of constant comparison and avoidance of prior assumption within grounded theory.

3.2.6 Strengths and weaknesses of the chosen methodology

The strengths and weaknesses of building theory from case study research have been usefully summarised by Eisenhardt (1989: 547). It is an approach which is likely to produce novel theory, particularly where it has to grapple with contradictory or paradoxical evidence, and so it may be particularly suitable for new research areas. It lends itself to further study and testing, but is at the same time more likely to produce reliable theory because of the constant testing and comparison to which the accumulating evidence has been subjected. On the other hand, the very richness of the data may result in over-complex, narrow or idiosyncratic theory. These are dangers that it seems particularly pertinent for this research to keep in mind.

3.2.7 Risk analysis

I identified a number of potential problems facing the methodology as it developed in practice and for which there would be a need to develop mitigating strategies. These are summarised in Table 5.

Potential weaknesses arising in the methodology	Mitigation
Sample mortality	Significant risk if working with only one school over two years. Equally a large number of schools would be unwieldy. Balanced compromise chosen (i.e. incorporating three schools), but some further thought may need to be given to isolating other variables between them.
Control effects	May be possible with some groups to keep the involvement of some individuals constant and involve others at each data collection point as a cross-check.
Intervening effects make research plan difficult to achieve	Highly likely. Degree of flexibility will be required in research development. Some opportunity to address any emerging gaps along the way through the 2-stage model adopted.
Data complex to analyse	In part unavoidable because of the range of stakeholder groups. May need to focus down on some key issues as they emerge.
Maintaining internal validity across the data collection over time	The reflective approach of grounded theory should help in guarding against the development of too much researcher bias.
Integrating qualitative and quantitative data streams	The use of constant comparison may be particularly helpful here.

Table 5: Potential research risks – initial analysis

3.3 Research design

3.3.1 Preliminary considerations

It was decided at an early stage to include more than one school in the research study, whilst recognising the potential workload challenges this might present the researcher. Too many schools would make the load unmanageable. Too few would leave the research at high risk from sample mortality.

Crucial to the design, too, is a recognition that, since there is no commonly agreed understanding about the outcomes of school and community engagement strategy, each school needs to be examined in the first instance against its own intentions and purposes. Moreover, it will be necessary also to see these unfold over a sufficiently long period of time, drawing throughout on a range of perspectives and types of data.

Finally, the methodology needed to recognise the constraints of the school day and organisation in providing access to individuals and groups, and to allow flexibility and sensitivity for that.

3.3.2 Selection of methods

The research methodology therefore looked to use the headteacher's perspective as the starting point for gaining understanding of their strategy, and then investigation of its

impact, placing it against the views of other key stakeholders, notably other leaders, governors, staff, students, parents and external partners.

In order to create manageability, full interviews were planned only with the head, another key leader, governor and partner. A focus group approach was adopted for staff, parents and students. In order to establish some consistency of sampling across the schools, given the potentially large numbers of students and parents, a decision was made to randomly select two tutor groups in each school, one drawn from year 7 and one from year 9, in the belief that this may also offer some potential for looking at outcomes when those groups reach a formal assessment stage in year 9 and year 11 respectively.

Quantitative data to supplement this qualitative evidence would be drawn from a survey designed to capture key elements of trust and engagement, in terms of the perceptions of individuals, for each of the staff, parent and student groups. Repeating this over time offered the potential to identify changes taking place. Additional evidence would be drawn from a scrutiny of school documentation and a range of performance data provided by each school across the research period.

3.4 Design of data gathering instruments

3.4.1 Interviews

Common baseline interview schedules were designed and used across all participating schools (see Appendix 3). These were designed to gain an understanding of the school's context, development, leadership and strategy.

Subsequent interviews were structured with a mix of some common themes but shaped by the specific individual characteristics of previous interviews and developments that had occurred subsequently in that particular school.

All interviews were recorded, with permission, and then full transcripts made for analysis. I chose not to use a commercial software package for coding these data but to operate manually. I hoped in this way to ensure close understanding of these data, storing the results using a simple, effective database tool, Notepad Deluxe initially, and later Curio Professional.

3.4.2 Surveys

I intended that the use of surveys with students, parents and staff would provide some quantitative indicators of change over time amongst participants to set alongside the qualitative data generated through interviews and focus groups. I decided, after

considering the range of approaches identified earlier in this chapter, to design the survey questionnaires by using a modified version of the UK Social Capital Framework (2003). This was because it offered the prospect of some commonality in approach, had been tested against a range of contexts, and could have fairly ready applicability to the school context.

The modifications I made consisted of translating the example indicators, shown in Figure 11 above (p.109), into statements that would be applicable to English secondary schools. Similar statements were used for all three participant groups, with appropriate modifications made simply to reflect their age and/or relationship to the school. I also chose to incorporate into the survey the elements of Goddard's (2003) Social Capital Scale for Schools (Figure 13, p.111), because of the standardisation that he had applied to this and the comparisons this might allow. However, I did adapt the language of these statements for the English rather than American context. The survey framework used can be found in Appendix 5.

The survey questions were grouped into four themes identified and reinforced by the initial coding process undertaken with the baseline visit data. These themes were: attitude to school, trust, participation and support for learning. A similar structure was adopted to guide the follow-up focus groups.

A 5-point Likert scale was chosen, on balance, as the basis for the responses sought. It allows for ease of completion, and speed is a factor for all groups. It also helps to offer a consistent approach across the three survey groups, parents, students, and staff. It is, in addition, more suitable where attitudes and attitude change are being explored. In choosing this approach, I also opted to include a central neutral point. Although some (e.g. Nowlis et al. 2002) argue against this, suggesting compelling the respondent to make a decision means that anyone who is genuinely undecided will make a purely random response which would not therefore bias the outcome, the inclusion of a central neutral point seems more likely to give a better representation of the state of opinion, and also offer a better gauge for any change that may occur between survey points.

A small pilot, testing the language and structure of the survey was undertaken involving a school known to the researcher but unconnected with the schools directly involved. As a result, some apparently closely similar statements in different sections were removed from the survey, and some re-ordering of the sequence of statements was made to achieve a more logical flow.

In seeking to analyse the survey results, I am mindful that, though the data collected does have an inherent sequence, it is dangerous to assume that that the difference between, for example, agreeing and strongly agreeing is that same as the difference between agreeing and being undecided. For this reason, I planned to collate the

responses into broad categories of Agree, Neutral and Disagree, providing weighted average scores against each statement for each stakeholder group. This approach allows more straightforward presentation, whilst also capturing a more nuanced and sophisticated understanding of their views than a simpler three-level scoring.

All the surveys were offered online using SurveyMonkey Professional. In the case of parents who did not have email or internet access, printed copies were sent to them for hand completion and with a stamped addressed envelope. I then entered their responses manually.

3.4.3 Focus Groups

Powell and Single (1996: 499) define a focus group as:

“a group of individuals selected and assembled by researchers to discuss and comment on, from personal experience, the topic that is the subject of the research”.

The focus group method was originally chosen because it allowed a means to listen to a range of views in situations where it would not be possible, because of time, to conduct individual interviews. Thus it could also offer a more open perspective on the developments that might be taking place. In that sense, a focus group is different from a group interview, where the emphasis is on questions and interaction between researcher

and participants. The key characteristic that distinguishes focus groups is the insight and data produced by the interaction between participants (Morgan 1997).

The benefits of this freer interaction in terms of the insights it might produce needed to be balanced against the issue of control and direction, particularly when time was scarce. In practice, I felt only the focus groups involving staff worked in a proper sense. The time available with students did not create the conditions in which they became sufficiently familiar and confident with the process, and they required ongoing prompting by the researcher.

Care was taken to ensure that all participants knew the purpose of the research, and of the session and how it was organised. Participants also needed to understand confidentiality in terms of their responsibility to each other not just the researcher. Particularly when working with the students, it was also necessary for me to take care not to pressurise unduly any who might be reluctant to speak out, whilst also ensuring they had space if they wanted it. Further discussion of the ethical considerations involved can be found later, in section 3.8.

3.4.4 Use of EQ-i

Crawford (2009: 9) argues that emotion is integral to all leadership practice, and the definitions of both Robison et al. (2002) and Field (2008) cited earlier (pp. 35-7) highlighted the centrality of relationships in understanding social capital.

All headteachers approached for the sample had completed an on-line psychometric profile based on the Emotional Intelligence (EQ-i) Model developed by the American psychologist Reuven Bar-On (see www.reuvenbaron.org and Bar-On et al. 2000) as part of the SSAT Community Leadership Programme to which I have already referred. This model of emotional-social intelligence views it as an array of interrelated emotional and social competencies, skills and facilitators that impact on intelligent behaviour. Each head chosen for the research agreed to make their profile report available to the research. The data thus obtained were used to open a dialogue with these leaders and to help frame questions for investigation.

The EQ-i test adopted here is a self-reported measure of emotionally and socially intelligent behaviour that provides an indication of emotional-social predispositions. This model was chosen because of its developmental focus, as it does not predicate intelligence as a fixed commodity, but as something susceptible to growth and development through awareness and training. The particular version used for the research purposes comprises 133 items in the form of short sentences and employs a

5-point response scale with a textual response format ranging from "very seldom or not true of me" (point 1) to "very often true of me or true of me" (point 5).

The results of the self-assessment are analysed in three categories, termed 'reflect', 'relate' and 'respond', each comprising five sub-components. The 'reflect' category is concerned with the leader's knowledge of self, the 'relate' category is concerned with their understanding of others, and the 'respond' category with the way the individual adapts to the world around them. Each is organised into five sub-traits. The resulting overall model is shown in Table 6.

REFLECTING				
Self awareness	Self actualization	Self regard	Independence	Happiness
RELATING				
Social Responsibility	Empathy	Assertiveness	Impulse control	Interpersonal Relationships
RESPONDING				
Stress tolerance	Optimism	Flexibility	Problem Solving	Reality Testing

Table 6: Elements of the EQ-i model adopted for this research

However, doubts have been expressed in the research literature about the validity of self-report as an index of emotional intelligence. Such responses have been found by some researchers to be susceptible to faking (Day & Carroll, 2008; Grubb & McDaniel, 2007). However, objectivity was not required for the purposes of this research. My interest was to discover whether it shed any light on the behaviour or predispositions of the school leaders, and also how the leaders understood themselves and their behaviour.

3.4.5 Validity and reliability

The research methodology adopted is mindful of the issues of validity and reliability in evaluating its findings. Validity relates to whether the data collected gives a true picture of what is being studied. Reliability relates to whether a repeat study would show the same results. Qualitative methods of research focus on the quality and the depth of the data. The accuracy and reliability of qualitative studies rely on verification (Collis and Hussey, 2003).

The research methodology uses three main techniques to try to ensure validity and reliability. They are:

- a) **Use of triangulation**, with multiple data sources cross-checked and revisited over time, for verification.
- b) **Methodological coherence** – ensuring a close interlocking fit of techniques and questions, for validity.

c) **Ongoing collection and analysis** of data with the use of constant comparison techniques, for reliability.

It is important to recognise and acknowledge, at the outset, that it is never going to be possible for the research to be exactly repeated because of the particularity of each individual context and situation in time. What it can reasonably seek to achieve is a high level of clarity about each individual situation as a basis for increasing wider understanding of the processes at work.

3.5 Selection of schools as research sites

The specific approach developed from this rationale involved working with a small number of English secondary schools over a two year period, commencing in Autumn 2010, to develop extended case studies which examine the nature and effect of leadership interventions in relation to their community engagement over time.

As indicated in the Introduction, five English secondary schools were initially approached as potential sites for this research. They were chosen because the headteachers of each had been a recent participant in the SSAT Community Leadership Programme I was directing, and had indicated as part of that involvement their intention to develop community engagement as a central element of their school improvement strategy. Each head was therefore personally committed to, and at an early stage in

implementing, a strategy for community engagement by which they sought to build social capital within and around their school so as to improve educational outcomes.

It could be argued that, because these school leaders have such an inbuilt investment and commitment, they are outliers in this regard compared to the majority of schools. But as the Roseto experience illustrated, looking outside the norm can reveal important insights for normal practice

I am also aware that my role and relationship with the headteachers could lead them into reporting in the course of the research more favourably on success than would otherwise be the case. However, my prior role exercised no direct or personal authority, so there is little real incentive to exaggerate beyond that inevitably associated with any research group under study, and there are some potential advantages in their possible enthusiasm for the subject in terms of securing their commitment to completing the research programme.

Three schools eventually committed, and each headteacher signed a formal agreement to take part in the research (see Appendix 1). Each school has been given an anonymised name in this research. They each have different contexts, communities, and histories, broadly summarised in Table 7 below.

SCHOOL	CONTEXT	STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT	LEADERSHIP	STATUS
Ashtree	Established school with new identity serving dispersed deprived city communities	Journeying itself from satisfactory to good	Head appointed in 2007 to lead school away from a cause for serious LA concern	National Challenge Trust school. Becomes academised under new regulations in September 2012
Birchgrove	New school in a new town, no established community, broadly middle class	Journeying from good to outstanding	Head in post since 2009	Became a 'new' academy in August 2011
Chestnut	New academy formed from a failing school, serving deprived post-war council housing estate	Journeying from special measures to satisfactory	Head appointed in March 2010 to open the new academy	Created as an 'old-style' academy which opened in September 2010. Original sponsor withdrew after first year.

Table 7: Research site context summary

3.6 Data gathering

It was envisaged at the outset that data collection would take place in each school across two years, commencing in November 2010. In each school, the following programme of data collection was planned and agreed:

Headteacher:

A baseline interview would establish aims, intention and strategy in relation to community engagement over the coming two years and beyond. This would be followed by three further individual interviews, taking place every other term, to look at developments and progress, with a final review interview in November 2012.

Senior leadership team member and a Governor nominated by the head:

A similar programme of individual interviews was designed for these people, with the intention of being able to triangulate the perspective of the head and understand to what extent purposes, strategies and progress were shared and understood.

In practice, it emerged very quickly that each head had appointed some form of senior manager to play a lead role in their strategy. In one case, this was not a member of the senior leadership team. In the other two cases, the post-holder changed during the research period. All were therefore included in the interview programme, in addition to another school leader without a direct responsibility for strategy development and implementation.

Parents and students:

I planned to work with one randomly chosen tutor group in Y7 and one in Y9 through a survey each year and at the end of research period, based on the design described previously in 3.4.1. The purpose was to gain some measure of the extent to which attitudes to the school were changing in ways that may reflect a growth in social capital across the school. These year groups were chosen to give an insight into each of the key stages, avoiding the pressures that may come with a formal national assessment period coinciding with the research. A managed sample was proposed in order to try to keep the scale of the data for analysis feasible for a single researcher. I also hoped to be able to explore similarities and differences between parent and student outlook and attitudes.

In addition, I planned two follow-up focus group interviews at the end of each year, with a small group of volunteers from each of the survey samples in order to have a chance to explore emerging findings in more depth.

Staff:

I planned a similar survey strategy for staff, along with a focus group of six staff, in which I hoped to include a long-serving staff member, a new staff member, teaching staff, non-teaching staff, and middle managers (not senior management). All staff, teaching and non-teaching, were to be included.

External partners:

Finally, I wanted to gain insights from some of the external partners involved with the schools. My initial idea had been to look at a focus group of four partners, meeting on 2 occasions, with partners chosen by the head to represent long-established and recent partnerships, formal and less formal, all with strategic significance in terms of student impact.

However, it became clear at an early stage that the logistics of bringing such a group together within the overall plan would be close to insurmountable.

I therefore decided to conduct telephone interviews with the identified partners on two occasions, towards the end of year one and the end of year two of the research period.

I hoped that this range of perspectives and data sources would allow for cross-checking and triangulation and so help to build validity and understanding of what was in process in and around the school.

BY WHEN	RESEARCH DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT	ASHTREE	BIRCHGROVE	CHESTNUT
DEC 2009	Commencement			
MAR 2010	Initial literature review			
APR 2010	Research questions framed			
JUN 2010	School selection and invitation			
JUL 2010	Ethical approval Obtained			
SEP 2010	School agreement to participate			
NOV 2010		Baseline Interviews	Baseline interviews	
DEC 2010	Analysis of baseline data	Individual consent	Individual consent	
JAN 2011	Upgrade paper prepared	Baseline questionnaires	Baseline questionnaires	Individual consent
MAR 2011	Method refinement			Baseline interviews and questionnaires
JUN 2011		Data gathering	Data gathering	
OCT 2011				Data gathering
JAN 2012		Data gathering	Data gathering	
JUN 2012				Data gathering
OCT 2012		Final data gathering	Final data gathering	
DEC 2012				Final data gathering
JAN–JUL 2013	Analysis of data and findings			
SEPT 2013 – MAY 2014	Composition of thesis			
JUN 2014	Final submission of thesis			

Table 8: Original timeline for research, analysis and writing

Table 8 shows how these various activities fitted together in the original overall research plan. In this, I planned to spread the heavy workload of data gathering in three schools by creating two cycles, with activity in two schools running a few months ahead of the third. This would also allow the opportunity for any refinement in methods or further investigation identified as necessary in the course of the research.

3.7 Ethical considerations

Ethical approval for the proposed research was obtained from the university in July 2010 (Appendix 2). A detailed signed agreement was made with each school (Appendix 1) in September 2010. It encompassed both ethics of procedure and ethics of behavior, and included an explicit code of values by which the researcher aimed to operate.

This seemed particularly important because of the stated intention to seek ways to incorporate the views of children and young people as research participants not just as the objects of its intentions. I was concerned to ensure '*ethical symmetry*' (Christensen and Prout 2002), and employ the same ethical principles whether participants were children or adults.

The school agreement indicated that the researcher would, with the help of staff, seek to obtain signed consent from all students, parents and staff at the outset. This proved logistically and practically very complex to achieve. It was dependent on procedures operated by the school which required the involvement of several layers of staff to administer, and was the cause of significant delay in the initial stages of the research in all schools. This was despite care being taken to make the purposes and expectations clear to all, to act in a timely fashion, and to ensure that the amount and presentation of information and the language used was not off-putting (Wiles et al. 2004). It also led to some change in the research design in two schools and in the way in which consent was sought from students (see 3.8).

Potential participants were given the opportunity to remove themselves from the sampling initially and in the course of the research (something which did not in fact happen). This meant that the individuals and groups I met as part of the research programme were not purely random and, as a result, were more likely to include individuals who were, in some way, more committed or supportive or had a particular slant they wished to bring. However, the long-term and multi-faceted nature of the research design can go some way towards minimising the risks of bias that might arise from this.

Informed consent was seen from the outset to be an ongoing negotiation, not a one-off event. At each stage, reminders were given to participants of the research process, the confidential nature of the exchanges, and the option for them to withdraw. All interviews and phone calls were recorded, with the prior knowledge and agreement of participants.

Because interviewees were being encouraged to describe their positive and negative experiences of change in the school, in order to gain a more rounded appreciation of the issues, ethically it was essential to protect participants from any negative consequences that such disclosures may produce. To this end, all interviews were conducted on a confidential basis and the names of participants have been anonymised in both the transcripts of interviews and all reporting of the research.

3.8 Changes made to the research design

A number of issues were uncovered as the research moved forward in the first year, which resulted in some modifications to the original research design.

Delays in obtaining the necessary participant permission meant that, after the baseline visit, the next visit to each of the schools took place in June/July 2011, and from then on all three schools followed a broadly similar time schedule.

In Ashtree and Chestnut, it proved impossible to gain a response from parents through the means of a letter circulated by the school, despite the fact that much care had been taken to draft something that was friendly and accessible. These were the two schools serving the most disadvantaged communities, with the most turbulent histories and the shortest opportunity for change. The difficulty is perhaps not surprising against that context, and the simplest response might have been to ignore the parent component of the research in these schools.

However, after considerable thought and discussion, I concluded this was not an acceptable response, and in discussion with each school, tried to find a different way to proceed. I attended community events at both schools and established contact with some parents who had taken a lead in organising these activities. I used a snowball technique to encourage them to introduce me to someone else they thought it would be good for me to meet. By this means, I arranged to speak to a number of connected parents individually by phone. I also moved the focus of the parent dimension of the research in these two schools to incorporate the role and development of the newly established parent council in one, or the 'Friends of the Academy', as it was termed, in the other. Through this change, I hoped to gain some understanding of the ways in which engagement emerged and developed within the parent body.

I had also intended to focus on tracking students in two tutor groups in Y7 and Y9 across the two years in each school. In the end, this only proved possible in one of the schools. In the other two, again Ashtree and Chestnut, a broader mix of young people became involved as student leaders. In one case, this was, in part, due to the vertical tutor group structure used by the school. In the other case, insufficient numbers consented to take part in the first instance. In both cases, it was agreed that the school would take responsibility for offering the survey to all its students on a voluntary basis and to ask parents to let the school know if they were unhappy for these responses to be made available anonymously for research purposes. No focus groups were held in the form originally envisaged.

Focus groups were used to complement the surveys completed by staff in all three schools and by students in the first year in one (Birchgrove). However, it proved impossible to bring groups of parents together in any school. As a result, a small and arguably unrepresentative number of individual telephone and face-to-face interviews were undertaken with parents who volunteered. In the case of Ashtree and Chestnut, this approach was directed towards those encountered through their involvement with the Friends or parent council organisations who were involved in the community events attended by the researcher.

In all three schools, however, I was led by the emerging findings to incorporate a much stronger focus in year two on the development of student leadership than I had envisaged. I therefore arranged to meet with the student leaders in each of the schools as a group mid-way through and at the end of the research period, tracking their experiences specifically across the second year of data gathering.

Finally, a focus group of external partners nominated by the headteacher in each school proved logistically too difficult to arrange, so telephone interviews were held with a number in each case towards the end of year one. However, for reasons that are described more fully in the case studies and in Chapter 5 (Discussion and Analysis), this was not repeated in year two, because of the ways both the schools and their partners had changed.

Thus, the original research plan has had to be flexible and adapt to the reality on the ground without losing the research purpose. It was most difficult at Ashtree and Chestnut given their particular contexts and history. The easiest solution might, at one level, have been to remove these schools from the research and focus on a single, more in-depth case study, but I felt it was important to find a way for the voice of the more challenging communities and schools to be heard through following the data that was emerging. For that reason, I felt it best to change aspects of the research design to allow time and find ways for that to be possible.

3.9 Data analysis

Initial baseline interviews were held in Ashtree and Birchgrove in November 2010 and Chestnut in March 2011. These involved, in each case, one-hour individual interviews with the Headteacher, and slightly shorter interviews with a Deputy, a Governor, and the lead manager responsible for partnerships and community engagement. The purpose was to establish a frame of reference for understanding their situation and intentions, from which both to track their progress over the subsequent two years, and also to begin to develop a method of qualitative data analysis.

The initial baseline interviews were analysed after transcription using open coding. This was developed in three stages:

- a. initial comparison of independent coding by the researcher with his supervisor, based on a common sample of the first school's responses.
- b. a further blind coding of first school responses by the researcher.
- c. a third coding by the researcher using data from the second and third schools.

This resulted in several revisions to the original coding and was followed by an initial grouping into concepts.

After the second round of interviews, I began to feel these first coding attempts focused too simply on topics in an abstract sense and that they needed to be developed more to

reflect actions and processes. Charmaz (2006: 136) advises the use only of gerunds in coding on the grounds that this focus on processes and actions, thus encouraging the seeing of sequences and the making of connections.

I therefore revisited the coding and also began to develop possible themes and patterns arising from them on this basis. These were shared with the three heads collectively at the end of year one for discussion and comment. All three agreed to seek to collect ongoing data in year two that may reflect these themes. They used a list of potential sources of evidence, adapted from one proposed by Dyson et al. (2011) to schools in their research, as a guide in this.

I decided not to make transcripts of the interviews available to interviewees for checking after each session. I felt that the ongoing series of interviews allowed scope for me to cross-check emerging findings, without participants being placed in a situation where they felt they needed to defend or adapt what they were saying to be consistent with previous interviews. Inevitably, views would develop and change over the extended period of the research. I read all the transcripts in tandem with the recordings to check for accuracy and also meaning.

I did, however, provide the three heads with six-monthly updates on the progress of the whole research and met with them as a group together on three occasions to explore

common issues and report progress. I also took time with the lead managers to share with them the developing shape and direction of the research over and above the interview time we had. In addition, transcripts of their own interviews were shared with each head at the end of the research period.

A preliminary analysis was made of responses to the first survey in Year 1. These, however, were not examined by sub-category of participant, nor a full analysis made of open comments, until the end of year 2. Because of the variable numbers, and the small nature of some sample sizes, it was decided not to apply statistical analysis to these data, but to examine each survey individually against the context of its school. The detail of this is contained in Chapter 4 in the introduction to the case studies. An example spreadsheet containing the overall summary of responses for one school can be found in Appendix 6.

3.10 Summary

This chapter has discussed the choice of methodology for this research and the rationale behind that. It then looked at the issues of design and implementation that followed from this. Within that methodology, particular significance has been given to understanding at the outset the intentions of the three schools, and using this to guide the subsequent processes of data collection and analysis. The next chapter describes in detail the results of *'the study of singularity conducted in depth'* (Bassey 1999) in each of the three chosen cases.

4. CASE STUDIES

4.1 Overview

The three case studies that follow trace the development, change and impact of the strategies for community engagement initiated by the respective headteachers during the period September 2010 to August 2012. Each case study draws on the methodology set out in Chapter 3, but adapted for the particular circumstances of the school. This is explained in each case in the section on methodological considerations.

Each case study is written following a similar structure:

Introduction

This explains the context of the school and its communities.

Methodological considerations

This section explains the adaptations to the methodology adopted for this school and the reasons for these. In addition, each head was invited to identify sources of data that they held which they felt would provide indicators of change against the outcomes they were seeking for their community engagement strategy. Their chosen indicators are identified here.

Baseline

This section sets out the headteacher's perspective at the start of the case study period, their intention and purposes, and the strategy they were adopting to try and achieve these. This account is supplemented by other interview data obtained at the time for the purposes of triangulation, and concludes with identifying key themes that emerged.

Year 1 Findings

This section examines the evidence gained during the first year. It is structured in four sections:

i. Contextual change

This section records significant changes in the context of the school that may impact upon its community engagement strategy, since the baseline visit.

ii. Survey evidence

This section considers the survey evidence from students, staff and parents, where available. Survey responses have been analysed using a five-point scoring scale for each statement, where 1 represents 'strongly disagree' and 5 represents 'strongly agree'.

The question statements in the survey were clustered according to the four guiding themes that arose from the initial literature review and coding process; attitudes to school, trust, engagement, and support for learning. The structure of the survey was designed to reflect the amended version of the Office for National Statistics Framework for Social Capital adopted for this research (see p.109 and p.131).

Responses to the statements from each theme were scored as indicated and an overall average for that theme derived from those scores. A further potential cross-check has been applied by including survey statements drawn from Goddard's (2003) Social Capital Scale (see p.111), as these had been subjected to statistical testing and multi-level modeling. The combined score for these questions is shown as a separate category in the summary table. It should however be noted that Goddard only applied his scale with teachers, not with other stakeholders, so its transferability is not a given.

In addition, the three most positive statements and the three least positive statements for each stakeholder group are tabulated, to give an indication of aspects attracting the greatest strength of feeling within a stakeholder group.

The size of samples in each school is relatively small, ranging from 12 to 164 at the extremes, but with a median of 26. Therefore, the survey responses are being used only to provide an insight into attitudes and feelings and how these might be changing over time. No attempt is made to gauge statistical significance or draw inferences between or across schools or groups.

iii. Stakeholder evidence

The evidence from interviews and focus groups with students, staff, and, where available, parents and external partners is then considered.

iv. Leadership evidence

Finally the data gained from interviews with various leaders, including the head, deputy, chair of governors, and other key members of the school leadership team, is examined.

Within the consideration of leadership, each school identified a member of the leadership team who had a major responsibility for their community engagement strategy. The title and duties attached to this role varied. For the sake of clarity and consistency for the reader, the name of this role is referred to throughout as the 'partnership lead'. Although no

school uses this exact term, it does convey some sense of intention and status. The different meaning attached to this role by each school is explained in the relevant baseline section.

Year 2 Findings

This section reviews the evidence gained during the second year and follows a similar pattern of organisation to the previous section with the same four sub-headings.

Evidence of change

This section summarises key evidence that has emerged from the case study in relation to the nature and process of change and the major themes which emerged from the baseline interviews. It considers the evidence of change that might be associated with the head's community engagement strategy, drawing on consideration of the outcomes offered by the school itself, alongside the survey and interview data from across the two years.

A note on identifiers

The three schools are identified throughout by the pseudonyms Ashtree, Birchgrove and Chestnut.

The roles in each school are identified by common initial letters:

G: Governor	H: Headteacher
L: Student	P: Parent
S: Staff member	V: Deputy Head
W: Partnership Lead	Y: Partner

These are combined with the school's initial placed first. Thus AH is the head of Ashtree. A number follows to indicate which interview is referenced. So AH1 refers to the first interview held with the head of Ashtree.

Where there is more than one interviewee in any group in a school they are identified, as necessary, by a small letter after their identifying initial. So APb1 would be used to identify comments from the first interview with the second parent at Ashtree.

4.2 Case Study 1 - Ashtree School

4.2.1 Introduction

The school opened in its present form in September 2007, having moved into brand new buildings, funded with Private Finance Initiative (PFI) money. The present headteacher (AH) was appointed to coincide with the new school building and identity. The predecessor school was perceived to have a poor reputation and to be very under-achieving.

The school lies on the outskirts of a major city and serves an ill-defined geographical community. According to AH:

“We don’t have a village centre, or set of shops, or a church, or anything that clearly defines community. Our parents and children don’t have that in their own lives either ... So I feel our school, hopefully working with partner schools, actually has a role in defining what that community might mean”. (AH1)

Two wards have high levels of deprivation.

“I think we’ve the lowest average age of mortality. People die younger in one ward than anywhere else in the city. The other has the second such figure. That’s kind of daunting. What does it mean for our community in terms of health and wellbeing - their physical health and wellbeing as well as their mental health and wellbeing? It obviously impacts upon our children”. (AH1)

The school has 790 pupils on roll and has specialist status for English and modern foreign languages. Most students are of White British heritage, with broadly average

proportions from minority ethnic backgrounds, but the number of children who speak English as an additional language has been increasing rapidly, from 20 in 2006 to 128, representing 28 home languages, in 2010. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, and the percentage known to be eligible for free school meals, are above average. There are high levels of pupil mobility.

“I sometimes describe my children as coming from chaotic backgrounds ... I have children that move from family member to family member during their schooling. Some ... have already been to three or four secondary schools. Not the majority, but some ... and this has huge impact. I’ve welcomed 38 students as in-year entrants since September, and we’re talking on November 10th”. (AH1)

So this is a rapidly changing school community. Although AH noted there is a group of middle class parents, and the school has a truly comprehensive range of ability across its students, she also explains it is in no way a normal distribution curve in terms of attainment or socio-economics, being skewed towards the lower end.

4.2.2 Methodological considerations

Students

Only one parent and two students from groups identified by the school responded to the initial invitation to contribute to the research through the surveys. It was therefore necessary to consider carefully whether and how to proceed from this point.

It seemed important to acknowledge the reality behind this lack of response in re-considering the overall research design rather than exclude those who perhaps felt alienated either by the formality of the research or the fact that it was connected with school. Therefore, in discussion with the headteacher, two alternative strategies were adopted. First, the school itself offered the student survey directly to all students as part of its own consultation processes. Students and parents were advised the anonymous results would be made available for research purposes, and if they had concerns about this, it was not necessary to complete the survey. 27 students completed the survey in year one and 167 students in year two.

Second, it became apparent during the first year how central the development of student leadership was to AH's strategy to change the culture of both staff and students. So instead of a focus group, permission was sought to interview a group of student leaders. This took place at the beginning and end of year two. Six students took part in the first group interview and four in the second. Two students took part in both interviews.

Parents

Given the lack of response indicated above, in order to try to establish contact with some parents I attended the first-ever Community Fun Day organised by the school in partnership with local primary schools. Three parents that I met there agreed to be interviewed by phone, including one parent whose son was also a student leader.

I also arranged to follow the development of the Parent Council, which had been established two years earlier as part of the requirements for becoming a trust school. I interviewed the Chair or Vice-Chair on three occasions.

Staff

The survey was made available online to all staff. In the first year, 27 staff responded, with the same number in the second year. Of these, it is not known exactly how many individuals completed the survey on both occasions, but, of those who chose to give their name, the number appears to be small.

Seven staff volunteered to participate in a focus group. Of these, four were able to attend the first year focus group, and four participated in the second year. Two were common to both sessions.

Partners

At the start of the research period AH identified as key strategic partners:

- The community learning centre which is co-located on the same campus.
- A local primary school.
- A voluntary organisation.

The latter of these chose not to participate in the research. Interviews were held at the end the first year with the other two. Because of changes in the situation of both partners, these were not repeated in year two.

Leadership

In addition to a baseline and concluding interview with the headteacher, and three intervening interviews with her across the two years, interviews were also held with the deputy head, and the partnership lead (AW), who subsequently was also to become the member of staff responsible for student leadership.

Governance

Since 2009, the school had been part of a National Challenge Trust, formed with the local university and the city council. The initial chair of the trust was interviewed at the end of each year of the research. During year two the trust was involved in moving towards academy status, as sponsor for both Ashtree and other schools, and the initial chair became vice-chair.

Outcome indicators

AH chose to provide the following data at end of year two as indicators of the outcomes she was seeking:

- Student progress data

- Externally conducted surveys of student and parent satisfaction
- Survey of primary school feedback
- Files of informal stakeholder feedback comment
- Analysis of parent open evening feedback

4.2.3 Baseline

Joining the school in 2006, AH found:

“a castle, with a very wide, deep moat, and a drawbridge, and that drawbridge didn’t go down very often, and only for a select few” (AH1).

She suggested various reasons for this. Two local schools had closed down, and the students from those schools came to Ashtree. This caused turbulence in the school community:

“I think the school battened down its hatches. I understand in stormy times it’s quite a good thing to do in some areas, but it perhaps makes you vulnerable to not seeing what happens out there”. (AH1)

Her deputy (AV) went further:

“I came here seven years ago and there was absolutely no link with any primary school or any Further Education establishment, and, I can’t stress this enough, this bunker mentality was ... actually deliberately fostered”. (AV1)

A parent, also a governor, experienced the problem this way:

“I think the biggest issue in the community at large is the reputation of the previous school. There’s still a hangover. It’s a very difficult thing to fight. The attitudes of people towards my son in his uniform were not good”. (AG1)

AH set out to fill in the moat she had perceived. *“We looked for support from as many people as we could. We started being less defensive and tried to be more engaging”* (AH1).

However, this was not straightforward. AH believed it was necessary to address internal matters before the school could have the confidence or capacity to look outwards too much:

“Community engagement for me hasn’t been an easy journey ... I’ve had to get things right here before we could engage with the community. I would’ve loved to be doing this work four years ago so we could see the impact of it, but we just didn’t have the capacity. We had to get our own house straight before we could have any kind of meaningful dialogue with key stakeholders”. (AH1)

For AH, engagement and partnership did not just mean talking to people, but *“actual two-way dialogue with stakeholders, shared vision and values between school and overlapping stakeholders”* (AH1).

Ashtree’s historically low levels of academic achievement meant it was characterised in government policy at the time as a school under National Challenge, required to improve or face intervention. In 2009, it became part of a National Challenge Trust, in which the main partners were the University, the FE College and the local authority. The chair of the Trust acknowledged the challenge posed by the school, but also recognised the

positive impact AH's leadership was having, and gave her full support in tackling the change in staff culture, which he saw as key to successful outcomes for students.

AH identified three key elements of her approach:

- *“communication”*.
- *“a more distributed leadership within school, giving people autonomy along with accountability to do their roles”*.
- *“relationships with families (so that) families see us as supporting them and their children”*. (AH1)

To give one example, she changed the pastoral system to a vertical house system, along with associated staffing arrangements to make it *“easier for parents to feel we are supporting them. It's had huge benefits in terms of behaviour and attendance”* (AH1).

The impact of AH on the school was strongly recognised by all those interviewed at the baseline stage. For AW:

“She's very honest, open and friendly, both to parents and other local schools.... Time and again, I hear from parents who've met AH that she's the reason they're sending their child here. The attitude to the school in the cluster can be quite quickly changed, in a positive way, by the way AH operates”. (AW1)

AGb endorsed this view. She found the school had become much more approachable and responsive. For her, the cause was clear:

“I don't think you could overstate the difference AH has made to the feel of school and the community ... Her clear commitment to the students, and passion, is what people see

as being the school, regardless of the teaching, regardless of all those other things like league tables, it's AH who makes the difference". (AGb1)

For AH, students are her highest priority:

"The most important people I am accountable to are the children in the school. If we don't have the ambition that all our children can be successful, can achieve their potential and more, then we shouldn't be here". (AH1)

Success here includes a range of elements connected with personal and social development, particularly communication and confidence:

"I want our children to understand that adults aren't an unknown quantity. Too many of my children don't have conversations ... I want children at this school to be able to communicate and articulate with the different groups within their local community". (AH1)

But she also suggests that a further motivation is to help her students understand they have a part to play in shaping the present and the future:

"If you say you teach in a secondary school, people go, 'My goodness, what an awkward age group!'. They're not an awkward age group, they're just teenagers, just like we were. I want to help my children understand they can be really powerful in shaping their own futures, well, shaping their now as well as their futures". (AH1)

A final key element in her thinking looked beyond the individual and the school, towards a joined-up view of education across all sectors:

"I have this picture in my head. We've brought about internal school improvement, we haven't finished yet, but it's a bit like building a tower. To build it any taller, we have to put some stabilisers out, and those stabilisers are our work with the community. By 'community', I mean engaging parents more, and one of our chosen routes to that is working more closely with primary schools". (AH1)

In fact, the involvement of the university and the FE College as Trust partners extends the potential even beyond a 0-19 age range, and at the heart of this vision lay support for families:

“This isn’t about wishy-washy ‘come and have a cup of tea’ support. It’s about teachers talking learning, talking about a common language for learning. It’s teachers sharing INSET about emotional literacy, about researching practices, so children see education provides them with a seamless experience, and transition doesn’t get in the way of that”.
(AH1)

AW, the partnership lead, had become AH’s key agent in bringing about this vision. However, at the time, she only worked part-time, and was not employed by the school. The ‘extended services’ funding that supported her post was to disappear within months, following changes in government policy and budget cuts.

AW’s prime role was to support the cluster of schools, but she was based at Ashtree, both because of their capacity to support her and their key role in the cluster. Under her guidance, the cluster had started to develop towards a more defined partnership:

“The work of the cluster... was basically a casual meeting of heads to think about how they needed to work better together and just have some time to say ‘this has happened to me, any advice or help’, or whatever. A number of schools were starting to say ‘well, actually we have the same challenges, we really have the same families, the same community, although it’s not a designated community that anyone could see. So we really need to work a lot more closely together” (AW1).

AW’s role was to help the schools within the Partnership, which comprised Ashtree and five other primary and children’s centres, to work together to create this vision of:

“separate schools and settings but with a oneness about them to make it easier for us to work with and serve our community, so we can work with whole families rather than individual students, whilst they are with us, to help smooth the learning journey from Children’s Centre all the way through”. (AW1)

This role was still new and not fully formulated at the time of the baseline visit. AW reported to AH as line manager, but had a steering group, comprising the heads and governor representatives from all settings. The stated aim of their work was to see the communities that Ashtree serves having improved aspirations for both themselves as communities and for their children:

“If we achieved that, everything else would be falling into place. People within school might verbalise it slightly differently, because in school it’s very much about attainment and results, but if we had [that], then attainment and results would really improve dramatically. You’ve real issues around here in parents engaging in their child’s education, and having any idea that this is at all important, or beautiful, or helpful”. (AW1)

But the structures of participation and stakeholding are complex and partially overlapping. In addition to the cluster partnership, there is the National Challenge Trust and the governing body. There is also a Parent Council, a legal requirement for trust schools, but there were some suggestions that its purposes are not always clear. A parent governor commented that the Parent Council seemed a ‘*tick box*’ response to DfE requirements rather than a genuine exercise in engagement. She went on to note that work around the community engagement agenda had been very peripheral to the governing body.

Summary of Baseline Findings

In summary, AH saw the stage school development had reached in terms of starting to secure and build improvement in student outcomes through increased confidence in the school. This is because “*a confident school builds a confident community and a confident community builds a confident school*” (AHI).

The baseline interviews indicated a number of distinctive features of development at Ashtree that it would be important to track across the next two years. The most significant of these are:

- the impact of the head in giving direction to the previously withdrawn, inward-looking school, building confidence and mutual esteem within its communities.
- the nature of partnerships being developed to foster a sense of cohesiveness across education provision.
- the difficulties in and opportunities for the engagement of parents and for taking a holistic view of the family.
- the development of self-confidence among students as a critical element of success for them and for the school.

4.2.4 Year 1 Findings

Contextual change

The school received an OFSTED inspection in March 2011. This found the school to be “*satisfactory, with a strong commitment to rapid improvement*”. AH was pleased with the outcome to a degree.

“We had some very positive things. Attitudes and behaviour are good, something the school were fighting for long before my arrival, and just as important as good exam results”. (AH2)

She returned again to the matter of confidence:

“We were judged as satisfactory and improving rapidly, which is good, but we need to be outstanding. We need the confidence to say we can do this. We’ve had low self-esteem ... so no-one has the confidence to improve ... We knew we were improving but Ofsted have confirmed it. Attendance has improved. I’m not convinced about the results this year, but I think we can ride whatever results throw at us because we’re in a better place”. (AH2)

AH offered as an example of that ‘*better place*’ holding the recent first ‘Community Fun Day’ in conjunction with local primary schools. This afternoon festival was attended by many more people than were expected, and feedback was highly positive. Ashtree student leaders played a significant part in its organisation.

In another development, AW was now employed directly by Ashtree, still part-time, following the withdrawal of external funding. Her role now included the development of student leadership, through a structure known as the school senate, and the future

development of the Parent Council, as well as supporting the wider cluster partnership. She had been joined by a Marketing Manager, an ex-governor and former deputy editor of the local paper, and she was now starting to work more closely with the recently appointed transition coordinator on the school staff, whose role was to work with local primary schools on all transition issues.

AH saw these as key developments, particularly in their impact on students. She continued to emphasise the importance of AW as a leader in the school:

“She sees clearly what we need to do to build the school into one you’d want to send your children to. She’s ... been instrumental in organising the cluster partnership, and student voice – that’s having an enormous effect. That, I believe, is where the school will be transformed. You’ll have student leadership in the classroom and beyond the school as well. They’ve brought an energy that you never get from adults. They see the change agenda perfectly and they understand it fully”. (AH2)

Finally, the question of academy status was being taken forward by the Trust. This was proving complex for a PFI school. Moreover, because the local authority was a partner in the existing trust, the DfE was unhappy with the Trust submission to become the academy sponsor, leading to some tough negotiation. The Trust chair was clear:

“We’ll hang onto our core principles and challenge the government. You can make the case that ... [some city-wide ownership and contribution] ... is no longer a goal. But it’s where we started, so if we’re going to change our position, we need an absolutely clear rationale as to why”. (AGa1)

Survey evidence

A summary of survey responses from all groups is captured in Table 9. The rationale for the grouping of statements and the scoring method adopted has been explained in detail at the start of this chapter (p. 157).

The sample sizes achieved from students and staff are broadly similar but represent quite different proportions of the respective populations, 3.6% of students and roughly a third of staff. Students from all year groups responded, but Y7 and Y9 were over-represented. The proportion of teaching and support staff responding is broadly similar, but the response from middle managers is also over-represented compared with other staff.

For both groups, their sense of trust and engagement appears relatively limited. The least positive survey comments further support this assessment. Staff show limited confidence in parents (2.7) or students (2.89) to meet commitments or work hard. Students do not express a strong feeling that they can make a difference to Ashtree (3.13), although those students who identified themselves as student leaders and completed the survey do say they feel that ability.

YEAR 1	ALL	STUDENTS	STAFF
(Note: on the scale used, 1 is the lowest score possible and 5 is the highest)	n = 52	n = 25	n = 27
ALL RESPONSES	3.53	3.52	3.54
ATTITUDES TO SCHOOL	3.82	3.66	4.02
TRUST	3.3	3.26	3.32
ENGAGEMENT	3.46	3.41	3.51
SUPPORT FOR LEARNING	3.68	3.86	3.5
GODDARD'S SOCIAL CAPITAL SCALE	3.16	3.31	3.09

Table 9: Ashtree - survey response analysis – Year 1

YEAR 1	MOST POSITIVE STATEMENT 1		MOST POSITIVE STATEMENT 2		MOST POSITIVE STATEMENT 3	
STUDENTS	The staff here want me to do well I know who the school's leaders are	4.17	I am well supported at school	3.95	The school has good facilities	3.92
STAFF	The school has good facilities	4.52	Serving the students is the highest priority of staff	4.33	The people I work with are willing to help each other even if it means doing something outside their usual activities or job	4.26

YEAR 1	MOST NEGATIVE STATEMENT 1		MOST NEGATIVE STATEMENT 2		MOST NEGATIVE STATEMENT 3	
STUDENTS	Students here are caring towards each other	2.78	I know what the school wants to do in future	3.04	I feel I can make a difference	3.13
STAFF	Parents at this school can be relied on to meet their commitments	2.7	Students in this school can be counted on to work hard	2.89	Parent involvement supports learning here	2.96

Table 10: Ashtree – most positive and negative survey statements - Year 1

Stakeholder evidence

What comes through from the interviews with parents and students is a stronger positive feeling than is evident in the survey evidence. The small number interviewed, in both groups, were those whose motivation and commitment to the school was already high. It is clear such individuals were present in the school and also that their commitment was strong, but they are not necessarily typical of their peers as a whole. The exact balance between those with stronger or less strong commitment is unclear.

Parents

APa's daughter had just joined the school in September. It was a conscious choice:

"I think the overall curriculum here, the teachers being friendly, the welcome you got, everything just seemed to fit into place." (APa1).

APb was also a new parent at the school. Her son joined Y7 at the start of the year and was already a member of the student leadership group:

"I've been pleasantly reassured so far. As a bright child I worried he'd be bullied, but he's been fine and made a good bunch of friends. He's been involved in the community promoting the Fun Day. He's had to go to local primary schools to speak about it, which was good for his confidence and English skills. Helping in organising the day has been a really positive thing for him". (APb1)

It is again the presence of AH that is significant for her. APb was impressed by "*her ideas, her passion and enthusiasm. She's obviously very driven and an excellent leader for the school*". She concluded, "*I do have confidence in where the school is going*".

Students

Student leaders were also enthusiastic in their commitment to change, and showed growth in confidence about the school and about themselves:

"Things are getting better, but the next step is to change our grades. They're improving, but we want to get better". (ALa1)

"I think the school's changed a lot over the last 3 years. We used to have polo shirts, but we changed the uniform, and I think people respect us more. We don't look scruffy when we come to school, we look smarter, as if we want to learn". (ALb1)

"What annoyed me was a lot of the people who go on about 'this school is rubbish', they've never actually been here, so they don't know what it's like. I wanted to make some changes, and work with the community so that people can see 'yes, this school does have problems, but it's not as bad as people think'". (ALc1)

"I didn't fit into my old school and I didn't think I'd fit in here either, but then I discovered there are some really good pupils, teachers here are nice, and people here like me". (ALd1)

Importantly, these were not just the obvious students who came with positive attitudes.

They included difficult students who had received help and support to make a significant personal change in attitude. For example:

"Y6 I was naughty, Y7 I was naughty, Y8 I was a bit. Since I've been in Y9, I've been kicked out of lessons and I was on report. They told me if I wasn't good I'd have no future, and they've been helping me and stuff, and I've been good since". (ALe1)

"I was bullied at my other school. I fit in here. I have to wear a uniform here and that's better for me. My confidence has improved. I've made new friends. Also my levels and my actual school work, like maths, I struggled, but I now get it and I'm good at it now". (ALc1)

Staff

The staff interviewed were, again, not a random sample, but a group of volunteers, who may therefore be regarded as among the more motivated staff. However, the staff focus group provided a clear indication of a group of staff with understanding of and commitment to the changes AH was seeking, with growing pride in the school, and perceiving some change in parental views:

“I think the big change is people aren’t saying “Oh, it’s Ashtree”, they’re celebrating us now. The reputation is building within the community and people are feeling more comfortable sending their children here. 18 months ago parents would say ‘oh, you poor thing’ if your child was offered a place here. Now they’re proud they’ve got a place. That’s a huge turnaround”. (ASc1)

The things that gave this group of staff a sense of pride were clear in this exchange:

“The recognition is greater than I’ve seen in other places, people will say ‘well done’ to you in the corridor”. (ASb1)

“I think the parents really appreciate you going that extra mile for them. You get some great feedback from parents who feel the school is very different”. (ASc1)

“I think the biggest thing for me is the children. They appreciate what we do”. (ASb1)

Partners

The two partner organisations identified by the school, a primary school and a community association, echoed positive views of the partnership, but also reinforced the difficulties Ashtree faced in engaging with parents:

“I think (Ashtree staff) are very generous of their time, energy and enthusiasm. Both AH and AW are good to work with and ensure things happen. Both have great strengths in knowledge and expertise in dealing with outside agencies. AH has great vision of the child from the start to the end of their education. She’s keen to get our more

aspirational parents to go to Ashtree. It's really hard because most of our parents will choose the C of E secondary school or they'll go to a school they perceive as better. Parents are quite critical of the school, but we want to promote it". (AYa1)

For the chair of the community association, their partnership was about complementing the work of the school:

"It's looking at what we can provide that the school can't. That way we can benefit the school for those children that won't come in after school, and support parents so it doesn't feel like we're educating them. My major challenge was how to get those parents through that school gate. They knew it wasn't school, but it was on school grounds, and for many parents that barrier was significantly challenging". (AYb1)

The head of the primary school highlighted transition, sharing expertise, and generosity as the main areas of benefit, including providing specialist teaching and joint teacher observations, but adds a note of caution:

"We're keen to promote that link as part of the Partnership. But as a church school it's not appropriate for us to join forces - we have to remain within the C of E group of schools. The main purpose of the Partnership is to strengthen the community". (AYa1)

The Partnership itself had some difficult discussions, hinted at in that last comment. For a period it became bogged down in concerns about structure and governance and the impact of academy status. These took a long time to resolve, but the group now wanted to be moving forward in a more unified way. They adopted a formal constitution and have applied to become a charity. Roles were being shared around more equitably, and significantly funding for AW's post was now being shared more evenly across the

schools. The rationale for this move stemmed from the dawning realisation across all of the schools that parental engagement was their biggest common concern.

Leadership evidence

AW's role within Ashtree had strengthened considerably over the year. This was partly because Ashtree now funded part of her post directly, because of the significant contribution AH perceived she could make to helping change the culture. As a result, AW felt more integral to the school, and that the value she could bring was starting to be recognised by staff:

“I'm having more impact on children and their education than I ever imagined at the beginning. I hadn't really taken on board when I started that I'd ever do any work with students, whereas now they're knocking on my door almost on an hourly basis. I feel quite passionately the work I'm doing with students will change their lives”. (AW3)

The changes she saw in students involved opening up avenues they would never previously have considered and developing new communication skills. Most were now used to standing up in front of large groups of students or adults, having presented in primary schools, in whole-school assemblies, and at staff INSET days. Most recently, they had organised a conference with local schools in the neighbourhood council house. The young people worked with councillors to share their views and concerns living as young people in the neighbourhood:

“Actually getting them to influence not just each other but the councillors and the decision-making that's going on - that's really powerful stuff. It wouldn't necessarily happen just sitting in a classroom learning about geography and politics. We took the

student leaders, but also some of the more hard-to-reach students. One of those is probably going to take on the role of shadowing one of the councilors in the local area. For a student who's to some degree struggling at school to be able to have a really strong leadership role within the community is really exciting". (AW3)

AW's involvement with parent council was only just starting to move forward. She wanted to shift its focus "*into something where the parents and school are working in partnership to make the school and education better*". However, only a small number of parents, around 14 in total, were currently involved at all:

"I'd like to see more parents involved. We've discussed it on a number of occasions, and don't seem to be getting very far. I suggested 'why don't you bring a friend?'. I was really shocked when they said, 'But we don't know anybody else'. That may be because the catchment area for the school is quite wide, but I don't know. It could be a reflection of the type of community we're in. It's forever changing, so people don't necessarily know their neighbours or the people down the street". (AW3)

4.2.5 Year 2 Findings

Contextual change

Ashtree's 2011 GCSE results fell below what the school had hoped for and just matched the previous year at 37% of students achieving 5 A*-C (EM) grades. AH was also disappointed in November 2011 when the number of expressions of first choice by parents for children to join the school in September 2012 also fell. Some explanation for this may lie in the opening of a new free school within the catchment area, which removed 80 places from the wider system. It was nevertheless a serious disappointment:

“Whilst recognising all sorts of issues about demographics, we’d hoped to hold our own. It’s early days, but my key staff will be devastated because the work done has been powerful. We now have more positive relations with more primary schools, and the feeling in those schools is all positive. Is our perception wrong? Do we hear things we just want to hear? Do we see success in a different way to the primary schools? Or is it just one part of a much more complex thing? We have to investigate all those to find out what the real factor is”. (HA3)

However, the Secretary of State had now granted academy status. This would take effect from September 2012, but involve considerable prior work for both the existing Trust and AH to put the necessary changes in place. As one of these changes, the school had acquired the modern on-site building previously used by the now-defunct City Learning Centre. In exchange, the school would accommodate an existing nearby infant school on-site from September 2012. This school would also come under the auspices of the academy trust, but retain a separate identity, nevertheless opening up a path to develop all-age schooling on Ashtree’s campus. The necessary building adaptation and negotiations all created further significant demands on AH’s time.

Her workload pressure was further compounded by the long-term illness of one of the senior leadership team, and by the departure of the school business manager mid-way through the year. In addition, during the year, AW faced a long-term family illness. As a result, AH decides to ease some of the pressure on her by taking over temporarily her parent council responsibility.

Survey evidence

The student sample this year was much larger, over a fifth of the school population, and may therefore give a more accurate picture. 40% of responses came from Y9, and a further 40% from Y7 and Y8. Y10 and Y11 are less represented, although this may be partly because of timing and examinations. The proportion of teaching staff responding was much smaller than in the first year, while the number of administrative staff responding was much higher.

A number of features stand out in comparison with the previous year's questionnaire. There is an apparent decline in staff scorings overall, most noticeably in relation to the social capital scale, trust (from 3.32 to 3.18) and attitudes to school (from 4.02 to 3.82), although an increased positivity in relation to engagement (from 3.51 to 3.68).

Meanwhile student scores have improved overall, most notably in positive responses in relation to attitudes to school (3.66 to 3.9) and engagement (3.41 to 3.58). However, it may also be noteworthy that feeling safe in the school has now attracted the most negative score from students (2.46), and significantly down on the previous year, while statements about trust in staff also score among the lowest (2.91 and 2.96). It is possible to speculate these two changes may be connected, with staff unease transmitting through to students, and so connected also with the overall changes in staff responses. But the link cannot be established, and is contradicted by the interview evidence from students

and staff in the next section. Alternatively, it may reflect changes in the make-up of the sample.

While in both years, staff have been least positive about the response from parents (2.7 and 2.38), in year two it is quality of communication (2.38) and the culture of openness and transparency (2.72) that receive lowest scores. One possible explanation for this change might lie in the move to academy status, perhaps viewed with suspicion by some, and in the associated pressures on senior leadership time noted earlier.

YEAR 2	ALL	STUDENTS	STAFF
(Note: on the scale used, 1 is the lowest score possible and 5 is the highest)	n = 194	n = 167	n = 27
ALL RESPONSES	3.57	3.67	3.47
ATTITUDES TO SCHOOL	3.86	3.9	3.82
TRUST	3.25	3.37	3.18
ENGAGEMENT	3.63	3.58	3.68
SUPPORT FOR LEARNING	3.68	3.9	3.45
GODDARD'S SOCIAL CAPITAL SCALE	3.09	3.29	2.98

Table 11: Ashtree Survey Findings – Year 2

YEAR 2	MOST POSITIVE STATEMENT 1		MOST POSITIVE STATEMENT 2		MOST POSITIVE STATEMENT 3	
STUDENTS	The staff here want me to do well	3.94	I am well supported at school	3.63	I know who the school's leaders are	3.58
STAFF	The school has good facilities	4.44	The people I work with are willing to help each other even if it means doing something outside their usual activities or job	4.38	I'm aware of who the school's leaders are and their roles	4.31

YEAR 2	MOST NEGATIVE STATEMENT 1		MOST NEGATIVE STATEMENT 2		MOST NEGATIVE STATEMENT 3	
STUDENTS	I feel safe in this school	2.46	Staff in this school trust the students	2.91	Students in this school trust the staff I feel I can make a difference	2.96
STAFF	There is good communication in the school Parents at this school can be relied on to meet their commitments	2.38	There is a culture of openness and transparency within the school	2.72	Parents of students in this school encourage their children to learn	2.76

Table 12: Ashtree – most positive and negative survey statements – Year 2

Stakeholder evidence

Parent

APb was now involved with the Parent Council as Vice-Chair. In addition, a second son had entered Y7, and by the year-end was already involved with student leadership:

“I think they’ve both had positive experiences. I’ve not been at school to experience what they’re going through, of course, but what they’re coming home with ... is all positive. I wondered whether there’d be an element of bullying, and I’ve heard nothing of that from either of them. Induction was great for both of them ... really positive ... and allowed them to meet other children, because they’d both come up without many others from their primary school”. (APb2)

The process of joining the student senate was through application letter and interview by existing student members:

“Being on the Senate is particularly important because it means they get involved in things. They’re talking about involving the school in different things, but they’re also going out to other schools. I think it gives them a sense of achievement as well as confidence and responsibility, learning management techniques, and all kinds of things”. (APb2)

She felt her sons were being well prepared for their future through the range of experiences they are having. She had listened to AH talking about the rounded individual and the need to balance results with personal and social development, attitudes, and being involved in the community:

“I think they are becoming well-rounded individuals which is certainly a lot to do with the school. Obviously parenting is part of it, but the school is doing a really good job of bringing them on in every way”.

Her experience of the Parent Council was perhaps less strong:

“We meet once a term to talk about things that interest us as parents, like homework and school dinners. We’ve been getting Post-16 advice recently and talking about options and the way parents’ evenings are structured, various issues that it’s nice to talk to other parents about. It’s a useful forum”. (APb2)

But some lack of clarity of purpose for the council was also evident in her comments, the extent to which it was a social gathering for parents, a fund-raiser organisation, or a vehicle for representing views. Moreover, the council appears to have no formal links to the governing body. Although some parent governors attended council meetings, APb, despite her position, was not sure how close those links were in practice: *“I imagine they’re meant to be linked, but I can’t think of any examples”*.

Staff

Staff who attended the focus group displayed a cautiously positive and upbeat assessment of continuing change in the way the school was perceived outside:

“I don’t live locally, but certainly from people I’ve spoken to, Ashtree’s name and reputation is definitely getting out there”. (ASf2)

At the same time, there was recognition of the long-term nature of such a process:

“I live in the area and have neighbours ... with children this kind of age, one or two are teachers in the primary schools. The word’s getting out, but I don’t know whether the attitude is changing that significantly, I’m sorry to say”. (ASb2)

This was because, although primary age children visit the school regularly and appear to enjoy the experience, parent attitudes may be formed differently and earlier:

“When I talk to parents who might be more au fait with the system and look at Ofsted and examination results, we’ve still, I think, a long way to go in changing attitudes. We might actually be offering the community a great deal they’re benefitting from, but the perceptions of those parents have been established in a sense before a lot of this began”. (ASf2)

The attitude of students themselves, however, may be changing more directly:

“It’s not something you could say had transformed overnight, but I think the atmosphere and attitude towards learning is improving. We still have a very hard core who are resistant, but you’re able to bounce off against them some of those who go to activities, support things, and also get the rewards”. (ASb2)

One possible reason is contained within another comment in relation to enrichment days, with its implication of a change in role and relationship. In the past these had been very “very teacher-led”, with considerable pressure to get through the programme. By contrast:

“This year they had activities and the kids wanted to join in, so they did, and we didn’t have to force them to do anything. Because of that I was able to enjoy the experience instead of dreading it. I’ve come out the other side thinking that was great, I’d love to do it again”. (ASe2)

For some of the group the evidence of change was clear. *“There’s a lot that’s come about in two years”* (ASe2). A key feature of this was *“both children and staff being involved in the community, not being a stand-alone place anymore”* (ASa2).

But one long-serving staff member was more doubtful about meaningful impact on staff:

“I’ve taught in some tough schools and we’ve just grafted away, day in, day out ... Yes, it’s great to hear the staff on a Monday say how good those sessions were last week in transition or what happened on the community day ... but I don’t think it’s changed the way staff work. They work just as hard. There are people here early in the morning and that shows how committed they are”. (ASb2)

None of the staff in the group, however, appeared to be particularly informed about the work of the student senate:

“I don’t know what the Senate’s been doing, even though I have a Y7 student in my tutor group out a lot at Senate meetings. He’s hardly ever in tutor time, so he’s not involved in tutor activities. By the same token, I’ve no idea coming back the other way what the Senate’s doing”. (ASf2)

Students

The senate members themselves had undoubtedly had a positive experience. They highlighted ‘*self-confidence*’, ‘*bonding with people*’, and ‘*confidence because we’ve done public speaking courses and spoken in public*’. For one, ‘*I think I learned the bad and good points of the school, what needs to be done and what’s good already*’. For another, ‘*It gives us better qualifications for our life ahead of us. It’s a great experience for us*’.

The group also thought their work was having a wider effect, within the school and beyond:

“I think it’s working. We’ve got much higher opinions of us. Students are took into account about the community. Down the Hill, last year everyone used to throw apples to cause trouble, but now we’ve been and spread the word to students, it’s not been as bad, and our Police Community Support Officer has come and helped us on that”.
(ALe2)

“I think the exam results have got a bit higher as well because (students’) opinion of school now has changed, because they think ‘I’m going to be happy in school, I’m not going to be moody’. And because we have our jury system, they feel they won’t be bullied, but be in a happy environment”. (ALc2)

This reference to jury and restorative justice approaches is another example of the moves to encourage responsibility and leadership from within the student body rather than imposed by authority.

The commitment of the group has had to be strong:

“Organising all this takes up a lot of time. Sometimes, if a big event’s coming up, I’ll spend 3 or 4 days a week focusing and sorting out Senate stuff. Most of it’s at home. We don’t miss out on lessons”. (ALc2)

The work also involved pressure:

“The senate is a challenge. We tell [new members] it’s going to be hard and there are going to be times when you don’t like it, but you have to get on with it”. (ALg2)

The group was conscious of where improvement in their role is needed on their part and on the part of the school, and was aware of some of the tensions that AW also alludes to later:

“In our meetings we’re trying to do the best for the school, but our environment and our meetings isn’t very good. People try and speak over each other. It’s not very organised at the moment”. (ALg2)

“If someone comes in and says ‘you can do this or that and in my opinion I’d do that’, then we all feel quite intimidated. We feel we have to do that because they’ve said it, so it must be the best thing. So I think we should have half our meeting with AW and then half on our own so we get more confident on doing little meetings without a teacher looking over us all the time”. (ALh2)

Leadership evidence

The team around community, now comprising formally AW, a head of marketing, the senior teacher responsible for transition, and some administrative support, having been strengthened by AH, had become more cohesive as a result:

“We now work incredibly closely together. We share an office. It’s getting all of the people that inter-connect together. This has really helped the capacity side”. (AW4)

AW was, though, not happy overall with the development of student leadership, believing: *“It doesn’t all link together and there aren’t really enough students involved”*. She highlighted that only 10 students can be members of the senate, meeting at lunchtime once a week and on Saturdays. She believed what they do is effective, but other student leadership groups located within the house system had, she felt, worked less well:

“You’ve the wrong people in school managing the other student leadership groups; they don’t have the capacity to run the groups; they don’t happen every week so the kids don’t get used to what they have to do. I think some changes need to be made”. (AW4)

However, the most important change she identified was a clash of culture in terms of pedagogy and classroom management, highlighting the difficulty for classroom teachers who had to “*stand up and manage to get 30 children to behave and do what they’re told*” also to become “*people who are good at not telling kids what to do*”, which she saw as the requirement for student leadership work. “*The senate generally perform best when I’m too busy to come to the meeting. Then they get on and do it themselves, and they’re capable of doing it*” (AW4).

As a result of this tension, she saw one of two problems happening, both missing the sensitivity needed for adult facilitation:

“Either they carry on being the teacher and telling them what to do all the time, or they do nothing. Doing nothing isn’t right either because the kids do need a lot of support and hand-holding”. (AW4)

AW herself felt she was still learning this significant balance:

“I tend to veer on telling them what to do too much, not getting that balance of being able to say ‘OK, right now, for this two minutes, they’re ready to run with it’, then maybe two minutes later having to be quite directive. So it’s having those skills to sit on your hands, stop telling them what to do, but also making sure they’re successful and the projects work, because if you just let them fail, then they won’t try again”. (AW4)

Although the numbers involved in the senate were comparatively small, some of the success stories for individuals have not always been with ‘model’ students who began with positive attitudes to school:

“Last year I had a lovely boy who before he came to the senate was always getting kicked out of classes. He was only in the senate for nine months or so, but in that time his attitude completely changed and he wasn’t a problem in lessons any more. I’d no knowledge he was considered a difficult child, and he was always lovely. I worry a little bit about just deciding who in the school are going to be student leaders, because student leadership could be something that really turns around kids that aren’t particularly academic or particularly good”. (AW4)

4.2.6 Evidence of change

Key themes

The baseline summary identified four foci to guide the field research (p.172). Each of these is considered in summary here in turn, mindful of the inter-relationship between them.

a) The impact of the head in giving direction to the previously withdrawn, inward-looking school and building confidence and mutual esteem within its communities

There is strong interview evidence of the impact of AH as the significant driver of change (see, for example, the comments quoted earlier from AW1, Aga, AGb, APb), as well as of progress being made.

One of the most striking features running through AH’s interviews is her emphasis on the self-esteem and self-confidence needed to form successful relationships, and the parallels constantly drawn between individuals and organisations in that regard. She

believed it was necessary to focus internally in her initial period of headship to help the school become one others would wish to have as a partner.

She experienced difficulty building capacity in her leadership team to support change, but has shown the capacity to grasp opportunities, for instance, to bring together a small, initially ad hoc, team with AW and others, to focus on the wider development she wanted, using primary school transition as a major element. This strengthened team is now bringing significant extra energy and capacity. Three of the four are not teachers.

b) The nature of partnerships being developed to foster a sense of cohesiveness across education provision

There is evidence of an increasing sense of cohesiveness developing among a number of local schools and other partners. The loose alliance of the cluster evolved through hard discussion into a formal alliance, with a name, mission and logo. During my final farewell research visit in autumn 2012, AW was at pains to meet to tell me about the arts week the partnership was planning early in 2013. This was a direct follow-on from the initial Fun Days, and demonstrated among the partners an increased ambition and capacity for success. It also suggests a greater willingness by others to commit and become involved. AW felt she was no longer the only driver for change.

c) The difficulties in and opportunities for the engagement of parents and taking a holistic view of the family

The interview evidence (AH, AW) clearly suggests formal structures may not be the way in which to engage Ashtree parents effectively. They are alien in concept and threatening in appearance. The effect is withdrawal.

The wider question raised is about purpose and rationale. Ashtree has improved communication around the individual student and family through changes to its house structure and staffing, and AH has improved the nature of communication generally. The need for a wider relationship with the school by parents generally on behalf of all students has not been articulated in the same way yet. Equally, there has been little time within the research period for AW to initiate such change.

d) The development of self-confidence among students as a critical element of success for them and for the school

For AH, the development of student leadership has been a key component of her strategy, and the picture in terms of success is mixed:

“I’d love to say the student leadership vision has worked, and if it had, that would’ve made a real change, but we’re not there yet. Maybe I’m too close to it to see, but I do believe the attitude must be being changed in the community with things like the community awards night and hundreds of people here for the second community fun day last week, they were queuing up”. (AH4)

The senate, though small, has had impact both on the individual members, the school and the wider community (AL2), but other elements of AH's student engagement strategy, which have been more teacher-led, have had more mixed results (AW4, AH4). A key factor appears to lie in the different skillset and outlook needed by adults, whether teachers or others, to engage students in this way. It may highlight a need for consideration of staff development before initiating this work.

Additional data provided by the school

Although GCSE attainment data appears to have been static, Ashtree now analyses its headline data more carefully, looking at students against their achievements at KS2 and the levels of progress they make from there. The first year this was possible was 2011, when on headline figures Ashtree was the worst performing school in the city.

Deeper analysis showed Ashtree performed significantly better than they thought with their high achieving students. For this group of students, matched against students of similar attainment in other schools, Ashtree is the fourth best performing school in the city. It is the ninth best performing out of 13 schools for middle attainers, and eighth for the lowest group. It is the overall greater numerical preponderance of this group at Ashtree that brings it down in the combined headline figures.

Ashtree's own externally conducted surveys of student and parent views also show a steady year on year improvement from 2009-2012 on 28 out of 30 measures for parents. For them, reported low-level disruption in lessons is the biggest concern. Student responses do not show such a consistent improvement trend year on year. Seven measures show a small drop, nine are steady and 12 show a significant increase. Scores are below the national average in regard to discipline, interesting lessons, and regular homework.

Concluding discussion

All these data tend to support the broad research findings of significant, but as yet uneven, change in attitudes and culture among stakeholders. The survey and interview evidence from staff and students provides evidence of change, most consistently in terms of student attitudes. What is less clear is the full extent of this, and where the tipping point for change might lie.

AH is confident of the direction of travel, notwithstanding disappointments and reverses along the way, whilst acknowledging that understanding cause and effect is far from simple:

“We've moved on. We're more confident through a combination of things. Schools are complex places. It's not a one-to-one relationship. You cannot separate input variables from outcome variables”. (AH4)

However, there is at least a question about the pace of change, although it is certainly the case that a long-term illness within the SLT hampered progress, and also, with regard to parent council, that AW's family circumstances, had some impact in slowing progress in year two. Moreover the GCSE results in 2012 may have been affected to some degree, in common with many other schools, by the national dispute over grade boundary changes in English, potentially contributing to the fact that the proportion of students achieving 5A*-C grades, including English and Maths, again remained almost static and below expectations.

Nevertheless, AGa, commenting from the perspective of the new academy trust and a personal involvement with other academies, before the 2012 results were known, also observed:

“There's no doubt the journey Ashtree has been on continues to be a positive one. Whether it's making as fast progress as we'd like, or as I've seen in some other academies in challenging circumstances, I may have some reservations about. There's an element of senior leadership still needing to be worked on”. (AGa2)

A further possible explanation to help in understanding the process and extent of change may lie in a notion of critical mass. It is clear that among all three main stakeholder groups, parents, staff and students, there are groups of individuals with high levels of engagement, trust, and participation in the process of change. There is significant evidence, too, of the personal and social development AH seeks among senate students

interviewed. It is probable that in no stakeholder group do these movers and shakers yet form the majority, although their numbers and influence do appear to have increased over two years. The question may be at what point, and by what further means, a critical mass is achieved that drives and accelerates the momentum forward.

4.3 Case Study 2 – Birchgrove School

4.3.1 Introduction

Birchgrove opened as a brand-new school in September 2005, with just two years of entry of 240 students across years 7 and 8. It grew by a further year of entry in each subsequent year, until reaching its full size of 1500 students, with year groups 7-13, in 2011-12.

Most students are of White British heritage, with about a quarter from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of students with special educational needs or disabilities is in line with the national average. There are a small number of looked-after children. The school was designated a specialist science college.

Built on a green field site to serve a planned new community on the edge of a major new town, it shares this site with a community residential special school for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders. In reality, the new housing the school was intended to serve has not yet been built, so in its first years the school took students from more than 40 different primary schools across the city.

4.3.2 Methodological considerations

Students

The school identified a Y7 and a Y9 tutor group to receive an invitation to participate in this research. 15 Y7 students and their parents and 20 Y9 students and their parents agreed.

Of these, 21 students across both year groups completed the survey in year one. Six were from Y9 and 11 from Y7. The remainder did not provide this information. 12 of these also completed it again in year two. Four are known to be from Y8, and four from Y10.

The focus group was held during school time towards the end of year one and organised by school staff. However, only one Y9 and two Y7 students were able to attend at the time arranged by the school. Because of the evident logistical problems involved for the school, this exercise was not repeated in year two. Instead, drawing on the emerging findings in all three case study schools about the significance of student leadership in each head's strategy, two meetings were held with student leaders representing all year groups, one early in the year in which twelve students from all year groups participated, the other towards the end. Six students from Y7-Y10 took part in the latter. Because of timing and examinations, this session did not include Y11-Y13 students.

Parents

25 parents completed the survey in the first year, and 13 of these parents completed it again in the second year.

A focus group was organised towards the end of the first year. Although nine parents had indicated their intention to attend at the agreed time, in reality only two did. A decision was taken in the light of the experience, both here and in the other case study schools, not to repeat this activity in the second year.

Staff

The survey was made available online to all staff. 21 staff responded to it in the first year, and 37 in the second.

Eight staff volunteered to take part in the focus group. Five were able to attend the first focus group, and three of these participated in the second. Two individuals of the eight attended both sessions.

Partners

The principal identified as examples of key strategic partners at the start of the research period:

- The special school co-located on the same campus
- The company the school had recently appointed to provide its catering services
- A local secondary school linked to its specialism

The latter of these chose not to participate in the research. Interviews were held at the end of the first year with the other two. Because of changes in the situation of both partners and of the school, these were not repeated in year two.

Leadership

The principal was interviewed five times, once at the beginning and end of the research and three further times across the two years. The deputy principal was interviewed twice, at the beginning of the research and the end of year one, before leaving to take up a new post elsewhere. The three successive holders of the position of assistant principal for partnership development were interviewed four times. In the second year of research, the member of staff who had become responsible for student leadership was also interviewed.

The post of assistant principal had three different incumbents in course of the research period, due to maternity leave and other staff changes.

Governance

The chair of governors was interviewed as part of the baseline visit and again at the end of each year of the research.

Other outcome indicators

The principal chose to provide the following data at the end of year two as further potential indicators of the outcomes he was seeking:

- Student progress tracking data
- Behaviour and exclusion data
- Post 16 destination data
- Business partner feedback
- Parent 'smile file'
- Parent satisfaction survey data
- IIP assessment data

4.3.3 Baseline

The present principal (BH) took up post in September 2009. His previous experience was gained mainly in schools that were seeking rapid improvement as a result of a poor previous history. It was a very different situation at Birchgrove. OFSTED inspected the school in November 2009, shortly after his arrival, and found it to be '*good with*

outstanding features'. In particular they praised the quality of care, guidance and support; relationships at all levels; the ambitious vision of BH; and the quality and accuracy of self-evaluation on which this was based.

But BH's perception was slightly different. He describes the school he inherited a few months earlier as, to a degree, coasting:

"It became apparent how much I had to invest simply in standards in the school. The school had begun to drop off in the two terms before I came because the head was already doing two days a week at his new school, and the deputy was on maternity leave. So there was a lot of work ... getting the school back on course. Behaviour had slipped. The staff had gone back into non-risk-taking satisfactory teaching. An awful lot of work was done shoring results up so we could get a set of outstanding results and start back on the outstanding journey". (BH1)

It was also a school with a strong inward-looking culture:

"Because the school started with just 20 staff, a head and deputy, and 200 children, back in 2005, and grew up slowly but surely, we had nothing in departments in terms of resources, policies, procedures, protocols. Then suddenly there's KS4, then KS5. (So) ... departments have grown up in a silo culture that's proving very difficult to break down, even in the year I've been here. There wasn't negativity at all, but when you brought staff together you could quite literally hear a pin drop, and I'm not used to that. There was no sense of group rapport as a whole staff". (BH1)

BH also found in the first months "*a lot of resistance*" from senior staff who felt the school was "*doing alright*" and staff "*were working hard enough*".

Governors did have some clear ideas of what they were seeking from their new head, but have also since modified or expanded these views under the influence of BH:

“As a new school, I’d say we concentrated on the internal community very, very strongly, not quite exclusively, but very strongly. One of the weakest things that had come back from our survey was our communication with parents. It was identified as a key weakness in the school. In appointing a new head, that was in our minds. We appointed BH, and he has a real vision for engaging the community and working with a whole variety of stakeholders. So ...it was a benefit to us to see BH not only beginning to address our specific weakness but to support us in developing, if you like, a wider vision”. (BG1)

BH’s vision begins with student learning and their outcomes. He locates community engagement within that, not the other way round:

“We’re here first and foremost to educate children and prepare them for the world ... There’s very little merit, in my view, in creating a vision around community engagement which doesn’t impact ultimately on learning and life-chances of young people. For me, it starts with the child and what we should be doing as a school to help prepare them to thrive in a very different world. It doesn’t actually start, for me, with the community and what we can do with our community and for our community and what they can do for us. Naturally that comes later because that’s another aspect of it”. (BH1)

He goes on to explain his understanding of those outcomes, in ways which embrace, but go beyond, current national accountability measures:

“Young people have to live in the world, not in a closed community which is the school of the past. I’m mindful of the fact that I read, I hear, and I believe, that to thrive in the 21st century, in a global post-information age, young people are going to have to come out of school - even the concept of coming out of school doesn’t make any sense, does it? - going to have to come away from me and my people with skills, competencies, capabilities, which we frankly didn’t need when we left school”.

Among those skills and competencies he identifies the need to be *“life-long learners... not just well qualified, because qualifications are going to have change, and they are going to have to be incredibly powerful networkers, social networkers”*. So he identifies

the need for “*profound levels of social intelligence*”. For BH, the best way to gain those outcomes is through a wider engagement with the community.

The chair of governors echoed this priority and interconnection of outcomes for students with community engagement, and endorsed the change of direction in the school:

“I’d say we’ve moved enormously, from a school that saw its community... as an internal community, to really widening it out and looking outwards to how can the wider community, other stakeholders, work with us for the benefit of our youngsters”. (BG1)

The deputy principal also shares this emphasis on student outcomes, although perhaps more narrowly academically focused in terms of definition:

“BH ... fought to give partnerships and community links equal parity to standards. I think historically it’s been a bolt-on extra, not necessarily seen as equal parity to standards. Community and partnership links have a direct impact on standards ... they’re so interlinked. But, having said that, there’s one that stands alone and what the school is working towards. That’s standards”. (BV1)

BH’s response to his perception of the school as he found it, and the aspirations he had for it, began with the creation of a three year strategic plan. However, a degree of patience was called for, for he found much work needed to ensure basic systems, including target-setting, tracking, intervention, robust quality assurance and proper accountability were in place:

“I was frustrated how little time I had to invest in getting a better understanding (of community engagement) ... and I was only able in that year to sow seeds”. (BH1)

Those seeds included, for example, creating some leadership capacity by changing the job description of the existing Director of Specialism to more coherently oversee partnerships. Within six months a new opportunity was created when this partnership lead took maternity leave. An internal appointment was advertised to take the role a further step forward.

The eventual 3-year strategic plan was constructed around four interlocking themes: standards, personalisation, innovation, and partnerships. Within this, the partnerships theme contained four key objectives:

- Leadership and governance
- Student voice
- Local and regional community engagement
- National and international partnerships

Each theme was taken forward by a working group of interested staff coordinated by a senior leader. The personalisation group started first and looked intensively at the issue of introducing vertical tutor groups. BH hoped the partnership team would evolve similarly and build:

“a critical mass across the organisation of people who understand the role that a school could and should play in terms of brokering authentic community engagement and ..a developing concept of what it means for a school to play a part in building social capital within the school and beyond its walls”. (BH1)

The task, though, is not without challenges. BH identifies the biggest of these as parents and their conservative view of education:

“They don’t want to hear this kind of thinking. They actually want the quite traditional 3R’s approach. They’ve quite a limited perspective on their child’s education. Many of our parents will have thought about or tried to get their child into one of the grammars outside the area, or, if they can afford it, to a private school. Any concept of anything that’s a bit more innovative, more 21st century, you have to wrap it up in a very careful way when you’re communicating to our parents. That takes time and energy, and it’s a shame. I found that [the previous much more deprived area I worked in] was far more open to creative ideas about running a school. To make this really happen here, it will mean getting the buy-in of parents, who actually at the end of the day are at the heart of my community”. (BH1)

The role of parents was also picked up by the partnership lead in talking about the way the school’s sense of community and identity had evolved. Parents had exercised quite a strong protest influence under the previous head:

“The response from the school would’ve been to appease parents rather than perhaps the best decision from an educational point of view. I think all of that has made it a bit difficult to develop a sense of community”. (BWa1)

Both the partnership lead and the deputy head, who each lead one of the working groups, share an understanding of the importance of looking at the impact of partnership and community engagement for students and see this as an area for future development:

“At the moment there’s a focus on partnership working across the school and beyond the school, getting teachers to consider what their impact might be. We’ve become very good at setting things up and developing them, but among the staff there isn’t the reflective, what’s the impact, what’s the point?”. (BWa1)

Summary of baseline findings

The baseline interviews indicated a number of distinctive features of the development at Birchgrove, which it would be important to track across the next two years. The most significant of these themes are:

- The impact of a new head on the culture of the school and the leadership processes which influence change.
- The particular challenge posed by parents and their views, as well as the way the school has developed its relationship with parents in its early years.
- The strategy BH adopted of working groups around the four key themes of the strategic plan.
- Within that strategy the new focus on community engagement for clear reasons that are connected with student outcomes.

4.3.4 Year 1 Findings

Contextual change

By the summer of 2011, BH was actively considering with governors whether the school should convert to academy status. Central to this discussion were issues of ethics and morality:

“Obviously we took quite a long time to debate the ethics, the morality, the whole business of the very fast way in which the coalition came up with this idea of all schools at the outstanding end being encouraged to convert to academies. But the more we sat down and aligned that possibility with our three year vision, we saw the fit with where the school was going”. (BH2)

This was particularly true in relation to working with and for other schools. BH articulates a moral imperative that required him to consider how Birchgrove’s progress in leadership, standards and structures, could also benefit others.

This debate could not have been foreseen nine months earlier, and provided a defining moment for the governing body and the leadership, with differing views needing to be worked through. Some felt it was too soon and the school needed to consolidate first. Others believed that *“to stand still would be to go backwards”*, while BH sat somewhere between.

Partly in response to this development, the three-year strategy was already being revised for its final two years. BH captures the change in these terms:

“We’re doing more than just paying lip service to the three-year vision ... but in many ways we’re leaving it behind as new things come forward that upgrade our priorities. A lot of those are in the sphere of ... (the) governing body’s sense of social responsibility beyond the walls of the school which they set up in 2005. We’re still teasing that out ... it’s an interesting debate”. (BH2)

Survey evidence

A summary of survey responses from all groups is captured in Table 12. The rationale for the grouping of statements and the scoring method adopted has been explained in detail at the start of this chapter (p. 157).

Of the invited sample of Y7 and Y9 students and parents just over two-thirds of those who agreed to take part in the research responded, roughly evenly from both year groups. In terms of the staff response, significantly more support staff than teachers responded. Half of those who responded had worked in the school for at least five years.

YEAR 1	ALL	STUDENTS	STAFF	PARENTS
(Note: on the scale used, 1 is the lowest score possible and 5 is the highest)	n=67	n=21	n=21	n=25
ALL RESPONSES	3.87	3.93	3.83	3.94
ATTITUDES TO SCHOOL	4.19	4.1	4.24	4.3
TRUST	3.71	3.77	3.6	3.79
ENGAGEMENT	3.72	3.61	3.77	3.72
SUPPORT FOR LEARNING	4.01	4.21	3.89	3.95
GODDARD'S SOCIAL CAPITAL SCALE	3.6	3.84	3.51	3.57

Table 13: Analysis of survey responses - Birchgrove Y1

Overall this survey evidence from year one, based on a consistently sized sample, but not on large numbers of responses from any one group of stakeholders, suggests a strongly positive view of the school, what it offers and what it is trying to achieve. This appears to echo the findings of the OFSTED report and the school's good to outstanding rating.

The responses suggest students have a particularly positive view related to support for learning (4.21 out of 5) and their overall attitudes to school (4.1). Staff and parents share even more positive attitudes to the school (4.24 and 4.3 respectively) but score less strongly in terms of support for learning (3.89 and 3.95 respectively). The least positive scores overall for both students and parents relate to engagement.

If we consider the three survey statements that attracted the most positive levels of support, there is strong commonality across all stakeholder groups, focused on learning and progress, and suggesting a strong sense of pride and shared purpose.

However, the statements which drew the least positive response suggest that, as well as some feeling of lack of engagement, there may be some latent issues of trust between staff and students, and between staff and parents. This reflects the overall scores in relation to trust and engagement.

YEAR 1	MOST POSITIVE STATEMENT 1		MOST POSITIVE STATEMENT 2		MOST POSITIVE STATEMENT 3	
Y7 STUDENTS	I am proud to belong to this school	4.7	I am making good progress here	4.36	Staff here want me to do well	4.36
Y9 STUDENTS	Staff here want me to do well	4.33	I feel I am making good progress	4.2	The school is a good place for me to learn in	4.17
STAFF	Serving students is the highest priority of staff here	4.74	The school has good facilities	4.57	I am proud to be associated with this school	4.52
PARENTS	The school is a good place for son/daughter to learn in	4.54	The school has good facilities	4.48	My son /daughter is making good progress	4.42

YEAR 1	MOST NEGATIVE STATEMENT 1		MOST NEGATIVE STATEMENT 2		MOST NEGATIVE STATEMENT 3	
Y7 STUDENTS	I can easily use the facilities I want outside the school day	3.18	I feel I can make a difference to what happens in school	3.27	Students here are caring towards one another	3.3
Y9 STUDENTS	Students here are caring towards one another I know what the school wants to do in future	2.83	Students trust staff Staff trust students	3	I have opportunities to learn from people outside school	3.33
STAFF	Staff in this school trust the parents	3.2	There is good communication in this school	3.3	Parents at this school can be counted on to meet their commitments	3.35
PARENTS	I feel I can make a difference to what happens in school	3.17	The involvement of the wider community supports learning	3.25	Parents at this school can be counted on to meet their commitments	3.39

Table 14: Birchgrove - most positive and negative survey statements - Year 1

Stakeholder evidence

The staff focus group strongly endorsed their positive attitudes to school. All spoke with apparent pride. It should be noted however that the group is self-selecting and so not necessarily a representative sample. It may be biased towards more enthusiastic individuals, or those with their own axe to grind.

Views about participation are more mixed. Staff reported positive experiences of the four working groups, highlighting the way they had shaped debate about a possible move to vertical tutoring, and the way in which staff felt they had been listened to and been able to influence this discussion. They attribute this to a change of culture, with BH bringing greater openness. They also suggest he has a clarity of vision previously lacking, and led a shift from being an inward-looking school to more outward-facing, a change this group regarded as beneficial and necessary.

However, the increasing size and changing nature of the school was also bringing problems of communication. Staff, in particular, noted this, while some student evidence also suggested participation structures may be variable in their effectiveness.

Asked about their involvement in the working groups, two students responded:

“I can’t remember because we haven’t had a meeting for a long time. We had two meetings at the start of the year and there haven’t been any since”. (BLa1)

“I’m not involved ... but my friends are. If we have any ideas we have to tell them and they take them to the council”. (BLb1)

But overall, both these small groups of students reinforced positive messages about the school:

“Birchgrove is a good school with a range of activities, good support, and you feel secure and safe. They’re always really good to you and if you have a problem, there’s H2H (Here to Help) to go to and they help you. You can relate to your form group and people in your form group, which is quite nice”. (BLb1)

“I do think it’s a good school because the teachers are very fair, the rules are quite fair, the way we learn things is very good, so I’ve learnt a lot more from this school than I have before”. (BLa1)

Both nominated partners described a developing sense of common purpose and positive relationship with the school. For the catering company:

“I like to think we’re part of the school and working together for a common goal, educating children, and we support that in anyway we can”. (BYb1)

This relationship was two-way, and not dependent on size and power. The small neighbouring special school took the initiative to successfully bring together local business managers and found BH and the school to be *“fully supportive, very forward and positive”*. Asked whether this partnership was solely dependent on the personality of the head, the response highlighted Birchgrove’s sensitivity in approaching and developing partner relationships:

“I think it’s probably more than coincidence that we have such cooperation and demonstrable measurable progress in quite a few areas. I think that’s about Birchgrove’s attitudes ... it’s genuinely an outward-looking school that’s proactive in working in partnership ... without beating the drum and using their power as by far the biggest school in this relationship”. (BYa1)

Leadership evidence

Partnerships had also been extended at Post 16 level to include joint courses with other schools. The Deputy Head responsible for this reflected a growing appreciation of the nature of partnership:

“We started by ... having a common agreement about what partnership was, that we weren't doing it for ourselves, we were doing it for the greater good of the student body of the schools...If there are issues we resolve them as a team ... rather saying 'it's your problem, you sort it'”. (BV2)

But there had been significant disputes:

“There was a big question whether another school should join and, although I was very comfortable with it because I think my relationship with that school is quite good, the others weren't. So we said no”.

The nature of trust, partnership and collaboration, though, had begun crystallise more clearly:

“It's very interesting, this thing called trust, and understanding and questioning each other to have the same definition. Collaboration, I think, is slightly different. You can collaborate with people without necessarily having the same complete value-set because the collaboration may be short-term. But I think if you're setting up a partnership, it has to be longer-term. You're setting up some values that you're all working towards, and not putting yourself first”. (BV2)

The partnership lead now was an acting post-holder covering maternity leave, and, at the time of interview, coming to the end of that role. Her understanding of partnership placed more emphasis on internal working, encouraging partnership between departments and collaboration across the curriculum than BH's more outward-looking

view, but this shift of emphasis did not necessarily reflect an opposition to or disregard of BH:

“I really do like BH and his ideas. I’m very much on the bus with that. He’s created a pace and energy about the school. He’s innovative, more European in his thinking. For example, he’s intimated about having a curriculum for KS3 that crosses all the departments ... personalising the students so they’re taught by ability rather than age. I know that’s optimistic and a dream, but if he’s on board for any kind of change like that, then certainly you can try. I think he’s brought a lot of energy to the school. He’s a walking dynamo”. (BWb2)

However, there were also some indications here that not everyone had always felt as positively about what is happening in the school:

“The change management, I think, has been a weakness. The change of the management across the school I don’t think has really been talked about, which has probably been his biggest weakness. But you can’t have everything, can you? You can’t have somebody who creates pace and energy and at the same time nurtures everyone”. (BWb2)

It also appears the working groups had experienced difficulties as time progressed, with some suggestion of dwindling enthusiasm:

“People turn up for meetings and have ideas, but then don’t want to take ownership of the work because it’s going to increase their workload. Numbers dwindled around exam time because people were running revision groups. They tend to work quite well with the strategic groups that directly impact their own teaching and learning, and ... they’re okay with the idea of partnership, but don’t want to take ownership and develop an idea themselves”. (BWb2)

As a result BH changed tack, moving to have a task and finishing group rather than separate groups. That means:

“We actually have one group where people come in and solve problems, whether that’s innovations or partnership, and then someone takes ownership and finishes that work off. I like that idea. The work’s more finished that way”. (BWb2)

BWb acknowledged the very strong *“shared culture, shared vision, shared commitment”* in the school, but also some tensions:

“I’ve never worked with a staff who work so hard and I’ve worked in good schools. We’ve all bought into BH ... but as for us working together, not at all. And I think that was divisive of the previous head. We had no input in whole school meetings ...(and) there was very little feedback coming back from us. So the departments are very separate, self-contained”. (BWb2)

She also highlights how BH has tried to change the way the school engages with parents:

“Now he consults the parents on everything ... That’s a strength of his and he sits down once a term with parents. Turn-out isn’t always great, but he’s certainly invited them all. I’ve not known anything like it in any other school. He very much has an open door. Parents ring him up and will come in and have a chat about concerns about their child ... There’s openness, a transparency about him actually”. (BWb2)

4.3.5 Year 2 Findings

Contextual change

Birchgrove converted to an academy in September 2011. The ethical debate that took place around this decision continued to some extent in discussions about how to use the new status:

“We debated long and hard about becoming a converter academy, effectively removing a layer of funding from local authority capacity to support a number of schools who are in difficulty in the city. It’s in everyone’s interest to want to support those. And, philosophically, myself and the governing body could only really get behind the idea of a converter academy if we stepped up our commitment to supporting other schools in the city or more regionally”. (BH3)

Indeed that conviction had moved beyond the idea stage to holding concrete discussions about becoming sponsor of another city school. It was felt too soon for the school to take such a step, but a marker had been placed. At the same time there was even stronger interest in looking to create all-through 4-19 provision on the school site.

A further initiative taking shape is an even stronger focus on the development of student leadership:

“It’s so central to my philosophy on how schools should be run, but also I’ve never worked in a school where the students were quite so articulate and so assertive - some call it arrogant! I haven’t yet gone into assemblies and talked about that side of how we’re sometimes viewed as a community. It’s finding the right time really and exploring with youngsters the difference between arrogance and assertive leadership”. (BH3)

The vision is to have an authentic mirror of the leadership team on the student body. Students themselves are setting the pace here, directly requesting involvement in the recruitment of a new Director of Sixth Form for the first time, and raising new questions of protocol:

“They were very keen to have a significant part, right down to asking questions like ‘would it be possible for us, like you, to see the application forms and references?’. Difficulty comes with ‘can we have minors knowing the intimate details of possible

future colleagues?'. It's something we're going to explore. I haven't said no, nor have I said yes. Where do we draw the line there?". (BH3)

The other significant development lies in curriculum organisation, with the adoption of seven faculties. They comprise English Literacy, Maths and IT, Science and Technology, and four foundation faculties, several of which have been designed to support elements of the community engagement agenda. Global Citizenship brings together humanities and languages with a whole-school agenda around the global citizen. Wellbeing brings together sports, PE, health with food and catering, the development of life skills and social intelligence. Finally, Enterprise is concerned with developing enterprise behaviours and entrepreneurship.

Survey evidence

A summary of responses from all groups is captured in Table 15 in similar format to year one. Although the overall sample size is broadly similar, the proportion of staff is much higher and the proportion of both parents and students significantly smaller. However these two small samples also only contain individuals who completed the survey in year one, and so can provide a distinctive perspective, if understood in that light. The staff survey contains some who completed the year one survey and others who did not. The proportion of teaching and support staff responding is broadly similar. Most of those responding have worked in the school for two years or more.

YEAR 2	ALL	STUDENTS	STAFF	PARENTS
(Note: on the scale used, 1 is the lowest score possible and 5 is the highest)	n=62	n=12	n=37	n=13
ALL RESPONSES	3.66	3.49	3.69	3.98
ATTITUDES TO SCHOOL	3.92	3.8	4.06	3.93
TRUST	3.49	3.35	3.53	3.55
ENGAGEMENT	3.37	3.22	3.58	3.34
SUPPORT FOR LEARNING	3.62	3.5	3.7	3.67
GODDARD'S SOCIAL CAPITAL SCALE	3.34	3.17	3.51	3.23

Table 15: Birchgrove - Analysis of survey responses – Year 2

While the figures overall show some decline for both students (from 3.93 to 3.49) and staff (from 3.83 to 3.69), the responses from parents show a modest overall rise (from 3.94 to 3.98). This may be explained by the possibility that only the most committed returned to the survey on the second occasion, or it may reflect some impact from BH's changes.

Similarly the student response, given the small sample, may be coloured by the negative views of one particular individual student, who volunteered her name in her responses. Her change from broadly neutral views when in Year 7 may be a reflection of her own situation rather than the school as a whole. Likewise, for all students the process of just growing up may be affecting their outlook, to some degree, in ways unrelated to the school. However, it is possible to note the figures for trust and engagement have fallen for all, with the greatest decline among students (from 3.77 and 3.61 to 3.35 and 3.22 respectively).

The Goddard Scale questions also mirror broadly the general picture of change between year one and year two, except with parents. They show a decline (from 3.57 to 3.23) rather than a small increase, and a shift in their position relative to students.

If we look at the statements that attracted the most positive or negative responses from different groups, there is some similarity in themes to year one. Common positive

themes again reflect progress in learning for both students and parents. Student pride (scoring at 3.75, down from 4.7) appears to have fallen away markedly, although this may again be skewed by the small sample. The least positive statements again relate to trust between staff and students, as perceived by students, and parents' feeling of being able to make a difference.

YEAR 2	MOST POSITIVE STATEMENT 1		MOST POSITIVE STATEMENT 2		MOST POSITIVE STATEMENT 3	
Y8 STUDENTS	I feel I am making good progress	4.5	The school is a good place for me to learn in	4.5	The school has good facilities	4.25
					I know who the school's leaders are	4.25
Y10 STUDENTS	I feel I am making good progress	4.2	The school is a good place for me to learn in	4	I am proud to belong to this school	3.8
			Staff here want me to do well	4	I am well supported at school	3.8
STAFF	I am aware of who the school's leaders are	4.42	School facilities are well used by students and the community	4.27	The school has good facilities	4.24
PARENTS	The school has good facilities	4.62	The school is a good place for son/daughter to learn in	4.54	I am proud to be associated with this school	4.38

YEAR 2	MOST NEGATIVE STATEMENT 1		MOST NEGATIVE STATEMENT 2		MOST NEGATIVE STATEMENT 3	
Y8 STUDENTS	I feel I can make a difference	2.5	Students here are caring towards one another	3	Students can be counted on to work hard	3
Y10 STUDENTS	I have opportunities to learn from people outside school	2.6	Staff trust students	2.8	Students trust staff	2.8
STAFF	There is good communication in this school	2.81	There is a culture of openness and transparency in this school	3.11	Students can be counted on to work hard	3.23
PARENTS	I feel I can make a difference to what happens in school	2.69	The involvement of the wider community supports learning	3.23	The school is seen as an important part of the community	3.23

Table 16: Birchgrove - most positive and negative survey statements - Year 2

Stakeholder evidence

For staff, there were tensions around change in the school. Some see this as a necessary part of the school's journey:

"I think there's a general feeling that the way the school is today is the result of it being grown from the bottom up, so it doesn't really address very well the things for the older students in the school. The systems and procedures aren't really there". (BSd2)

Nevertheless communication remained a major issue for all, even though some recognised the size of the school as a factor in this and appreciated the openness of access to senior leadership. The focus group summarised their view as *“communications lack focus, balanced with the fact there’s a good open door policy”* (BSc2). That opportunity for informal contact, while appreciated by those who took advantage of it, was not seen to be balanced by effective opportunities for more structured engagement, for instance through the working groups, whose impact seemed to have declined over the year, as this member of staff indicated: *“I started attending one of those, and they all of a sudden just peter out. You don’t get any feedback and you don’t see any results from them”* (BSc2).

The curriculum emphasis on personal and social development was, by contrast, cautiously welcomed, with some concern expressed about whether it went far enough. The staff focus group also reflected the ambivalence some felt towards the way BH sought to engage with parents. Some felt staff were not supported in making demands of parents. One long-serving part-time member of staff was disillusioned with change, feeling that Birchgrove was unsupportive of staff, particularly dealing with verbally aggressive parents (BSa2). Another disagreed, suggesting it was less of a problem than in other schools (BSb2).

Staff were aware of the development of student leadership at sixth form level, but less so lower down the school. They knew of some of the initiatives at higher levels, and even displayed a touch of envy. *“They get more say than we do!”* (BSc2).

Student leadership involves a structure that mirrored the four working groups of the strategic plan along with an executive committee of older students. Every tutor group elected a maximum of four representatives. Some, but not all, achieved sufficient volunteers for this. For example, one tutor group had just one representative.

Student leaders themselves said that they were *“trusted”* but also expected to be *“good role models and ambassadors for the school”*. However, they also clearly understood their role as more than that:

“I don’t think we go on just what’s expected of us. It’s also important we find the changes that need to happen. Everyone can complain about something, but we can go ‘what do you think about this?’. We can then decide to take it forward.” (BLa2)

All could point clearly to how their experience had contributed to their personal development:

“I’m not afraid to say I wasn’t the easiest person to have in a classroom when I was younger, but the [student leadership] work I’ve done has given me a second chance, let people look at me twice, and realise I’m not that person. I’ve really changed a lot since I joined this school, and I think that’s down to them, the way my character’s been built up”. (BLb2)

Confidence and the ability to speak out in public were two common benefits student leaders attributed to their experience in this role:

“I now speak out in classes where I never used to because I thought if I got something wrong I’d be criticised. But now, thanks to this school, I’ve been able to speak out”.
(BLc2)

They could also point to their contribution to significant changes:

“I was part of the innovations group ... and one of the things we pushed through was the idea that Y9 have an option block a year early, so that before GCSEs they take on a minor qualification, like BTEC Level 1. That was an idea put to us through our innovations group, and we went on and pitched it to the governors, and that’s now in place”. (BLd2)

It was also clear there was some variability in the effectiveness of the structures, particularly in terms of representation and communication. The influence of form tutors appears to be significant, with some highly supportive and making sure there is proper time for discussion and feedback, but others taking far less interest, or even showing signs of cynicism.

Responsibility for oversight and development of student leadership had recently been given to an energetic younger member of staff, who recognised the difficulties of creating meeting time for students. However, as a full-time teacher, she currently had no time allowance made for the additional role, although this was planned for the future.

She found this new role drew on her strengths as a teacher, whilst also requiring new skills and learning:

“I pride myself on my relationships with students and, as a teacher, that’s one of the most important things. If you’ve a good relationship with your students, you can take them wherever you want them to go. You try new things. You can really push the boundaries of what they’re doing within the classroom. So the opportunity to work with students outside the classroom, and help them fulfil their potential in other areas, was something that greatly excited me. I find delegation quite difficult, I like to do it myself, and by handing over that responsibility to (students) I’m forcing myself to step back and say ‘I’m just next door if you need me’. I’m learning to take that step back into the facilitator role”. (BSh1)

Leadership evidence

The newly appointed partnership lead, moving roles in the school, had also found significant differences in the skills required by his new role:

“It’s been a bit of role reversal for me, having to go to staff to persuade them to help, rather than them coming to me”. (BWc3)

He had found *“much to get involved in, but not a coherent plan or direction to it”*. He established his priorities as *“developing the international curriculum first”*; secondly, parent engagement, including *“a customer charter setting out what parents can expect from the school”*, looking at how the school can be *“more accessible and less intimidating”* for parents as well as how to help develop *“their skills as parents”*, and finally *“developing new links around cultural diversity”*.

His reasoning echoes earlier messages about a broader range of student outcomes:

“I want students to leave here with awareness of the wider world, not just exam attainment. What is it that will separate our students from others when they’re competing for jobs? It’s that wider understanding and skills”. (BWc3)

However, as was evidenced in some of the staff comments, BH had also been encountering some resistance:

“You come in, you take your senior team, they know the score, they’ve been working here, they’ve a sense of direction, what the school actually is. Then you start to realise some of that aligns very well with what you want for the school and where you felt the governing body appointed you to take the school. Then of course you meet the resistance. I keep coming back to that, as I’m a physics teacher and I’m a strategist. I know how to get from A to B, I just need to convince others. I steal other people’s ideas. You’ve a group of great people with children at their heart, but not necessarily the disposition to drive that agenda forward, let alone the same sense of belief that in order to be this kind of a school that we all agree with, we need to do this, this and this”. (BH4)

As a result some staff changes ensued. The chair of governors commented: *“We’re at the stage where those who aren’t quite in tune with where we’re going are leaving us” (BG3).*

The issue of the way the school engages with parents had become a significant concern for BH, who saw it as a major barrier to future progress:

“Our relationship and dynamic with parents had to be different. That was the big thorn ... that was what led to the staffing changes and growth. A different way of looking at how we communicate with parents, carers and primary stakeholders will make all the difference. In many ways, three years in, I’m at the beginning there. I’ve recognition now, certainly amongst the top leadership, because they were appointed with that sense,

that we can only do what we want to do, and feel we need to do, if we're working very differently with parents and carers". (BH4)

The nature of this change involved a sense of *"being client-centred in our approach to things"*. For BH, this included:

"... not jumping to conclusions whenever a parent raises an alarm or concern ... that they're acting that way because they feel they know better, that they don't have an understanding about what we're about or what the school is about".

He believed this attitude was *"at the very heart of the old school"* and recognised that it was perhaps *"inevitable given the insane amount of things you have to do to get a school off the ground"*. There was a lack of time to listen to what stakeholders were saying:

"I think that was the crux of the issue and what tarnished the relationship. Even in my first year, a large part of the staff were saying 'keep parents at bay', tell them their child is going to move set, not engage them in dialogue about it". (BH4)

But BH also recognised he had a *"reputation for being too parent-friendly and, in some respects, too child-friendly too"*. The competing demands and interests of different stakeholder groups, in this case parents and staff, gave rise to tensions:

"An unfortunate series of events probably led to that sense, and mitigated against what I'm trying to do. An external person ... looking down would see a school that seemed to put its staff first in order to create such wellbeing amongst the staff that they'd want to be able to do the right thing by the children, even despite their parents. But my influence has seemed to take them far too far the other way, so that we're too family-friendly in spite of the staff. There was no intent. I know that unless I get wellbeing amongst the staff, I can't do anything". (BH4)

He sees this as *'the politics of change'* and thinks some of those difficulties may have reflected mixed messages within the senior leadership team. Changes within that team were starting to change the dynamic positively. *"I think things will settle now, but it's too recent to tell yet"* (BH4).

4.3.6 Evidence of change

Key themes

The baseline visit identified four foci that emerged to guide the field research (p. 213). Each of these is considered in summary here in turn, mindful of the inter-relationship between them.

a) The impact of a new head on the culture of the school and the leadership processes which influence change.

It is clear BH has been the key agent of change, expanding the awareness of governors, challenging staff and leaders in a range of ways, creating some new emphases and directions for the school (BG1, BWb2, BH1). The direction of that change has been broadly welcomed, notably by governors, but also encountered some resistance at staff level (BG3, BS2, BH4).

Four attributes stand out in his leadership of change. First, BH had a clear sense of priorities, seeing clearly the linkage between the core business of the school, as recognised by external requirements, and the expanded vision that he brought (BG1, BH1).

Second, the pace of change, characterised by energy tempered with opportunism, relentlessness and timing. The chair of governors characterised this as “*a constant drip process, drip it in, drip it in, at the right moment, make this change, move towards that*” (BG3). One effect of this was that it took time for those who may not be personally aligned with the direction of change to grasp the situation and decide to move, as was happening in year two.

Third, there is a serious commitment to partnership which for the chair of governors was “*absolutely down to the leadership of the head, without a doubt, and that's because he's placed a value on working with others*” (BG3).

Fourth, the personal qualities, particularly of energy, openness and transparency, are emphasised by range of staff and governors, as well as those few parents directly spoken to (e.g. BWb2, BG3, BP1).

b) The particular challenge posed by parents and their views, as well as the way the school has developed its relationship with parents in its early years.

This quality of openness has, though, caused some difficulty. For some staff, being open to parents means not being able to support staff. BH is aware of the perception that parents always come before staff, a perception he believes was until recently still being encouraged by some senior staff steeped in the previous culture.

He also understands the risk and cost attached to his open approach, but remains clear that he had to demonstrate change from the outset (BH5). He attributes the gap that had opened up between the school and parents before his arrival to a deliberate leadership strategy that was trying to accommodate the move from a small school to a large school. It was no longer possible to have such immediate engagement as in the early days of the school, although parents still expected that. The school response had been to withdraw back, but this had exacerbated problems.

BH's strategy to engage directly and personally with parents having issues, on occasions offering them constant access, shows some signs of success (see also BPa, BPb), but the issue serves to highlight the tensions in balancing competing stakeholder interests and the nature of the leadership role within that. One response could have been to suppress or ignore tensions, but the leadership response at Birchgrove has been to seek to acknowledge and work through them.

c) The strategy BH adopted of working groups around the four key themes of the strategic plan

The 3-year strategic vision has been a key tool in shaping the process of change. It embedded community engagement within clear whole-school priorities, as an integral element not bolted-on. This has then been woven into structures, such as the new faculties and the curriculum, as well as the way student leadership is organised and developed.

However, the mechanisms of the working groups used to take forward the strategy faced difficulties in sustaining engagement and ownership. This has called for a flexible, fast response to maintain momentum through alternative means.

At the end of the research period, the strategy is entering its final year. BH's intention is the same approach will be continued, but whereas the first document was written personally by him, working top-down, but drawing on wide-ranging discussions during his induction, the next strategy will grow more from the bottom up, building from faculty plans, but retaining the same four key themes:

“I can't think of any better model. It has to be standards because that's what we're about. Personalisation has to follow from that. Innovation, because we're in the 21st century. And partnership, because we can't do it alone”. (BH5)

But, over two years, BH's understanding of partnership has changed considerably. The key strategic partners he identified for research purposes at the outset of the research proved to be of less long-term significance than he believed at the time. New partners emerged whose significance proved to be greater. It may also be, though, that the way the school is able to engage with partners has developed through experience. "*There's been a definite shift in my thinking*" (BH4).

d) Within that strategy the new focus on community engagement for clear reasons that are connected with student outcomes.

BH sums up his view of progress in relation to student outcomes:

"We still need to shore up core standards and teaching, then move the curriculum into a very different place to where it was and to get a sense of community engagement in the broadest sense ... of quality association for the benefit of the youngsters' outcomes and employability skills. It's in our next 3-year vision and it's built already into faculty plans". (BH4)

The two main challenges for the broader vision of employability skills lie in the extent and availability of such opportunity, and the way in which they are captured and recognised.

The two main initial vehicles of opportunity used by BH have been in the impact of student leadership and in enterprise activity. Although it is possible to quantify the number of students involved, it is not yet possible to gauge the depth of their experience.

For example, BH estimates 50% of students experience an enterprise opportunity, but for some this is a single day, whereas for others it is an extended involvement over many months. Opportunity is beginning to be extended through structural change, notably in the way the faculty structure has been designed to build more structured curriculum expectations across all areas.

In terms of recognition and accreditation of the learning, this stage of development lies beyond the research period. In his final interview BH indicates the likely development over the next two years of what he terms a '*school passport*' (BH5). Through this, each student would be expected to gain a range of particular broader educational experiences, tailored by themselves and their parents, within and without school. For each they would receive a 'stamp' to indicate they had passed successfully through with the aim of building a complete range of 'stamps' over the course of their school career.

Additional data provided by school

The picture of the complex nature of change over the two years of research has some reflection in the data collected by the school. Progress is not simply linear.

In the 2012 GCSE results, the school experienced a slight and unexpected fall in English and Maths results. In English, this reflects in part the wider national dispute about grade

boundaries, while Maths was more of a surprise. But, within this picture, performance of the upper and lower ends of the ability range has proved strong, with fall-off occurring among students in the middle ranges.

For many of the other standard measures, the data only covers one year and does not allow understanding of trends. 2011 destinations of Y11 school leavers indicate that 88% continued in education, and just one student was recognised as not in education, training or employment. There were 24 students who received more than one temporary exclusion, and six of these eventually left the school. 95% of Y7 students in 2012 felt they had made the right choice of school after six months. But only 25% felt older students made them feel 'very welcome'. The successful IIP assessment indicated that staff morale appeared to be an issue, to some extent, in the number of staff who perceived themselves to be '*over-worked*'.

Concluding discussion

The survey, stakeholder and leadership evidence over two years provides substantial evidence of change. However, this does not simply present a steady pattern of even improvement. Instead there is an inter-play between complex variables. Change is multi-dimensional, is taking time, and does not happen smoothly in a linear progression.

One contributory factor is that the school itself is always changing. It has grown from 900 students to 1500 over the time of the research, whilst each year there will inevitably be significant change in the individual student body with several hundred leaving and arriving.

The change taking place at Birchgrove engages individuals and groups, themselves changing, in ways and patterns that are complex, perhaps uneven, but certainly unpredictable. As BH commented at the end of one interview: *“I can put my tongue in my cheek and say this has all been very carefully planned, but it’s just the way it is happening is the truth” (BH3).*

He went further in a significant final remark after the interview had formally finished: *“I’ve given up looking for causal relationships, I don’t have time for it really”.*

4.4 Case Study 3 - Chestnut Academy

4.4.1 Introduction

Chestnut Academy opened as a sponsored academy in September 2010, with a new name, identity and leadership. The initial sponsors were the local authority and a local FE college. It had specialist status in English and Sport.

It replaced a school that had been in special measures, with one of the smallest proportions of pupils achieving 5A*-C GCSE grades, including English and Maths, in England. The school had been earmarked for closure, but a last-minute campaign to keep it open was mounted from some in the local community, seeking to retain a secondary school in their part of the estate, by those who used its sports and community facilities, as well as some local schools concerned about possible effects on rolls and intakes.

Chestnut is small, with just 440 students in 2012 in Years 7-11. These students are almost all from White British backgrounds. The proportions of students supported by school action plus or with statements of special educational needs are higher than national averages. The large majority have moderate learning or behavioural, emotional or social difficulties. The proportion of students known to be entitled to free school meals is above average.

The school serves one part of a post-war housing estate, built to provide social housing for those whose homes had been in bombed cities. For CH:

“The immediate neighbourhood is one of huge social disadvantage. The majority of families are 3rd or 4th generation unemployed. You don’t have a truly comprehensive mix of families ... if young people do succeed, gain qualifications and get a good job, they’re barred from returning to their community because it’s purely social housing”. (CH1)

That is not to say she holds an over-simplified view of the community:

“Amongst the older generation are good working class people who’ve worked for a living, having left school at fourteen, and did alright. They think that’s acceptable for this community. But the immediate community is mainly white working class, indifferent, people who don’t value education necessarily”. (CH1)

4.4.2 Methodological considerations

Students

Only one parent and three students from tutor groups identified by the school responded positively to the initial invitation to participate in the research. Two parents refused permission. No other responses were received.

In considering how to respond, as at Ashtree, it seemed important not to exclude those who felt alienated either by the formality of the research or the fact that it was connected with school. Therefore, in discussion with the principal, two strategies were adopted.

First, the school offered the student survey directly to all students as part of its own consultation processes. Students and parents were advised that the anonymous results would be made available for research purposes, and if they had concerns about this, it was not necessary to complete the survey. 37 students completed the survey in year one and 51 in year two.

Second, it became apparent in year one that the development of student leadership was central to CH's strategy to change the culture of both staff and students. So instead of a focus group, permission was sought to interview the group of student leaders. This took place at the beginning and end of year two.

Parents

Given the lack of response, I looked for an alternative way to access the views of parents. The principal had decided to launch a Friends of the Academy group by holding a Big Lunch for the whole community one Saturday. I attended this and made personal contact with five parents who agreed to a telephone interview, although two of these subsequently did not respond. I also tracked the progress of the Friends over the following twelve months through the programme of interviews and documentation of the group.

Staff

The survey was made available online to all staff. In the first year 28 staff responded, but only 14 did in the second year. It is not known whether any completed the survey in both years.

Only two staff attended the focus group session in first year despite extensive publicity. The timing of this coincided with the major redundancy and internal reorganisation programme. In the second year, the school organised a programme of individual interviews with a range of staff so as to give greater flexibility of timing. Six staff participated. Of these, two took part in both years.

Whilst it may be argued the school would choose from those most supportive of change, the group were still volunteers. Although those seen may be liable to bias, as would volunteers to a focus group, this did allow a more in-depth conversation and insight into their experience of change.

Partners

The head identified as key strategic partners at the start of the research period:

- A representative of the local fire service who worked as a volunteer mentor
- The manager of the on-site community centre

- A recently retired primary school teacher who was both very well-placed in the local community and a volunteer in school

Interviews were held with these at the end the first year. Because of changes in the situation of both those partners and of the school, these were not repeated in year two, in line with the other case studies.

Leadership

In addition to a baseline and concluding interview with the principal and three intervening interviews with her across the two years, interviews were also held with the deputy principal, the assistant principal responsible for partnership development (who was appointed at the end of year one) on two occasions, and the member of staff responsible for student leadership (twice).

Governance

A member of the governing body was interviewed as part of the baseline visit. This was not repeated because of changes to the governing body and sponsor, which are described in detail in the text.

Outcome indicators

Although CH hoped to evidence indicators of the outcomes she was seeking, this material did not emerge, in part perhaps because of the newness of the school, but also the complex challenges it faced during the research period. Some indicators of change did, though, emerge in interviews, and are referred to in the text.

4.4.3 Baseline

This is CH's second headship. She was appointed principal-designate from April 2010 to prepare for the September opening of the new academy in the existing buildings, which received some cosmetic face-lifting. A major rebuilding and refurbishment programme for the existing poor premises, worth £11m, was also agreed as part of the new deal. Work began in 2011, continuing through to November 2012. Because this involved substantial adaptation of the existing building whilst still in use as a school, its impact on the school during the research period was significant.

Most staff from the predecessor school transferred to the academy. However, the first year proved challenging and turbulent with regard to staffing and finance. Because the number of staff was far higher than required for the number of students on roll, a major exercise in restructuring and redundancy was necessary, with inevitable implications for leadership time and general morale.

CH describes the attitudes she found in the staff she inherited:

“There was a siege mentality ... when I arrived. If you make yourself a small enough target, you won’t get hit. Do as little as possible, then you can’t be hit for doing things wrong. It’s been very inward-looking, very insular, very much survival of the fittest, not looking at the wider local picture, let alone the national or global picture. And no connectivity, none of that joined-up thinking you’d expect of a fully functioning school community. Certainly no strategy. Everything had been very reactionary”. (CH1)

The result was a serious lack of internal trust and confidence. Although she found a certain solidarity in the face of adversity among teachers, she felt this excluded non-teaching staff, who they viewed as quite separate, as well as the students and school leadership:

“I get frustrated by the staff sometimes, but when I step back I can understand that siege mentality. A dysfunctional community within the school doesn’t have the trust. The children don’t necessarily trust all the teachers, they don’t have the relationships right. Staff don’t trust the leadership team yet because they’re very new. They don’t completely trust the governing body. We’re working on it, but at the moment that’s where we are”. (CH1)

The alienation of students was a key concern for CH. The development of student leadership figured strongly in her thinking for the future:

“(Students) haven’t had a voice. Things have been done to them. They’ve not been empowered to take responsibility or be held accountable for what happens in school. So they’re very new to having a voice. Well, they’ve always had a voice, but they’ve not been listened to in school, nor enabled to make decisions, or take responsibility for themselves and their future. That’s really new to them”. (CH1)

CH also highlighted the lack of engagement by parents, citing only two parents making appointments to see her in the first 22 weeks of opening. Nor did parents attend parent evenings:

“I was completely baffled by this and put it to a primary head. She said; ‘That’s a good thing. If they’re not coming in, it means they’re happy with what you’re doing. Believe me, if they have something to say, they’ll be here in force’. I said, ‘Well, it’s great to hear, but I need someone here actively engaging in getting them to understand what we’re trying to achieve with their children’”. (CH1)

For the next Y11 evening, senior staff personally phoned every parent to invite them. The result was a 75% turnout. But it was not just the turnout that was changed, it was the content and purpose of the discussion:

“Previously (parents)... got ‘well, nice to see you, how’s Jimmy’s football going, no problems in Geography, nice to see you again, bye’. It wasn’t a worthwhile experience. Our parents have limited understanding of ... what their children are supposed to be doing to achieve and progress. So it wasn’t empowering the parents, or the students. It was a waste of everybody’s time”. (CH1)

CH piloted a new system. It was kept deliberately simple, without confusing data. It focused on dialogue about the most likely grade a student would get, and other key indicators, such as the number of homeworks completed on time and attitude to learning in class:

“We then surveyed parents afterwards ... one parent said to me ‘I’m exhausted. I’ve been here 3 hours, I’ve never known teachers have so much to say to me’. And that was the difference”. (CH1)

CH saw this as a significant first turning-point in starting to reshape the expectations of staff, parents, and students. The key for her was that it “*empowered*” all of them, bringing each both satisfaction and enjoyment. But it was an early stage in that process:

“Parents don’t see yet the connection between me giving (students) rules and them needing to do that at home. That’s the next step. At least they’re appreciating what’s trying to be done”. (CH1)

Although the engagement of the community might have helped secure the survival of a school on site, both CH and the community centre staff suggested independently the nature of that engagement was very limited. The predecessor school had been designated a ‘community school’ and had additional facilities for community use. But CH saw this as “*a very old-fashioned approach with a separate ‘community block’, as everyone called it*”. Every community activity took place in the community block, completely isolated from the rest of the school. The programme was limited, and focused heavily around sport. For CH there was:

“no joined-up thinking, no rationale, no thinking about what we’re trying to achieve. Just a sense we ought to be doing something, so let’s just publish these classes and see who turns up. Very often it would just be one man and his dog”. (CH1)

The provision was also in serious financial difficulty. So it was necessary to place it on a sound business footing, whilst also addressing the nature of provision and its connection with the rest of the school.

CV reinforced the view that *“part of the job we have is to challenge predecessor notions of what is community”* (CV1). But the rationale and purpose for this begins with the students. *“Dealing with the students first, that’s where we start.”*. For many students, he believed, the absence of relationships lay at the root of their difficulties. *“We know by what they tell us our students enjoy being with others. They enjoy the company and contact with other young people and adults”*. But in many home contexts that was lacking, with students often left to fend for themselves and no real interaction with the people who cared for them, or with friends. They were *“isolated even though there are a lot of people living around them”* (CV1).

So, understanding of Chestnut’s community role begins with the student:

“First and foremost, it’s about the learner, providing the opportunity for them to be part of something bigger than just themselves, understanding those wider, deeper issues of social relationships, tolerance, cohesion. These buzz words, they’re actually the key values that underpin a lot of the things we do”. (CV1)

This view is rooted in clear moral purpose:

“Learning is for me a fundamental part of morality. I think leadership has a moral purpose. I find it very hard to distinguish leadership from learning. They’re almost synonymous in the sense that a good leader is looking to engage people in reflecting on how they do things now, how they want to do stuff, and helping them get there”. (CV1)

However, it also runs counter to a long period of entrenched behaviours, within and without the school:

“What we’re looking at is changing a culture, one that actually suggests ‘yes, it’s good to go up the road and go into this place that used to be school, it’s okay for me to go there, and I’m quite excited to get there’. A whole change of behavior”. (CV1)

CV also recognised that not all the barriers were external and highlights the challenge of being a failing school and of changing staff perceptions as to the possibility of success.

Governors were noticing a difference within months:

“Boundaries are enforced a lot better, there’s the uniform, a culture for learning, behaviour management, and all staff and students are clear on what’s expected, as are parents. But also there’s more of a student voice, a student leadership team, which is much better. They never had that before and that’s given them a sense of ownership”. (CG1)

However, not everyone was on board. CG observed *“a certain lack of support from staff”*. Staff from the old school were reluctant to move forward. *“There’s a certain amount of, ‘well these parents have never been involved, so they won’t get involved”*”.

Speaking six months after opening, though, she was clear about the impact of CH:

“She’s made a considerable difference already. She is absolutely fantastic, she’s actually made people accountable and believe they’re accountable, whereas there was no accountability before. The way she’s doing things is making people realise we’re here for the children and not for ourselves”. (CG1)

She highlighted particularly the way CH encouraged staff to take responsibility, for example challenging students if their uniform was incorrect or they were not behaving.

Equally, staff were encouraged to take responsibility for their own behaviour in terms of consistency and to be accountable within the classroom:

“Because the children are getting more of a voice, they’re actually getting the children to evaluate their teaching, which is really quite good. There’s lots of changes. The atmosphere within the school is totally different”. (CG1)

For CH, this was only the beginning of what she knew was a long road:

“If I look ahead in 5 years time, in my mind I see this picture of the school as a learning network, not just for young people but within the community. It’s a learning network people access for education in its broadest sense. It might be to enable them to live better lives, to manage their lifestyles better, but equally it might be to enable them to gain the qualifications to re-enter the workplace, or enter it for the first time, or just for the satisfaction of having a qualification because they can. I see the campus being open from 7 in the morning until 10 at night, and used heavily during that time. There’s not a feeling the Academy belongs to me and my staff and the children, but that it genuinely belongs to the community ... I don’t want learning that’s created by me or a structure that’s composed by me ... the idea is I empower the community”. (CH1)

At the heart of her approach lies the importance of relationships and empowering people:

“To me, it’s all about relationships, getting that right, my relationships with parents, with students, with staff ... [then] the staff will go out and create the same sort of networks as I’m trying to do. It can’t just be me creating those networks, it’s got to be as many people as possible within the institution”. (CH1)

CH’s motivation was primarily about her students, but it also spread beyond them in a much more explicit way than in the other two case study schools:

“It’s important to connect to what’s happening in our locality in terms of businesses and work opportunities, what skills for employability I need to provide within the curriculum for the young people, but also post-16, and make sure there are a range of activities that enable people, if they wish, to access the workplace or grow their own business ... If I can give that empowerment to the community, that’s what it will look like in the future”. (CH1)

Summary of baseline findings

The baseline interviews indicated a number of distinctive features of development at Chestnut that it may be important to track across the research. The most significant are:

- The priorities for leadership, including:
 - the balance of energy devoted, in a challenging situation, between changing perceptions internally or externally.
 - the interplay between provision for school students and wider educational provision.

- The notion of empowerment as a driving force, and the catalytic role seen for student leadership.

- The challenge of parental engagement in a community without aspiration or, in many cases, expectation of employment.

4.4.4 Year 1 Findings

Contextual change

CH's first year proved highly challenging. She inherited not only the staff of the predecessor school but also an unexpected budget deficit of £1.2m. This resulted almost

immediately in major staff restructuring and an extensive redundancy process. At the same time, she had to oversee a major building project happening in the very heart of the existing buildings, whilst delivering rapid impact in terms of results.

Her overall assessment was upbeat, most notably in terms of the response of students:

“I cannot believe how quickly things have changed in terms of better student engagement with what we’re trying to do. That’s not just about improving the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms, it’s creating the community and the part they have to play in that ... (getting them) to think about their own leadership roles. They can see that me coming here has made a difference. Through my leadership the school is improving. We’re trying to get them to look at their own leadership role and how they can improve the school, and how they can be responsible for the improvement programme we’ve got ahead of us”. (CH2)

However the response from other stakeholders felt, to her, more mixed:

“I’ve almost reached crisis point in terms of my need to engage parents and not having a clear way of doing that effectively... It’s critical because I can’t do it without them. Parents don’t connect with the educational experiences being offered. Until we get that understanding, they’re not going to be able to support and encourage. Without that, some of our young people will fail. It’s not enough for the academy alone to provide that encouragement and support”. (CH2)

One illustration of this was the small number of parents coming to see her with complaints or to ask for support or help in resolving a problem, only three in a year compared with four or five a week in her previous headship:

“Our parents are quite happy to devolve responsibility, not just for education but for many things, to us. What I want to do is turn that around and say, not only is the way the children live their lives your responsibility, but actually you’ve a responsibility for ensuring they get a good education”. (CH2)

The absence of role models for young people was central:

“What they want to do is pack their children off in the morning, but actually many of them don’t get out of bed in the morning, the children get themselves up and off, because the norm is that X-Box and all sorts of games are played.... until 3 o’ clock in the morning. The children have either gone to bed or stayed up and played, the parents sleep in until lunchtime. The children get themselves up and come here. I need to tackle that. I need to model for students what is a good student for Chestnut. I want to start to do that for parents ... this is what we need from you as parents, now what do you need from us”. (CH2)

One strategy was to try to establish a Friends of the Academy group. Their first venture was to hold a Big Lunch one Saturday in July 2011:

“The whole idea is just to get parents to come along and have a chat with us, have something to eat for free, and see what we do. There’s no agenda, they don’t have to do anything, or be committed to anything, because they’re incredibly threatened by things like that”. (CH2)

Staff were extremely anxious beforehand that no one would turn up. In the end, an encouraging 200 people came along.

CH also re-structured her leadership team as part of the wider school restructuring. She also felt she now needed to create an integral full-time post with a major focus on community and parent engagement. She appointed, as Assistant Principal for Enterprise and Innovation, someone external, with strong experience of partnership working and creating and sustaining networks, but not a qualified teacher. This changed the dynamic of the Leadership Team, which has four Assistant Principals. Two were teachers, but

two were now non-teachers, because CH felt *“a teacher-based model is not what’s required. It’s very arrogant to think we teachers know everything”* (CH2).

The new postholder (CW) would engage in all aspects of leadership across the academy, but lacking a teaching qualification, had no teaching commitment. He would work with young people, parents, and partners:

“CW’s going to shake up, I hope, our whole community programme, and really start to tackle a huge range of educational needs that exist within our community”.

Governance was also an issue for CH. Two primary headteachers had joined the governing body, with positive impact:

“I think they’re starting to make the connection that if we get it right in the primary schools and create a strong community ethos there, that will travel through the children’s journey from the start of compulsory education to its end ... If the parent and community engagement strategy runs through, then the outcomes will be better for children”. (CH2)

That meant developing consistency of approach and policy on matters such as attendance, or taking holidays in term-time:

“Then our parents know where they stand and what schools stand for. There’s a consistent policy between our primaries and ourselves. Then it’ll come out through the children, and that’ll help the parents be better parents. I think it’s only now at headteacher level they’re making that connection. But the parents are beginning to see it, that’s the exciting bit”. (CH2)

However the Chair of Governors, who was also chair of the trustees, resigned unexpectedly in the summer of 2011. Although this was because he was retiring as

principal of the sponsoring FE college, the action served to reveal major deficiencies in the partnerships established to sponsor the new academy. The lack of a shared vision beyond establishing an academy, and a narrow understanding of the role and expectations of the sponsors other than appointing a Principal, created a situation whose impact would dominate coming months.

Survey evidence

The survey sample sizes achieved for students and staff are broadly similar. Students participating are all drawn from Y7, Y8 or Y9, in roughly equal proportions, and represent between 10% and 12% of each year group.

The sample represents about a third of staff overall, but the proportion of teachers responding is significantly smaller than support staff. It may be this lower response reflects morale issues caused by restructuring and change, but there is no way of knowing this.

Although, overall, there appears a broadly even pattern of response, the exception is the significantly lower score on the staff social capital scale. Their low score in relation to trusting parents is particularly reflected here.

It is perhaps surprising that staff think so favourably of school facilities. This may reflect partly the cosmetic overhaul prior to opening and partly the new building plans. Students clearly show some sense of staff support, although this may be related to low expectations in the previous school. Equally, at this stage they do not feel particularly listened to or involved in the new school.

YEAR 1	ALL	STUDENTS	STAFF
(Note: on the scale used, 1 is the lowest score possible and 5 is the highest)	n = 65	n = 37	n = 28
ALL RESPONSES	3.33	3.18	3.47
ATTITUDES TO SCHOOL	3.45	3.25	3.69
TRUST	3.2	3.05	3.3
ENGAGEMENT	3.35	3.13	3.57
SUPPORT FOR LEARNING	3.4	3.36	3.44
GODDARD'S SOCIAL CAPITAL SCALE	3.09	3.12	3.08

Table 17: Chestnut - Analysis of survey responses – year 1

N.B. The rationale for the grouping of statements and the scoring method adopted has been explained in detail at the start of this chapter (p. 157).

YEAR 1	MOST POSITIVE STATEMENT 1		MOST POSITIVE STATEMENT 2		MOST POSITIVE STATEMENT 3	
STUDENTS	Staff here want me to do well	3.81	I am well supported at school	3.55	I know what the school wants to do in the future	3.55
STAFF	I know who the school's leaders are	4.54	Serving the students is the highest priority of staff here	4.24	The school has good facilities	4.11

YEAR 1	MOST NEGATIVE STATEMENT 1		MOST NEGATIVE STATEMENT 2		MOST NEGATIVE STATEMENT 3	
STUDENTS	I can easily use the facilities I want outside the school day	2.74	The school listens to me	2.82	I feel I can make a difference in the school	2.91
STAFF	Parents can be relied on to meet their commitments	2.48	Parent involvement supports learning	2.63	There is a culture of openness and transparency within the school	3

Table 18: Chestnut - most positive and negative survey statements -Year 1

Stakeholder evidence

Those few parents spoken to were clearly supportive of the academy:

“The school is always very approachable”. (CPa1)

“I don’t know what it was like before. I will say children all look smarter and there’s less hanging around the local shops at break. Academically (my daughter) has settled in really well, a few problems on the social side, but all sorted by the school”. (CPb1)

However, an ex-parent, who is also a long-time local resident, is more measured in assessing the scale of the challenge:

“The school has an awful reputation locally and changing the name hasn’t done much to change perception. The biggest problem is to sell it to parents as the best place to send their children rather than the last resort. Parents on the estate are very distrustful of people they perceive as wanting to do good by them. They’re supportive of children in their own way, but that doesn’t necessarily include education. The perception is ‘I didn’t go to school and I’m OK’. For the majority, their children are important, and they do what they think’s best for them”. (CPc1)

A representative of the local fire service who works as a volunteer in the school sees some tentative signs of change:

“It is changing, hopefully for the better, but only time will tell. From my personal perception, it’s been a little difficult. CH needs to make changes, especially to some job roles, but it’s not always been easy for staff ... Now they can see what’s happening for next year, everyone’s got a more positive attitude. I’ll still be going on and will be positive. I’m pleased with the effects I’ve had and the positive relationships I’ve built with pupils”. (CYa1)

The manager of the separate community centre building was also starting to experience some difference, and the beginnings of closer links into the school:

“When I first came, the community part was very separate from the school. It always felt like the community just use us after school. There wasn’t much involvement of the school leadership in terms of community. But [since CH came] I have more presence over in the main building. There’s been more involvement”. (CSb1)

CSa worked as a middle leader in the previous school for six years and is very clear about the difference that is occurring:

“I think the school’s changed in many different ways, even the name change has given us a very different identity. We’ve moved from a school that focused very much on pastoral and on SEN children. What we’ve done this year is far more focused on learning. For me that’s very much been the key that’s been driven forward this year”. (CSa1)

She is extremely hopeful and optimistic about the future:

“In my mind there’s no question we’re going to succeed, and by succeed I mean, yes, government targets, but I think we’ll succeed in the long term in changing children’s aspirations”.

However, she adds an important coda: *“But my views are not shared, I know they’re not”.*

What is making the difference for CSa is the leadership of CH: *“At no point during the year has her vision for the Academy wavered. That makes me think we’re on the right*

track, she knows where she's going" (CSa1). Pressed as to how this difference in leadership has shown itself, she responds:

"I work very closely with middle leadership. What I've seen over the year is something quite transformational, also in the way I perform. They've embraced this real change around who we're here for, and what we want to achieve. [There's]... far more rigour and challenge in the way we're talking to colleagues and questioning the outcomes for children. There are now systems in place that are far more about 'is this right, is this good for students, is it fit for purpose, is it going to make a difference?'"

CSa also observes that the academy is starting to work with local primary schools, sharing resources and looking together at early intervention, in ways that never happened before. Finally, CSa is now taking on responsibility for the new arrangements for student leadership. She observes. *"It's fundamental, I don't think Chestnut will survive if we don't get the students involved"*.

Leadership evidence

CW took up post towards the end of year one. He describes his role as to broker relationships with local businesses and stakeholders in the area and for these to impact on students. He was keen to know before accepting the post that there was a match of vision and values with CH:

"In terms of looking at community and parental engagement, those values must underpin what we're trying to do, especially in an area of high deprivation, family breakdown, social and economic issues. There needs to be some kind of values attached to what we're trying to do to ensure students here have the best opportunity". (CW1)

Those values mean that in all decisions, partnerships and actions “*students’ welfare, and the opportunities they’re given, are at the forefront*”. This involves both academic achievement and character development, building self-confidence as well as widening their horizons:

“The values (mean) ... ensuring we’re not letting things just drift or saying ‘we just do that because it’s the norm’. It’s challenging ourselves to say, ‘Are we doing the best for our young people? If not, why not, and what do we do differently?’”. (CW1)

Whilst CH and CV share that vision, CW recognises that “*within the rest of the staff, there’s still a way to go to bring them all on board*”. His other priorities are to integrate the community provision “*as part of the academy rather than working in isolation*”, to develop the Friends, which involves “*identifying what its core purpose is*”, and “*making greater inroads into engaging local individuals and businesses to come and work with us on different projects*”. But, like CH, for him “*the big one is looking at how we effectively engage parents in learning*”.

4.4.5 Year 2 Findings

Contextual change

For CH, “*there are signs things are getting better. We’re not there yet, but things are getting better*” (CH3). First choice applications for the next September intake had doubled compared with the same time last year. This did not mean the school was yet

full, but that was now in sight. The full restructuring of staff had been completed, including new pastoral arrangements with four non-teaching house leaders whose whole job is communicating with parents:

“That’s starting to have benefits. Attendance has improved. There’s always someone who’ll telephone, or there’s somebody for parents to speak to”. (CH3)

She also detected a marked difference in pupils’ attitudes to mock exams:

“Even our most disaffected students were observed doing some revision, and that was scary. The afternoon of the Maths exam, at lunchtime some of my most difficult Y11 girls sat with revision sheets at their tables. That was a huge change in culture for here. The way the children conducted themselves in the exam, because of the things we’d spoken to parents about, made you realise they’d underlined to their children these exams were to be taken seriously. There was a real sense of purpose for the first time, and no behavioural issues. Not one single student was removed from exams all week”. (CH3)

However there were disappointments too. The first set of GCSE results had not been as good as hoped, showing a decline of four percentage points on the previous year in relation to 5A*-C (EM) percentages. This may not be altogether surprising given the turmoil generated by the inherited budget deficit, the ensuing staff changes and redundancy programme for 26 staff, along with the demands of the building programme, but it was nevertheless a serious shock. It also prompted a letter to the local paper from the ex-Chair of Governors, which appeared, without warning, over half-term, withdrawing the college, of which he was still Principal for that term, from involvement as a sponsor.

This presented another challenge for CH:

“Parental confidence was knocked by the newspaper article. It appeared, unfortunately, on the front page on the first day of half-term. It couldn’t have happened at a worse time because obviously we weren’t around. Our ambassadors in the community are our children. We’d have talked to them immediately about it, and they would’ve gone home with a clear message that it’s business as usual. So there was definitely a de-stabilising effect”. (CH3)

It also triggered the need for a sponsored academy to find a new sponsor, a process then without national precedent, at a time of great vulnerability for the young school. This again added hugely to the demands on CH:

“The process was incredibly challenging, because I felt I needed to take control on behalf of students, our community and governors. Governors were clueless, in the nicest possible way, not because they didn’t care, but because this hadn’t happened anywhere before. There wasn’t a blueprint for it, and very little information from DfE, because basically they were making it up as they went along”. (CH3)

She decided to act. She began by looking at sponsors with academies nearby, which she felt might create some local synergy. There were three of these. Then she paused to reflect:

“I went back to Governors to revisit the core values agreed for the academy at the outset, which of course I wasn’t part of because I hadn’t been appointed then. But I felt it was important that I distilled from the original statement they’d put together what the core values were for the children and for this community, so that as far as possible we could map each potential sponsor against them to find the best match. For me, the piece of work had already been done, the community had been consulted, all the primary school children, parents, the wider community, secondary schools, local businesses. What I didn’t want was any change of sponsorship not to reflect that fairly comprehensive piece of enquiry”. (CH3)

Having distilled those values, CH investigated as many sponsors as she could that she felt would most reflect those core values. It was not an easy task. The DfE had a very clear view that sponsorship could only be through a multi-academy sponsor. Because Chestnut was such a small school and quite isolated, it was seen as a business risk in terms of viability. There was also a question from DfE about the suitability of the original sponsor, since, from their perspective, that sponsor had not added value to the Academy. The initial set-up had been focused solely on the principal, and was not a sustainable model. There was no college-to-school support in place, and the College Principal had no experience of pre-16 education. External audit had also raised questions around governance and accountability.

After investigating possible sponsors, CH visited them and interviewed all the CEOs, as well as visiting some of their academies to see their work:

“There were tensions for me because some chains prefer to bring in their own leader. I was conscious that by presenting an unbiased picture to governors, I could do myself out of a job. But my core values are to do what’s best for the children and get the right educational outcome for them. So I presented a range of potential sponsors to governors, and we decided to follow up two. I was less happy with one because their blueprint is to replace the Principal with one of theirs, but that was fine”. (CH3)

Then this sponsor withdrew from the process, because they expected 5% of the school’s budget for their central costs. They did not feel this produced enough money to make taking on such a small academy viable.

The remaining CEO then interviewed CH, and met the governors, who took a decision that this offered the best available sponsor arrangement. Their model was very much about school-to-school support, based on heads working collaboratively, without hierarchy in the structure but with some regional coordination. *“It’s very local needs driven, with only 1% of budget taken away for central services” (CH3).*

With approval finally given to start on January 1 2012, CH turned to the next worries:

“There’ll be a bit of unrest amongst staff for a while, so I’m worried about managing it well. I feel a rigorous exercise has been undertaken and that I’ve remained true to the values set when the academy opened”.

In response to an interview question about those core values, she responded with three:

- Inclusivity

“Every child is entitled to come here whether they are Einstein-level or not. We don’t permanently exclude any child. We recognise it’s not the child that’s failed, it’s the system that’s failed the child, and we work out a means to ensure their needs are met”.

- Engaging the community

“Because there’s a lack of education generally within our community, lack of confidence, lack of self-belief, lack of skills, so it’s about promoting opportunities for the community to engage in education”.

- Working with local businesses

“Because traditionally local businesses take from outside the area, this school was designed to work closely with local business to find out what skills they require, get them to invest in that through here, and then guarantee that anyone who’s undertaken a course here will get an interview before the person from outside. We hope to break that cycle of deprivation within our community ... the only way you’re going to do that is by

creating a literate community with a range of skills, so they can access the workplace in extremely challenging times. For many of them that's about self-confidence and self-belief". (CH3)

The Friends of the Academy, however, was not growing. The heart of the problem, CH believed, was that the model was an imposed “*middle-class PTA model*”, alien to local people. Self-belief and self-confidence were the root cause:

“You tell them there's a meeting and put an agenda out, and that's it. They're put off and won't come, because they feel they can't speak. I still struggle with that with my parent governors. At governors' meetings they don't speak unless I directly say to them 'This is about the children, what do you think about it as parents? I'm a Mum too, what, as a Mum, do you think?'. If you translate it into that sort of language, they'll make a contribution. But because there's an agenda and papers, they think they're not equipped to speak, that no one will want to hear their viewpoint". (CH4)

By contrast, CH saw student leadership changes as the biggest success story:

“We've done an enormous amount of work. We had a student leadership team last year, head boy, head girl, house leaders. We've now moved away from that. It did give those children confidence, they'd never had leadership roles here before. But this year we've appointed students to completely mirror the leadership structure of the academy. A student principal, student vice principal, student assistant principal and so on, and they work alongside us". (CH4)

As an example CH and the student principal were co-delivering training to SALT

(Student Academy Leadership Team) on how to create a vision statement:

“We felt if we're really going to empower students, they ought to be doing real roles. It's not about the student council meeting once a term to talk about the state of the girls' toilets. We're going to show them how we do our jobs and how we lead. So the student principal and I meet and talk about how you create a cohesive team from a disparate group of people, how you get people to buy into it, how, when things aren't going as you planned, or in crisis, you get people back to thinking about core values. The work we've

done with them, I would say, is outstanding. They've developed beyond all recognition". (CH4)

If that meant student leaders might disagree with the policy or approach adult leaders were taking, for CH, this is good:

"I quite like a bit of disagreement. If you're disagreeing about values or vision, there's something really healthy in that discussion. If there's fundamental disagreement, you get them to go away and undertake a piece of research - 'okay, if you think you're right, come back and show me, give me the evidence'. That's what I'd do with an adult leader. If one of my leadership team disagrees with me, I'd tell them to go away, do some research, and show me the evidence. I think the same should apply to students". (CH4)

Survey evidence

In year two, the student sample is notably larger, over 10% of the student body, while the staff response is smaller than before. It may be the staff changes have contributed to this, with new staff not necessarily receiving full information about the research, but it is also clear from interview comments that at the time of the survey, general stress levels, triggered by the ongoing impact of the building programme on day-to-day life, were high.

Of those staff that responded, the majority were support staff and had worked in the school less than a year. The majority of students responding were from years 8,10 and 11, with comparatively small numbers from Y7 and Y9.

YEAR 2	ALL	STUDENTS	STAFF
(Note: on the scale used, 1 is the lowest score possible and 5 is the highest)	n = 64	n = 51	n = 13
ALL RESPONSES	3.36	3.05	3.64
ATTITUDES TO SCHOOL	3.47	3.17	3.83
TRUST	3.08	2.83	3.25
ENGAGEMENT	3.4	2.9	3.89
SUPPORT FOR LEARNING	3.67	3.36	3.98
GODDARD'S SOCIAL CAPITAL SCALE	3.04	2.76	3.18

Table 19: Chestnut - Analysis of survey responses – Year 2

It is notable that staff scores have improved since year one on all counts, except trust, which is broadly similar. The most significant improvement is in terms of support for learning and engagement.

However student scores have fallen in every area. This is most marked in terms of the social capital scale, a result influenced by a particularly low score against the statement ‘students in this school care for one another’.

It seems difficult to link the reason for that decline just to the sample size, which is larger by 38%. It is possible it also reflects some of the disruption caused by the extensive building work and its impact on the environment, and conceivably also reaction to the departure of so many established staff.

YEAR 2	MOST POSITIVE STATEMENT 1		MOST POSITIVE STATEMENT 2		MOST POSITIVE STATEMENT 3	
STUDENTS	The staff here want me to do well.	4.02	The school has good facilities.	3.41	I feel that I’m making good progress.	3.36
STAFF	Serving the students is the highest priority of staff in this school.	4.62	I have confidence in the direction in which this school is being led.	4.38	I feel I have responsibility for what happens in this school.	4.31

YEAR 2	MOST NEGATIVE STATEMENT 1		MOST NEGATIVE STATEMENT 2		MOST NEGATIVE STATEMENT 3	
STUDENTS	Students here are caring towards one another.	2.13	I feel I can make a difference.	2.57	I always know what is going on in school.	2.81
STAFF	Parents at this school can be relied on to meet their commitments. Students here are caring towards each other. Students in this school can be counted on to work hard.	2.92	Parents of students in this school encourage their children to learn.	3.08	Staff in this school trust the parents.	3.15

Table 20: Chestnut - most positive and negative survey statements -Year 2

Stakeholder evidence

The staff interviewed include a mix of those who have recently joined the academy, and some who had served in the predecessor school. Although staff in both groups are more likely to be those who are positive about change, both emphasise the strength of leadership and the very clear vision they are following. That vision has the students at its heart. For one new staff member:

“At the core of everything is our students, for them to be achieving the very best they can. I believe I’m seeing the calibre of staff teaching our students improve and be more

consistent... I wasn't here before, but there was a feeling perhaps it didn't go that extra mile". (CSd1)

The importance of building relationships is also emphasised. The new house staff play a key part:

"A lot of families haven't had good experiences in education themselves. They've been angry, upset and confused in the past. What we do now is treat every parent with respect. We're there to support families. I often do mediation with families. They find it safer perhaps to come into our academy, if there's conflict at home, to talk about it here". (CSe1)

Because the whole family is being supported, it is making it easier to gain their support for education purposes:

"So the journey when we say to them 'can you help us by doing some reading', or they ask us 'we don't know how to support', so we say 'perhaps you'd like to come in, and we can run through it', and staff then spend time with them ... is growing. And I think that's showing. When we have parents' evenings now, attendance has increased. I see a trust in us increasing, but it's a slow journey because of the area." (CSe1)

She felt the word was also starting to spread across the estate:

"I think there's confidence now within our academy; people want to come and join us. When I first started, I don't think there was great confidence, it was still that transition from the old school. Now, when I meet with primary staff, parents are wanting to come here. They're seeing we don't give up, they're seeing our results, and we're proud. They're seeing that if there's a problem, we do want parents to come in, we do want to discuss it, to work together. I think that's very strong". (CSd1)

The building work, though, had brought many challenges and a stressful time for staff, with frequent packing and unpacking of resources and equipment, and moving rooms,

sometimes at short notice, as different parts of the building were required for re-development. *“That’s been very challenging but it’s been worth it because the new spaces are nice spaces to be in” (CSb2).*

Both transferred and new staff shared the positive feelings:

“I feel it’s a very different school from where we were when I spoke to you last year. We’re a better school, but we’re on a long journey”. (CSb2)

“My perception was a school prepared to go above and beyond for its staff and students, and really set a high standard. I was attracted to working here because I’d heard a bit on the grapevine, and I know it had been going through a period of change”. (CSd1)

Student leaders presented a similar positive picture of change. They pointed both to their own personal development and the development of the school, including attitudes towards it:

“We’re a lot more confident in ourselves. Before you’d just not say anything, but now every member on SALT has learned how to step up and say what they believe is right”. (CLa2)

“We’re not afraid to talk. When we first started, some people, I was one of them, I didn’t like to talk. I like to talk, but I can’t really express myself and what I was meaning. But through this last year I can actually express what I feel with the debate”. (CLb2)

“Also we’ve learned good team work. As the SALT team I think we’ve done fantastic this year. We’ve all bonded as well, comparing that we’ve had Y9s, Y10s and Y11s and others coming in at times. We’ve constantly had new teachers coming and talking, and we all just listen and be respectful”. (CLc2)

The move this year to shadowing the adult leadership had been particularly valued:

“Over the last year, we’ve become very close with the person we’re shadowing, we’ve become very friendly and got to know them well. It’s made the connection so that other people can see they’re not that bad”. (CLe2)

It helped to build relationships and understanding, but with a significant maturity about seeing boundaries:

“I agree there’s a time and a place where the teacher has to be in the teacher role, but then if you get to know that teacher, then they’re a completely different person because they’re comfortable with you and you feel comfortable with them. But they will still be a teacher”. (CLd2)

CSa, who had been responsible for SALT for the last year, listened in to those interviews:

“That was probably one of my proudest moments this year, when I think about how far these young people have come and the way they’re talking about leadership. Some of our students have a long way to go, but really for me a lot of what they said around the table is my vision for SALT, and they’ve taken it as their own”. (CSa2)

CSa also acknowledged the way her role has developed, and a growing sense of empowerment:

“I said, when we spoke last year, I wanted to be in a position where my role is facilitator, enabler and guide. Increasingly I want to take a back seat, and they’ve learned to recognise that themselves, through guidance and support. I’ve not said to them I don’t want anything to do with it, but they’re recognising their role and their importance, and that’s new for our children”. (CSa2)

An investment in professional residential leadership development programmes for student leaders was a sign of the serious intent. It is being extended in year three to use exactly the same performance management model as staff.

Some, but not all, staff interviewed also noticed a difference in the nature of student leadership. CSf joined the school as an assistant head 10 weeks before her research interview:

“In other schools, I’ve had student leadership in the sense of giving them responsibility, but I realise now it was mostly operational, not strategic. The guidance we were giving was on an operations basis, not about them thinking, modeling, challenging, actually being leaders. So I wonder whether some schools think they’re doing it whereas in reality they’re just directing, task- orientated”. (CSf1)

Leadership evidence

CW, at the end of his first full year at Chestnut, could see development in the academy, particularly staff relationships:

“The staff coming in are buying into the ethos and vision of the academy rather than being forced into it from a previous experience. Staff are more willing to be involved, spend time and get to know students”. (CW2)

The closer integration of school and community provision, too, had moved forward, with community and academy finances coming together, and a new main reception area for both nearing completion. Community staff now joined academy staff briefings.

But some plans had not yet come to fruition. At times, his work had been diverted, by crisis, wholly into in-school pupil support. Parent engagement had remained difficult. He contrasted the increasingly positive feedback about the approachability of staff, and their willingness to talk, with the barriers parents still felt. Although the Friends still met fairly regularly, numbers had fallen away, with less than 10 now involved. For several school leaders, including CW, all this had been a steep learning curve:

“The journey the academy has come on has been a big journey, and I’ve been part of that. I’ve done things I wouldn’t have thought I’d have to, and a load of things I didn’t think I was going to learn, and it’s just been necessary”. (CW2)

For CSf, newly arrived in post as assistant headteacher having worked in eight previous schools, Chestnut felt like a school on the cusp of change:

“My impression is it’s in a state of high change. Staff morale is up and down. The children are beginning to feel secure about the academy, but the build is still causing issues. At the moment, it’s not a very secure environment for people to work in because we’re constantly responding and adapting to things. We have this overview, which I agree with, that if it doesn’t work, we need to change it, whereas a lot of schools have a model ‘we’ll stick with it and persevere’”. (CSf1)

At Chestnut, what made the difference, in her view, was trust:

“There’s a huge amount of trust for you to get on with it, and a high expectation you’ll complete it. There’s no question you won’t, you simply will. And it’s not micro-managed”. (CSf1)

So leadership at Chestnut appears to involve something quite different:

“My experience in other schools ... has been there’s one person who’s the leader and everyone else does as they’re told. They don’t demonstrate leadership qualities, nor is it encouraged or discussed. Here, you’re treated like leaders. The language of leadership

is talked the whole time, modeling, discussing, – ‘did you challenge that, are you demonstrating to the children, to the staff?’. If someone’s getting something wrong, rather than ‘you’ve done it wrong’, there’s a conversation about ‘if you did it differently, have you thought about’... trying to change behaviours, which I’ve never experienced in any other school”. (CSf1)

4.4.6 Evidence of change

Key themes

The baseline summary identified three foci that emerged to guide the field research (p.256). Each of these is now considered briefly in turn.

a) Priorities for leadership, including

- **the balance of energy in a challenging situation devoted to changing perceptions internally or externally**
- **the interplay between provision for school students and wider educational provision**

As in both previous case studies, CH has been the main driver for change and its direction of travel. Her particular leadership characteristics highlighted in interviews include:

- Clarity of purpose (e.g. CSa1, CH1, CV1)
- Moral commitment (e.g. CW1, CV1, CH3, CSd1)
- Resilience (e.g. CSa1, CH3)

- Rapid re-engineering (CSf1, CH4)
- Willingness to challenge and be challenged (e.g. CH3, CSd1, CG1)
- Accountability and empowerment (e.g. CSf1, CH1, CH2)

However, her approach has been directly and immediately outward-facing from the outset, in some contrast to both AH and BH. This may be because of the extreme and immediate challenge of the situation following the closure of the previous school and the controversy surrounding that, but it is perhaps also an indication of a wider commitment to education of the community, not just the students, a point she re-iterated in several interviews.

b) The notion of empowerment as a driving force and the catalytic role seen for student leadership

The revised model of student leadership introduced in year two has proved extremely powerful in terms of the individuals directly involved. It is not possible to take a view about the wider impact those individuals are having, but the maturity of their own reflection on both school and their personal development suggests at least the potential for it to be strong. Key factors appear to be the modeling of leadership behaviour by adult leaders, the skills of the member of staff responsible for the programme, and the investment made in mentoring and leadership training to support them.

Empowerment also seems to be growing within the staff group (CSf, CSa, CG), after a period of considerable turbulence and some resistance.

c) The challenge of parental engagement in a community without aspiration of in many cases expectation of employment

The notion of empowerment has not yet been successfully extended to parents, despite considerable efforts. There is a more dispersed and embedded culture to change. It is too soon to know how the new building, with its ambitious design, will add impetus when open.

There is, though, evidence that relationships are beginning to shift, in part with the impact of the house leaders, and the new emphasis they are bringing on language and approachability, as well as the fresh approach to parent evenings. It is equally clear that formal structures for engagement, such as the Friends, have not been successful in this context.

Additional data provided by school

Although the school was not able to provide any extensive set of data, CH highlights a range of indicators to suggest the progress being made, apart from formal measures:

- The absence of pregnancy among Y11 girls for the first time

- The increase from 5% to 60% of former students attending post-16 presentation evening
- The increase in first choice applications
- Attendance and behaviour during examinations
- The absence of any exclusions

Concluding discussion

This case study captures the very beginnings of the change process for Chestnut Academy. It has been an intense and pressured time because of the range of challenges involved in picking up from failure, opening a new school, physically re-building it around and within an operating school, as well as the wider political pressure to deliver results quickly. Pace and momentum have been crucial.

CH reflects with hindsight she might have underestimated the impact of change on the emotional wellbeing of students (CH5). They had been satisfied with the previous provision, which was all they knew. Then a new head arrives, removes many staff, upheaves the building and much else, with no reason yet for students to trust her. On the other hand, if CH had not done that, there would have been no money for a new building and possibly no school. It was her responsibility and decision as leader to weigh the long-term gain against the short-term cost of not having everyone on board at the outset. She was guided by values and by instinct.

Just over two years into the life of the school, CH believes a tipping point may have been reached in terms of trust and relations. There is a rise in students seeking to return to school after leaving, attitudes among difficult students are changing, staff are beginning to talk with pride. She also believes she should have done even more early on to involve her community. It is only through this, she believes, change will become sustainable. This is because young people, who succeed in school and return to their community believing that qualifications provide a better route to financial survival than existing on benefits, do not have enough weight of influence to change and shape the culture around them. Whilst they may view education more positively when they are parents in 10-15 years time, for CH that is far too remote from now.

5. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

This thesis began with an enquiry about social capital. It asked whether the evidenced effects of social capital on health outcomes had any relevance for education outcomes. The question is posed in relation to English secondary schools, in particular, at a time of fundamental policy change and turbulence.

An understanding of social capital was developed through examination of a further four key themes set out in the Introduction:

- Trust
- Engagement
- Networks and Partnership
- Leadership

The definition of social capital produced by Robison et al (2002: 6) was adopted from the literature review as the working basis for the present study:

“Social capital is a person’s or group’s sympathy toward another person or group that may produce a potential benefit, advantage, and preferential treatment for another person or group of persons beyond that expected in an exchange relationship”.

This was felt to be helpful because it captured both individual and group perspectives, and then placed these in the context of more complex, and not purely instrumental, or exchange, relationships. The phrase '*beyond that expected*' was also thought to be particularly helpful in directing attention to such additional dimensions. It serves to emphasise the dual importance of both trust and engagement. Trust without engagement may be little more than passive acceptance. Engagement without trust carries potential for unproductive conflict rather than benefit.

The group and individual sympathies and the resulting dynamics of relationship between schools and their various stakeholders were then examined in three long-term case studies, undertaken over a two-year period.

The initial review of literature around those key themes suggested four particular areas where greater understanding was called for. These areas helped to shape the design of the research methodology. They were:

- how social capital is activated and developed among stakeholders
 - this research responded by focusing on the role of school leaders.
- whether the development of social capital can be separated from socio-economic status
 - this research responded by looking at schools in different contexts.

- understanding the role of young people in relation to social capital in a school
 - this research responded by looking for ways to incorporate data from school students through survey and interview.
- examining the balancing and reconciliation of competing demands and stakeholders
 - this research responded by seeking to include the full range of stakeholders in its enquiries.

Against this background, the key questions chosen to guide the research were identified as:

- How do school leaders look to build trust and engagement within their schools and across their schools' wider communities?
- What effects do levels of trust and engagement have upon schools and their wider communities?
- To what extent do levels of trust and engagement within schools and across their wider communities influence their educational outcomes?

This chapter now considers those questions against the evidence gained from the case studies. It begins by reviewing findings from across the three case studies. These are considered in the light of the overall literature review, and, in particular, the four areas for further understanding noted above.

Each case study was focused around a number of key issues that emerged from careful analysis of the baseline interview findings. Although each was prepared independently of the others, there is a significant degree of overlap in the themes that emerged. Table 21 sets out the issues derived from each case study to show how they can be linked around a number of common foci, even though they were derived independently in the first instance.

What binds these foci together in the context of this study is the nature and role of leadership, particularly, but not exclusively, the headteacher. The foci of engagement and partnership relate directly to our understanding of social capital, while purpose derives from a common focus on student outcomes as the key driver for the change strategy adopted in each case.

BASELINE ISSUES FROM EACH CASE STUDY			COMMON FOCUS
Ashtree	Birchgrove	Chestnut	
The impact of the head in giving direction to the previously withdrawn, inward-looking school, building confidence and mutual esteem within its communities.	The impact of a new head on the culture of the school and the leadership processes which influence change.	Priorities for leadership, including the balance of energy in a challenging situation devoted to changing perceptions internally or externally.	LEADERSHIP
The difficulties in and opportunities for the engagement of parents and for taking a holistic view of the family.	The particular challenge posed by parents and their views, as well as the way the school has developed its relationship with parents in its early years.	The challenge of parental engagement in a community without aspiration or in many cases expectation of employment.	ENGAGEMENT
The development of self-confidence among students as a critical element of success for them and for the school.	The new focus on community engagement for clear reasons that are connected with student outcomes.	The notion of empowerment as a driving force, and the catalytic role seen for student leadership.	WIDER OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS
The nature of partnerships being developed to foster a sense of cohesiveness across education provision.	The strategy BH adopted of working groups around the four key themes of the strategic plan.	The interplay between provision for school students and wider educational provision.	PARTNERSHIP

Table 21: Comparison of themes emerging from case study baseline visits

It is also possible to see a broad connection between each of the common foci above and the four areas for further understanding identified by the literature review, as shown in Table 22.

COMMON FOCI FROM CASE STUDIES	LITERATURE REVIEW AREAS FOR INCREASED UNDERSTANDING
Leadership	How social capital is activated and developed among stakeholders
Engagement	Whether the development of social capital can be separated from socio-economic status
Wider outcomes for students	Understanding the role of young people in relation to social capital in a school
Partnership	Examining the balancing and reconciliation of competing demands and stakeholders

Table 22: Comparison of case study common foci with initial literature review analysis

Although the overlap between foci and the literature review areas is only partial, it is sufficient to allow consideration of the research evidence and literature in tandem in the sections which follow (5.2 - 5.5), whilst recognising that aspects of each may require individual consideration.

The chapter then concludes by giving attention to the specific research questions in the light of the preceding discussion and analysis (Section 5.6).

5.2 Leadership

5.2.1 The centrality of leadership

The nature and significance of leadership is central, as in Roseto, to the development of trust and engagement within and beyond the school. More specifically, in all three case studies, it was the incoming head of the school who was the most important driver and influencer in shaping a change strategy for community engagement in the school. It was their arrival in the school that provided the most significant impetus and direction for change and for the strategy adopted in each school, and it was their vision that continued to give that shape and focus.

It is, though, equally important to acknowledge that the circumstances in which each head took up their leadership reflected a situation where the need for some change had already been identified externally. Governors at Birchgrove had seen a weakness in the school's parental engagement. At both Ashtree and Chestnut, the local authority had taken steps to intervene because the schools were seen to be under-performing and not well-regarded. However, in none of the schools did many staff or students necessarily share these views internally.

In all three cases, nevertheless, the new leader significantly extended the basis and nature of the change sought, encountering both support, resentment and opposition, in differing proportions in each case. The impetus for the further change these leaders sought stemmed primarily from their own value base, informed by their own experience, but also their own wider studies, reading and reflection.

At Ashtree, the priority AH brought was to raise the self-esteem of the organisation, and to build organisational self-confidence as the pre-cursor to forging a range of partnerships and common approach across education providers serving the local area.

At Birchgrove, BH expanded governors' awareness of the need to improve parental engagement to engender a different culture towards parents, not one based primarily on seeking compliance. However, he also extended this vision in reaching out to establish much broader local, regional and international partnerships, and to focus on their impact on the curriculum.

At Chestnut, CH pursued, from the outset, a close integration of school and community, both in terms of the design and organisation of changed buildings and in terms of engaging pro-actively with parents to challenge prevailing culture. Her approach was characterised by a powerful focus on empowerment of individuals in all stakeholder groups.

All three heads had to contend with pursuing their agenda for change within a wider external environment which was itself characterised by intense change, in ways unforeseeable at the point at which they embarked on their strategy. The most significant of these changes has been in government policy, particularly in relation to the rapidly accelerated development of academies, which affected all three schools, and in relation to narrower definitions of school performance, with the associated accountability pressures that have followed.

5.2.2 The characteristics of the leaders

Although some of the factors were in place in each situation for stakeholders to embrace change, strong leadership was required to move forward beyond what might have become, at best, a comfortable zone of placid acceptance from many, perhaps accompanied by mild resistance or apathy from others.

In taking forward their leadership of change, each leader adopted different strategies, influenced by their context but also by their own predispositions. The research examined these through the medium of an EQ-i questionnaire, derived from the work of Bar-On, as described in Chapter 3 (p. 135). The nature of the emotional intelligence information obtained through structured self-assessment by each leader is explained and justified there.

The results of the self-assessment each leader completed were organised into three categories, termed ‘*reflect*’, ‘*relate*’ and ‘*respond*’, with each comprising five sub-components. The ‘*reflect*’ category is concerned with the leader’s knowledge of self, the ‘*relate*’ category is concerned with their understanding of others, and the ‘*respond*’ category with the way the individual adapts to the world around them. The three categories are colour-coded in the figures below.

Table 23 shows the overall scores of each leader against these three main categories of analysis.

Name	Reflect	Relate	Respond
CH	108	110	102
BH	112	87	97
AH	113	102	107
Average	111	99.5	102
Median	110	104	103

Table 23: Overall EQ-i scores for all three headteachers

The scores are based on a scale that could, in theory, stretch from 0 to 150. In reality, responses almost always fall within a range of 70 to 130. Anything over 130 would be regarded in the design framework as an excessive indication, unhelpfully overpowering other characteristics. The design manual for the particular self-assessment used in this instance captures the relationship between scores and effectiveness in the graph in Figure 14.

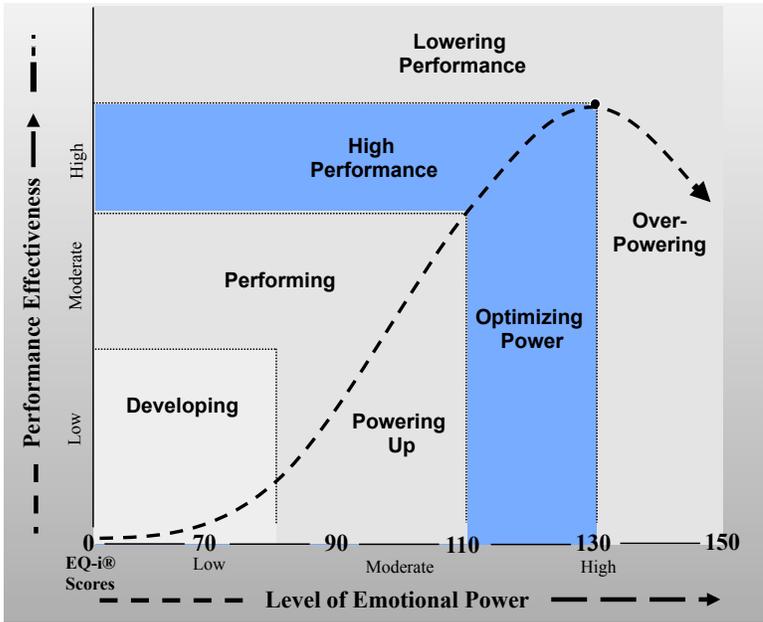


Fig. 14: Relationship of EQ-i scores to performance
Source: Connective Intelligence EQ-i Manual

Table 24 breaks the overall analysis of scores for each head down further into fifteen component parts. There is no obvious single leadership profile evident in such a small sample, though the three leaders do display some interesting features. The *reflect* dimension is the highest scoring for all three and also shows the least variation. Perhaps more surprisingly, the *relate* dimension shows the greatest variation. This is in part because of BH.

Dimension	Component	CH	BH	AH
REFLECT	Self- Awareness	111	121	119
	Self- Actualisation	109	109	111
	Self-regard	106	103	110
	Independence	109	121	112
	Happiness	107	105	111
Average		108	112	113
Median		109	109	111
RELATE	Social responsibility	108	90	106
	Empathy	112	89	104
	Assertiveness	107	99	104
	Impulse control	103	81	83
	Interpersonal relationships	121	78	112
Average		110	87	102
Median		108	89	105
RESPOND	Stress tolerance	99	117	114
	Optimism	100	103	115
	Flexibility	109	104	101
	Problem-solving	94	79	102
	Reality testing	108	81	104
Average		102	97	107
Median		100	103	104

Table 24: Component EQ-i scores for the three headteachers

BH's relatively low score across the 'relate' category might be seen as a significant weakness in relation to leadership roles. Moreover, his scoring for predisposition for inter-personal relationships is the lowest of any here. But he also displays very high self-awareness, independence and stress tolerance scores. BH is a strong enthusiast for the underlying EQ-i model, and has been introducing similar assessment opportunities both for staff and students in school. He commented on his pattern of scores:

"I shouldn't be a head really, I should be a computer programmer or something. I've had to fight my extreme independence for my whole career. When I was 18 or 19, I didn't want to do anything where I had to stand up in front of big crowds. But although I loathe people, I love company. I'm extremely introverted, but also extremely optimistic. So it sort of balances out in a way". (BH2)

His comments are perhaps a useful reminder that, while assessments such as EQ-i can be a valuable tool for self-analysis, aiding understanding and development, they should not be regarded as definitive templates. Pre-dispositions are not inviolably fixed, but can, with self-awareness, be managed, shaped, or perhaps even developed. It is therefore worth noting that, for these three heads, the reflect category, including self-awareness, was the most uniform and highest-scoring overall, suggesting perhaps it is possible to be a highly effective leader without scoring at the highest level on interpersonal skills, as long as the leader has very high levels of self-awareness, and takes steps to ameliorate this potential weakness in other ways. This point echoes to some extent the caution given by Yukl (1999: 302) that:

“Vague definitions of leader ‘types’ have long been popular in the literature, but they are often simplistic stereotypes with limited utility for increasing our understanding of effective leadership”.

A range of staff in all three schools, and some governors and parents, also provided their perspective on the leadership displayed by the heads. In all three cases, they highlighted particularly the head’s openness and transparency (e.g. interviews with AW1, BWb2, CSf1), their personal impact (AGb1, BG3, CG1), as well as their energy and resilience (AW1, BWb2, CSa1), and real clarity of purpose linked to a strong moral commitment (AGb1, BG1, CW1).

In other words, whatever their predisposition, the leaders were all clear in their direction and values, whilst modeling trust and engagement in the way they conducted themselves in dealings with all their various stakeholders. It is important to note as well, however, that this was not a soft, easy-going relationship, but one characterised equally by a willingness to challenge the status quo and be challenged. Examples of this include BH’s response to parents’ views of education, or CH’s attitude to student leaders. AH is perhaps generally more circumspect, but was nonetheless still purposeful in seeking change in the interests of students, whilst building open relationships wherever possible, as in her development of wider partnerships.

5.2.3 The pace of change

The judgements each head made about the pace of change they pursued were shaped by the view they took of the context to which they were appointed, as well as the predispositions and values they brought to the task of change.

In each of the three cases, there was a slightly different balance between what might be termed ‘forced’ and ‘accepted’ change, where forced change is largely imposed on at least some stakeholders, and accepted change carries a degree of support ranging from passive compliance to active participation.

At the extreme, the nature of the radical changes CH was required to make were not, in the first instance, determined in consultation with ‘the community’, however defined. Although some of the local community had played a vocal part in retaining a school on that site, the terms and conditions laid down by government for funding a sponsored academy, which made this possible, precluded any mere continuation of the status quo. The very small window of opportunity available to secure funding for a new building programme amplified the urgency of change. So CH felt she had no choice but to embark on a course of rapid change, informed fundamentally by her own values and sense of purpose, before having any significant degree of community trust and engagement. This would have to come later, and then rest on being seen to keep promises made.

For all three heads, finding a particular balance in what might be termed their inward-facing and their outward-facing focus was a key judgement. They each came to a view about the extent to which they concerned themselves with the internal core business of the school and the extent to which they devoted time and energy to wider involvement, networks and partnerships.

At Ashtree, AH focused strongly, initially, on re-establishing a school that others would wish to connect with, or partner, before actively seeking too much external engagement. She articulated very strongly her view that it was necessary for the school itself, following a period of significant withdrawal from wider contact and relationships, or *'raising the drawbridge'*, to develop its own sense of self-esteem and self-worth before it could engage effectively with those beyond its gates. Self-worth, in AH's view, involved both competence, particularly in terms of teaching and managing behaviour, and confidence, knowing and believing that you can do well as an organisation.

CH, taking over what in many respects, with regard to budget, staffing and standards, was a much more serious internal school situation than either of the others, took the opposite approach, spending significant time from the very outset in building external relationships. Indeed, reflecting at the end of the research period, CH felt, if anything, she should have invested even more time in this, whilst dealing with a very demanding

set of school issues. It was not, in her view, sufficient for teachers alone to have aspirations for young people. The aspirations of the community for its young people and for itself were paramount, and it was necessary to make the connection between the two. If not, young people who achieved would subsequently be left isolated from, despite living within, their communities and their families (CH5).

BH falls somewhere between these positions, but was extremely clear about two things. First, it was necessary for him to invest more time than he expected in his first year dealing with internal issues to do with the quality of teaching to ensure the school could be recognised as outstanding in inspection terms, and he returned to this again in his third year when particular issues arose with respect to performance in mathematics. He was equally clear, though, that this was not an end in itself, that the achievement of his vision required the building of strong partnerships and different relationships with stakeholders. For him, there was a moral responsibility for his high-performing school to give to, and draw from, those beyond its gates.

A further factor influencing the pace of change lay in the competing demands of stakeholders, demanding high-level skills in conflict management. For BH, this was most acute between staff and parents, with some staff feeling undermined that parents were listened to unduly. For CH, the tensions between the old culture and the new were most notable among staff, but could also be detected among students and parents.

Adjusting the balance, reconciling those competing demands, while holding a true course, required of each leader sensitivity, flexibility, firmness, and tolerance of risk. This tension is discussed further later (see 5.5).

Finally, all three heads were also mindful throughout of the pressure of external forces, particularly government policy changes and change in inspection regimes, to force the pace and, to some extent, the direction of change. Nonetheless, all recognised the need to maintain their integrity of purpose. They also all articulated, to varying degrees, an awareness that real change needs time and nurture, if it is to take root.

5.2.4 The change strategies adopted by the leaders

The choice of strategies adopted by each leader to promote engagement whilst addressing the issues identified and summarised in the baseline review of each case study, was thus influenced, but not determined, by:

- the context of change they encountered;
- the individual predispositions and self-awareness they brought with them;
- the values base they had previously developed;
- the judgements each made about the pace of change that was required.

Table 25 illustrates the overview of those strategies identified by the researcher through interview coding, and shared with each head for comment towards the end of year one of the research. In each case, it can be seen that, in the range of strategies they pursued, each head adopted a blend of formal approaches, such as a three-year strategic plan (Birchgrove), accountability structures (Chestnut) and a partnership trust (Ashtree), and informal approaches, such as creating events and celebrations (Ashtree and Chestnut), and opportunism to reshape roles and find champions (Birchgrove).

Focus	Ashtree	Birchgrove	Chestnut
School as an organisation	Focus inwards before looking out – school being worthy of others’ respect . Community engagement developed to provide stabilisers of tower of school improvement.	Expanding the horizons of governing body and staff. Three year strategic plan as device to promote dialogue.	Re-branding and re-building of school.
Leadership capacity	New posts as champions of new culture – not necessarily teachers – with developing synergy across ‘school’ and ‘community’ roles.	Taking opportunities to re-define staff roles.	Creation of new posts, including introduction of non-teachers to senior leadership team.
Staff	Role of leader as model of behavior looked for from others.	Staff working group on partnership given parity with standards group. Challenging staff inertia.	Staff re-organisation. Staff development programme.
Parents	Developing role of Parent Council. Improving communication.	Open meetings with parents.	Establishment of Friends of Academy.
Students	Development of students as leaders through student senate.	Focus on student leadership – structure and roles mirror staff groups.	Focus on student leadership with development of roles to mirror adult senior leadership team.
Partnerships	Forging a formal Partnership with local schools. Focus on transition and progression across all phases.	Seeking out educational and business partners – with curiosity and respectful relationships.	Building wider partnerships with primary schools and business.
Wider community	Establishment of a community event – Fun Day.		Establishment of a community event – Big Lunch. Creating a physical presence for school in local shopping centre.

Table 25: Change strategies adopted by each head, derived from analysis of interview data during year 1

All three heads also invested heavily in the growth of fellow leaders, particularly staff and, significantly, students, as champions of change. Building capacity, in terms of both skills and people, was a critical element for all three. For each of them, this meant taking investment risks, investing in priorities, people and posts, even though long-term funding was not secure. AH funded the existing extended services coordinator, whose post was due to disappear, to take on a new role, based in the school but working across the partnership. BH redirected previous specialist school funding to establish the new role of partnership coordinator, while CH created both a non-teaching Assistant Principal to take forward community engagement and enterprise, and another post to establish post-16 provision before this was formally agreed and secure.

It also became apparent in the course of the early visits, to a degree unforeseen at the outset by the researcher, that all three heads were, independently, developing a significant focus on the development of student leadership as a key part of their strategy. In all three cases, it was students who became highly significant agents of change, affecting the attitudes both of staff and other students. This strategy is examined in more detail in a later section of this chapter (5.4.4).

One other characteristic emerges quite strongly. When strategies did not appear to be working in the way that had been hoped, re-engineering was undertaken, often very rapidly, sometimes more patiently, but always purposefully. This can be seen in the way

BH adjusted the role and nature of the strategy working group when the first flush of enthusiasm waned, while CH recast roles and structures and re-wrote timetables in mid-year. AH, as already noted, displayed to some extent more patience, taking, perhaps, more time, whilst nevertheless manoeuvring ceaselessly to create circumstances through which to move forward. An example here would be the gradual drawing together, over two years, of a 'community team' of three staff, through a mix of redefined and newly-created part-time roles, that was beginning to create synergy across the areas of transition, communications, and community engagement.

5.2.5 Leading within and beyond the school

There is an established literature linking the quality of leadership to high-performing schools (e.g. Hallinger & Heck (1996); Silins & Mulford (2002); Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins (2008)). Moreover, school improvement has been strongly associated with the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms (e.g. Hopkins, Reynolds & Gray 2005, Bush & Glover 2009).

In all three case studies, the leadership of the head is clearly central to the development of the school. This includes a strong focus on ensuring high quality teaching and learning, as, for instance, in BH's first year. However, the case studies also provide strong evidence to suggest that leadership here is, in addition, playing a key role in seeking the activation and development of social capital extending both beyond the

school organisation, per se, and also beyond the purely pedagogic, even though it is fundamentally focused on learning.

The case study evidence also suggests that reliance on a single model of leadership appears simplistic in providing explanations of the phenomena observed. It is possible to detect clear traces of, for instance, distributed leadership or authentic leadership, in all three case studies, but neither of these models, alone or in combination, offers a full account. While there is in all cases a focus on instructional leadership, the conceptions of leadership adopted by the three heads go beyond this focus alone.

The notion of hybrid models of leadership (e.g. Gronn 2009a) or blended models (e.g. Coleman 2011, Mongon and Chapman 2012), discussed previously (pp. 93-6), get closer to the reality observed in the case studies. The evidence from the case studies highlight how it is difficult for theoretical models to take real account of the agency of the leader in adopting and adapting the mix of leadership approaches over time. As Gronn (2009b: 214) also argues, an understanding of hybridity shifts the focus for research to describing and explaining rather than prescribing leadership practice.

It is the impact of the individual leader's conscious and unconscious decisions about leadership practice that may, in fact, be central to the successful development, or otherwise, of social capital. Leadership behaviour appears, in all three cases, to be a

particularly significant element in relation to the nature and pace of change here. This finding echoes the analysis made in the literature review in seeing leadership as *practice* rather than *role* (Faris and Outcalt 2001). An awareness of relationships lies at its heart, but this involves more than simply looking upwards (towards the goal) and looking downwards (towards followers), as Cowsill and Grint (2008) suggested. What perhaps distinguishes leadership for social capital, as evident in the case studies, is a sense of looking sideways and around as well, an awareness of the significance and nature of partnership and networks. Such emotionally aware leadership is able to recognise and respond to the multi-dimensional nature of trust (Khodyakov 2007), simultaneously in different ways for different groups.

Their behaviour also reflects the centrality of values and moral purpose (Fullan 2003), and the leadership evidenced in the case studies has a clear appreciation of wider purposes. It is not just focused on the self-interest of the individual school. Such leadership also displays insight into how the school for which the leader has responsibility is, itself, part of a wider fabric, to which it actively contributes, and from which it consciously draws.

However, it is not sufficient to develop an understanding of how school leadership can contribute to the activation of social capital through the behaviour it models and encourages. It is also necessary to consider whether this is a worthwhile thing on which

to expend leadership time and energy. Arguably, this question has even greater significance since the recent thrust of national policy has moved to a more inward focus on the quality of teaching as the principal driver for school improvement, as seen, for instance, in the OFSTED Inspection Framework 2012.

Moreno, Mulford and Hargreaves (2007: 8) comment that: “*The tragedy of school change is that only about 30% of the explanation for variations in school achievement appears to be attributable to factors in the school*”. This echoes the views of Muijs (2010), and of Ainscow et al. (2012), already noted in the literature review. All maintain that, whilst it is important and necessary to gain the most benefit from that 30% or so which lies within the school’s reach, the impact of differences in family, community, parenting and other extra-school factors on the child are larger, and more significant.

West-Burnham (2013) incorporates the following diagram (Figure 15) to illustrate this differential for impact between factors within the school and factors outside the school. The quality of teaching and leadership are the prime in-school factors affecting outcomes, whatever view one takes about their relative balance that he proposes, but both are outweighed significantly by the social factors beyond the school.

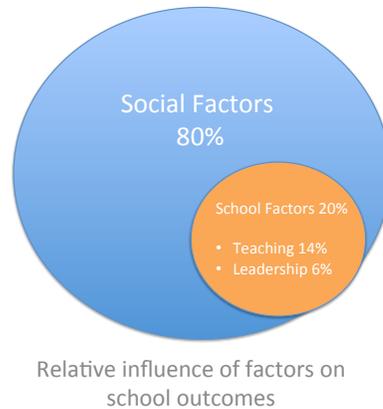


Fig. 15: West-Burnham 2013

For this reason, all these authors argue that family and community engagement merit closer attention from school leaders, in ways that will impact on the school, than is currently generally thought to be necessary. In that proposition lies the heart of the argument that it is important for school leaders, as the case studies demonstrate, to both lead their schools and also exert influence beyond the school walls. Nevertheless, the blend of leadership styles appropriate to each may well vary.

5.3 Engagement

5.3.1 The notion of empowerment

In all three cases, the incoming head faced a need to change the culture of the school if they were to increase the nature and levels of engagement of stakeholder groups, most

particularly parents. The building of trust was a key element in the processes each used to reach this goal.

Trust here is not passive acceptance. That is why it is so closely connected to engagement. What was being sought was most appositely defined by CH as '*empowerment*'. This notion includes both independence and challenge. In her case, an increase in the numbers of parents making demands on her, or even complaining, was to be regarded as a positive indicator of increasing trust. Similarly, BH was expecting and experiencing a more direct engagement with parents, even if this was challenging for his staff. At Ashtree, a key indicator of trust developing was the evolution of the formal partnership Trust, and, after careful nurturing to build trust, the willingness of partners to take initiative and responsibility for organising shared programmes and events. This active understanding of trust and engagement was most characteristically seen in relation to students. The focus in all three schools was on significantly more than just listening to the voice of students. There was a real focus on developing their leadership, most strongly evident at Chestnut, and this is discussed more fully in 5.4.4 following.

There are some close similarities between this understanding of empowerment and the earlier discussion within the literature review of understandings of distributed leadership, moving from single to collaborative leadership (Neumann and Simmons 2000). There are, though, two important emphases coming through strongly in the

approaches adopted by these leaders that are perhaps less prominent in the literature reviewed, and again indicative of hybridity.

The first is a focus on strong accountability. There is an expectation that people will deliver the outcome agreed, as evident in the comments quoted earlier from CSf1, *“There’s a huge amount of trust for you to get on with it, and a high expectation you’ll complete it. There’s no question you won’t, you simply will. And it’s not micro-managed”*. But, secondly, it is also matched by significant emphasis on coaching and modeling the behaviour of leadership. *“Here, you’re treated like leaders. The language of leadership is talked the whole time, modeling, discussing”* (CSf1). The distinction CSf makes in that interview between her experience at Chestnut and previous schools in which she had worked mirrors closely that drawn by Harris (2004: 19) between distributed leadership and merely delegated headship.

The significance of power in the development of relationships of trust and engagement was signaled as an issue for exploration in the literature review. Indeed the very term ‘empowerment’, defined by the Oxford Dictionary as to *“give (someone) the authority or power to do something”*, carries within it connotations of transfer and gifting of power.

All three heads have to some extent been using their power to that end. However, there is a further dimension, evident in both the development of student leadership and parental engagement, in all three schools. The ability of the individual to challenge, to make choices and take action, needs to be understood within a wider perspective than individual rights and capability. There is a conscious attempt in all three schools to encourage and expect individual empowerment to be informed by a wider sense of common purpose.

5.3.2 The growth of trust and engagement

Any consideration of the growth of trust and engagement, or their converse, necessarily implies some means of measuring changes in levels of trust and forms of social capital. For the purposes of this research, a survey was designed, drawing on sources from the Office for National Statistics in the UK and from Goddard's Social Capital Scale developed in American schools. The accuracy of the questionnaire as a tool of measurement cannot be taken for granted, given the small and varied sample sizes and the variations of approach between schools. As a result, a conscious decision was made not to attempt any form of statistical analysis, because of the significant logistical implications and practical difficulties involved.

One feature of the questionnaire not generally applied by earlier researchers, such as Goddard, was its attempt to gauge participants' perception of their peer group's levels of trust and also of others' trust in their peer group, rather than just taking a one-sided or partial view. In this way, the survey findings contain some additional scope for internal cross-checking and validation for the broad direction of the survey findings, even though they are not standardised.

The research evidence is able to provide stronger indications about trust and engagement among students and staff than it can among parents, because of response levels and the reasons already discussed in relation to the case studies. Within those two groups in particular, the evidence of trust revealed in the surveys is not uniform in spread or growth. Variations are evident, with a decline in some areas from some groups between the two surveys taken in all three schools, though it should be noted respondents are not necessarily the same between surveys.

Although this might suggest the heads' strategies were not succeeding, there were also, in each case, particular reasons by which the apparent decline may be explained, and which may not therefore negate the head's strategy. For instance, at Chestnut, the marked decline in student trust on a larger sample in year two may be a reflection of the significant upheaval still being experienced through the, as yet, unfinished building works and major staff changes.

Moreover, the growth of trust and engagement is not an end in itself. It was, for each head, a means to establishing a broader purpose. So, while it may be valuable to have an awareness of ups and downs in overall levels in the short term, perhaps as a guide to adjusting actions and intentions, decline in the short term need not necessarily suggest longer-term failure.

5.3.3. The relationship between social capital and socio-economic status and its impact

If social capital is not fixed or static, but something which is susceptible to change, and if leadership is a critical factor in its activation and development, it nevertheless remains to consider to what extent socio-economic status affects the nature and scope of the change that might be possible with effective leadership. Goddard (2003) stressed the need to understand more about whether social capital can be developed independently of socio-economic status. Schaefer-McDaniel (2004) highlighted the disproportionate attention given in research terms to poorer communities rather than richer ones. For those reasons, a range of socio-economic contexts was selected for the case studies in this research with the intention of seeking evidence of social capital development in all of them.

The literature review also considered how social capital was not a value-free concept and how it could carry a risk of social determinism. Gorard's (2009: 761) key

conclusion that *“pupil prior attainment and background explain the vast majority of variation in school outcomes”* was noted in the Introduction. Wilson and Pickett (2009: 103) summarise convincingly the evidence that: *“Although good schools make a difference, the biggest influence on educational attainment, how well a child performs in school and later in higher education, is family background”*.

However, family background is not necessarily the same as either social capital or socio-economic status. The challenge for this research is to consider whether there is evidence of growth in trust and engagement in a wide range of socio-economic contexts and range of family backgrounds. If so, that would suggest that socio-economic status is not, of itself, a limiting factor.

It might appear that the results of the survey adopted for this research support the idea that the most recognisable social capital in terms of trust and engagement existed in the more affluent or advantaged area of Birchgrove, where the school was also most successful in terms of national inspection criteria.

However, this may be too superficial an interpretation, as social capital clearly pre-existed the heads' initiatives, and also was developing, in all three settings, even if it was not always evident within the school. At Chestnut, it was engagement by the local community that helped to secure the survival of a school on site. At Ashtree it could

perhaps be visible in parents' response to and involvement in the first Community Fun Day. The way trust and engagement manifests itself may take different forms, reflecting local community norms and culture. None of the three leaders wholly accepted the norms they encountered, and on occasions challenged them. By the same token, neither did they negate or ignore them.

In the view of BH, parent support at Birchgrove was also more self-interested, or narrowly focused, within that population than in the previous less affluent areas in which he had worked, although methodological difficulties in reaching parents limited the scope of this research in testing that view further.

Fluctuations in levels of trust and engagement over time were evident in survey evidence in all three settings and across all stakeholder groups reached. In the two least advantaged settings, trust and engagement appears to grow first more strongly among some, but not all, students. At both Chestnut and Ashtree, student leaders were drawn from a range of family backgrounds, and for CH they were a key part of her strategy to increase and extend social capital between the school and parents generally. Both Ashtree and Chestnut were also making use of cross-school alliances and support to influence both parent and student perceptions.

This research cannot measure precise effects, but if there is evidence of some upward changes, in particular, in levels of trust and engagement across a range of settings, even if not uniform across all groups, then it gives grounds to encourage further investigation to understand in more depth, with broader samples and more refined instruments, how leadership can help to develop social capital independently of socio-economic status.

5.4 Wider outcomes for students

5.4.1 The pre-eminence of students' interests and needs

Definitions of school performance most commonly focus, first and foremost, on the measures of attainment, and their proportions, as defined by current government policy and inspection frameworks. To some extent, this was also an assumption implicit in the initial thinking about the present research.

But it became clear at a very early stage in the baseline process that, for these three heads, there were other outcomes they sought, not instead of, but in addition to, those outcomes by which schools are judged currently through national accountability measures. Indeed, their argument perhaps goes a stage further to suggest that those 'additional' outcomes could themselves contribute to subsequent further improvement in academic achievement.

The rationale offered by each school head for their pursuit of a community engagement strategy rests essentially on their argument that a full education needs to address the personal and social development of the individual as well as particular societal measures of academic attainment. As well as securing qualifications, it needs to equip students for their life as workers and citizens in an unknown, but radically different, future.

Each head was clear that the prime driver for their engagement strategy was the needs of their students, now and in the future, as they perceived these. To the extent that this is synonymous with the long-term interest of society, it is a legitimate motivation. None of the heads would see themselves as community workers. They were all primarily educators of the young. At the same time, they recognised a necessity to look beyond school as well, to give to and draw from the support of families and communities, who have a major share in that role.

5.4.2 Definition and nature of outcomes

The much broader nature of the outcomes being sought for students was expressed in slightly different language by each of the three heads, but with considerable overlap in the underlying intention. The various terms, showing both commonality and distinctive emphases in which they expressed this, are shown in Table 26.

	AH	BH	CH
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	Development of social and emotional intelligence	Enterprise	Confidence
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT	Understanding of adult world	Employability	Opportunity for role and responsibility

Table 26: Language used by heads to describe desired wider outcomes

All these elements are connected in part by ideas of self-esteem and of building relationships with adults, and it is in the context of this concern for personal and social development that the significance of their commitment to student leadership can perhaps best be understood, with its potential to generate changes in attitudes from adults and learners.

In addition, the three heads all hinted in different ways at a wider set of potential outcomes, particularly in relation to parents, which they considered crucial to their success but for which there were no recognised measures. AH was concerned for parents to develop a wider and deeper understanding of their role. BH wanted to shift perceptions of learning amongst parents in particular. CH identified the lack of

sustainability in improved attainment outcomes for young people, and indeed their isolation within their families, if parents did not understand and value achievement.

The conviction behind this broader quest for an understanding of successful outcomes lay in the potential for a reinforcing effect, the establishment of a virtuous spiral, not in opposition to recognised outcomes but alongside, and with potential to impact positively on these in the longer term.

The present research can present no direct evidence of success due to the long-term nature of the outcomes being sought. What it can do is to capture an image of the baseline starting-point and the intended direction of travel, and, through a process akin to time-lapse photography, begin to build sequenced images of change.

5.4.3 Seeking patterns of linkage

It is perhaps not surprising that there is no evidence of a simple linear or causal pattern between input and output for either student or wider outcomes.

In terms of the nationally used measures of attainment, there is no discernible pattern evident in any of the schools, with both falls and rises evident in each from year to year on specific measures. However, the 2013 KS4 data, which reflects the students who

participated in this research, does indicate an overall upward trend since 2010 in all three schools, which is markedly greater than the national trend (Table 27).

In this table, the rate of improvement was calculated using the number of percentage points increase from first year to final year as a percentage of the first year figure. A similar calculation was made for the national change. It was not judged appropriate to calculate national comparisons for attendance or exclusions in the same way.

Whilst such a simplistic headline analysis does not allow consideration of causation or special factors that may affect trends, it does, at the very least, give some grounds to suggest that the investment of time and energy made by the three heads in working beyond the school has not impacted negatively on standard accountability measures.

It is also clear from the limited other outcome data that the heads were able to provide for this research that all three are only just at the earliest stages of considering how they might measure the wider impact of the strategies they have adopted. It is new and difficult territory.

Ashtree	2010	2011	2012	2013	School %age change 2010-13	National %age change 2010-13
5A*-C (EM)	37	37	38	43	+16.2	+9.1
Attendance rate	87.5	90.9	92.5	91.7	+4.8	
No of permanent exclusions	8	1	2	2	-75	

Birchgrove	2010	2011	2012	2013	School %age change 2011-13	National %age change 2011-13
5A*-C (EM)	PRE-ACADEMY DATA NOT AVAILABLE	64	60	72	+12.5	+3.4
Attendance rate		95.3	94.7	95.3	0	
No of permanent exclusions		0	1	0	0	

Chestnut	2010	2011	2012	2013	School %age change 2011-13	National %age change 2011-13
5A*-C (EM)	DATA NOT AVAILABLE AS SCHOOL NOT OPEN	22	30	41	+86	+3.4
Attendance rate		90.2	90.7	91.6	+1.6	
No of permanent exclusions		0	0	0	0	

Table 27: Changes in school performance against selected national outcome measures over the research period in the three schools

At both Ashtree and Chestnut, with their lower starting points in terms of both trust and attainment, a range of other indicators also indicate some possible change in climate, particularly in relation to behaviour and attendance. AH drew on evidence from repeated standardised surveys of parent and student perceptions to suggest increased satisfaction. CH pointed with some pride to the fact in year two, for the first time ever, no Y11 girl became pregnant, and that, while Chestnut was an 11-16 school currently, some of those students who had to leave on completion of Y11, wished to return for further study or to improve their prospects.

The effects of such apparently small steps, though, can become cumulative multipliers, contributing to a virtuous spiral of change. The challenge this poses, for the researcher as for the school, concerns how to gauge the nature and extent of change with valid and credible consistent indicators, whilst recognising that the effects are not instant in their impact. They build over time, like a seed unfurling in the soil. Those indicators therefore need to reflect process measures as well as outcome measures.

5.4.4 The role of young people in relation to social capital in a school

The literature review highlighted the long history of the way in which students have been given roles in the day-to-day organisation of schools on behalf of teachers, and how, in the 1990s and early 2000s there had been a growing interest, fostered through

the work of Rudduck and others, in taking greater account of the voice of students. Two different justifications were offered by those writers, one from a school improvement perspective and one from a democratic perspective. Tensions have been noted in both (Thomson and Gunter 2006), and the mixed purposes that might lie behind the use of student voice laid out by Fielding (2006), summarised on page 72.

What was observed in the three case studies had resonance with both the school improvement and democratic perspectives, but linked them together in quite radical ways around the notion of student leadership. The nature of student leadership observed in these three schools had distinctive emphases on the agency of young people, and on their role beyond the school.

Though this change was evident to a degree in all three schools, it is most clearly seen at Chestnut through their mirroring of student and adult leadership. Part of the expectation here was of these student leaders in turn not just building social capital in school, by modeling behaviour and leadership themselves, under the coaching and mentorship of their adult equivalent, but also acting in the community as ambassadors for the school and as agents of change in their families. The tensions of power relationships noted above are not removed in this approach. However, the issue of imposition and challenge was clearly understood by CH and formed a central element in her understanding of empowerment, as was the need to open up wider opportunity for such engagement.

It is clear that, in each school, it is the head who was the instigator and champion of the student leadership approach taken and the philosophy behind it. This echoes the Australian findings of Lavery and Hine (2012) regarding the central importance of the school leader in any such development. Each of the three heads, in different ways, sought to modify or fundamentally change existing practice in their school as part of their wider improvement strategy. In this, they were all seeking to move beyond the basic model of a school council common in many schools. As a result, each school adopted its own approach to student leadership, with both similarities and differences, as shown in Table 28.

AH decided, in 2010, that the existing school council was not working effectively, and replaced it with what was termed the student senate. Students chose to apply for the role of senate member, or were, in some cases, encouraged to apply. They are now appointed after interview jointly by staff and current members. However, it was clear from their stories that it was not just what might be termed conforming or well-behaved students who came through this process. A number of those interviewed talked about past behaviour problems they had been helped to overcome. Yet it is certainly true that the number of students involved overall is relatively small, and also that they come from Y7-Y10, as the school felt exam pressures were too important, in the context of the school's situation, for older students to be distracted by this work.

BH had been working to increase the engagement of the existing school council which has representatives elected by each tutor group, albeit with varying degrees of enthusiasm. To this end, he involved council members in the four strategic staff working groups he had set up to support the school strategic plan put in place soon after he took up his post. The four groups address standards, innovation, personalisation and partnership. In this way, BH looked to move student voice away from more peripheral issues to central areas of school development. An executive committee of older students now coordinates these groups, overall, and its members chair group meetings. Numbers involved are greater than at Ashtree, even allowing for the size of school, and BH is now keen to find ways to extend a much broader range of opportunities for leadership across the student body.

	Ashtree	Birchgrove	Chestnut
Organisational Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student senate • Members host house groups • Weekly meeting during tutor time • Replaced previous school council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive committee of older students • Working groups, chaired by exec. • Reps from each tutor group meet by year groups during assembly • Development of previous school council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student leadership team mirrors roles in adult leadership team, with direct individual link • Lunch-time meeting • Replaced previous prefect system
Roles undertaken by students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys of student opinion • Mediation and restorative justice • Direct organisation of community events • Representation of school at community meetings • Presentations to and work in local primary schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative of tutor group. • Involvement in working groups that mirror staff groups/school strategic themes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team plan, plus each member has individual targets and performance review
Staff support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported by a part-time non-teacher with background in community development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead member of staff given small timetable remission • Form tutor (variable support) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistant Principal works with the team to support them as a group • Mentoring through link SLT member
Appointment process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mix of application and invitation to apply and interview by staff and current senate members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elected by tutor groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By application and interview – in first year by external business interviewers, in second year by current post-holders
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public speaking skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Off-site leadership training – 3 days
Scale of participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 students directly – 3 per year group • Y11 excluded because of perceived exam pressure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four students per tutor group – around 80 in total • Other opportunities – classroom ambassadors, enterprise group (40 students for limited time period) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17 students directly, all year groups

Table 28: Features of the approaches to student leadership adopted in each school

CH in her first year adopted an inherited prefect system before rejecting it and replacing it with a new structure, the Student Academy Leadership Team (SALT). Each SALT member has a role paralleled with the school senior leadership team, and each senior leader works with their student counterpart, partly as coach and mentor and partly on common agendas. Like the adult leadership team, SALT has both team and individual plans that members shape, and the members follow staff performance management practice.

The first SALT group went through an application and interview process, against job descriptions, which was carried out by a local business organisation. A further feature was investment in leadership training for appointed students, buying in professional, adult-derived programmes. This intense focus on building leadership capability included the scope to challenge the school leadership using evidence and argument. Again, student numbers involved initially are relatively small, about 5% of the student body. Interviews for the second cohort were due to take place soon after the second research visit. The number and nature of roles was being expanded, and the numbers interested in applying had grown dramatically from the first year.

In all three cases, each head needed, along with their own commitment, the involvement of other staff to take this initiative forward. In all three cases, this was someone selected or identified by the head, not always an established teacher but someone they saw as a

key agent for wider change. A recurrent theme in interviewing those staff leading this work, whether their background was in teaching or not, was their assessment of the distinctive skills required of adults, themselves included, to help students develop in this way. They perceived these as quite different from those normally required of a classroom teacher, and spoke of the tensions their work sometimes caused with their colleagues. The nature of this difference is linked to the role of facilitator, identifying when and how to give up control, but on a constantly shifting basis (AW, BSh). The skills and insights inherent in the views of these two facilitators appear crucial to successfully navigating the tensions identified in the literature review.

There are two potential areas of effect for student leadership; the effect of student leaders on others, both within and beyond the school, and the effect of the experience on student leaders themselves. It was only possible within the scope of this research to consider both of these from the viewpoint of the students involved, cross-checking these with the views put forward by school leaders.

The research design did not allow the possibility of seeking out what Fielding and Rudduck (2002) called the '*silent voices*', those who, by choice or not, were not part of that circle. However, the survey evidence from students, as well as the focus group evidence from staff, gave grounds to think there were some in both groups with reservations or resentment. "*They get to see more of the head than we do*" (staff

member, Birchgrove). *“Only the student leaders find out what’s going on in the school”* (student, Ashtree).

Notwithstanding those limitations, and whilst it was not possible to test out the objectivity of their views, it does seem significant that every student leader interviewed was able to point to some personal development as a result of their experience. It is possible the sample made available by the schools, within the constraints of availability, timetables and examinations, was biased towards more enthusiastic students.

Nevertheless, in each case, a significant proportion of potential interviewees was seen, 30% (6 students) at Ashtree and around 60% (8 students) at Chestnut, although the proportion, not the number, at Birchgrove was smaller (about 12% - 10 students). It is also clear a number of those interviewed, in all three schools, were not simply traditionally well-behaved, conforming students.

It is beyond the scope of this research to attempt any linkage, causal or otherwise, between involvement in student leadership and academic success, either for individuals or schools. Nevertheless, each head defined their purposes in developing their stakeholder engagement strategy, and student leadership within that, in terms that began with their students and educational outcomes for them. However, they also defined these outcomes in much broader terms than current measures of purely academic attainment. The various terms in which they expressed this, again showing both

commonality and distinctive emphases, were discussed in 5.4.2. All are connected by ideas of self-esteem and of building relationships with adults.

There is a strong echo between some of these aims and the language used by students to express their view of what they felt had been the impact for them. Their views are summarised in Table 29 below. Key words include: confidence, relationships, tolerance, and teamwork, or, in other words, relationships and self-esteem again. They all point to changes in their schools they believe they have effected. At Ashtree, in particular, the effect is also beginning to extend beyond the school into students' own wider communities, as suggested by the Y9 student quoted in the table.

Thomson (2012:100) also reports similar learning outcomes were identified by student leaders in another context, whilst noting how little work has been undertaken to assess the learning gains from student voice and leadership or to involve students in this process. That would be true in these three schools too. Addressing this gap may be central to finding a new balance between the functional and the personal, to use Fielding's (2006) terms.

At Chestnut, where the students perhaps expressed with the greatest force and passion the impact they felt they had made and had experienced in themselves, it may be significant that the school had invested quite considerably in leadership development

training for those students, using adult-derived models and off-site locations. The model of shadowing and being mentored by senior leaders in the school also kept a real focus on leadership rather than passivity or compliance. This attitude and understanding may represent a differentiator in the development of a ‘*person-centred*’ organisation as opposed to a merely ‘*high-performing*’ one (Fielding 2006). It was also starting to affect the understanding of other school leaders, as evidenced by the comments from CSf quoted in the case study.

Robinson and Taylor (2013: 44), based on a study of two student voice projects in schools, question whether it is at all possible that “*staff and students can meet as genuine partners with a shared undertaking of making meaning of their work together*”. However, the potential for transformation in the three case studies does not come from school leaders simply listening to suggestions from students for changes they think might be beneficial, nor in merely coopting some students to act as proxies for school leaders. Rather it seems to lie in the relationships with teachers and other adults that develop as a result of sharing concerns, and the way in which mutual respect and understanding increases through shared responsibility. This is well illustrated by the Chestnut student cited in Table 28 discussing her changed attitude to Miss T. Her comments do not suggest ‘*synthetic trust*’ (Czerniawski 2012). They have resonance with the findings of Mitra (2009) relating to the significance of youth-adult relationships and Moloi et al. (2010) regarding mutual trust between students and teachers as a key driver of improvement.

	Ashtree	Birchgrove	Chestnut
Student-identified effects on school/others 2011-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing peoples' opinion of school for better • Giving community more insight into school • Organisation of student survey • Community befriending scheme • Organised community Fun Day on school site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to uniform • Changes to school organization • Help to appoint new Vice-Principal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved relationships and trust within academy • Planning a vending machine and shop • Application for laptop funding
Student-identified benefits for self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidence • Improved behavior • Ability to make relationships • Speaking in public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaking to groups • Decision-making • Political awareness • Determination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidence • Dealing with stress • Tolerance, and understanding of people, including teachers • Working as a team
Interview examples	<p>Y9 student:</p> <p><i>'What annoyed me was a lot of the people who go on about this school is rubbish have never actually been here so they don't know what it's like. I wanted to make some changes and work with the community so people can see that, yes, this school does have problems, but it's not as bad as people think. I think it's working. We've got much higher opinions of us. Students are taken into account about the community. Down the Hill last year, everyone used to throw apples to cause trouble, but now we've been there and spread the word to students, it's not been as bad, and our Police Community Support Officer has come and helped us on that'.</i></p>	<p>Y12 student:</p> <p><i>'I'm not afraid to say that I wasn't the easiest person to have in a classroom when I was younger. But through (the leadership work I've done) it's given me a second chance and let people look at me twice and realise I'm not that person. I've really changed a lot since I joined this school and I think that's down to them, the way my character has been built up. The fact I can go from being trouble to being Student Principal shows the encouragement I've had has helped me to progress and hopefully develop who I am'.</i></p>	<p>Y10 student:</p> <p><i>'All the kids muck around in school because they don't like some staff, like Miss T. But through SALT ... I had a meeting with Miss T once when I was doing the charity events, and we didn't just have a basic conversation on that, we ended up talking lady to girl. It was work to work, basically a friend to friend. Then after you've had conversations based on work, and then moved into something else other than work, you know that Miss T and some other teachers aren't actually that bad, and you develop a good relationship with them and you feel like it's out of order when everyone starts saying stuff'.</i></p>

Table 29: Analysis of benefits identified by student leaders

This research therefore suggests a significant reciprocal relationship between the development of genuine student leadership and the wider growth of trust and engagement in a school that has not been sufficiently noted in the literature previously. In much of the literature on school leadership, (e.g. Hallinger and Heck 2003, Leithwood and Riehl 2005, Hallinger 2011), the role of students as leaders is not discussed.

This is also true of the literature on school improvement. For example, Bryk and Schneider (2002) identified three settings in which relational trust acted as a force for improvement in schools; between principal and teacher, teacher and teacher, and between school professionals and parents. Day et al. (2009) add two others; principal/teachers with support (non teaching) staff, and principals with external agencies (including schools). Neither study makes reference to students in this context, perhaps reinforcing, whether consciously or not, a view that school improvement is something done to schools (and by implication to students) by adults.

Student leadership, as encountered in this research, still displays those tensions noted by previous researchers such as Thomson and Gunter (2006), but also appears to be finding ways, however rudimentary, to move beyond them. In all three schools, albeit in slightly different ways, there appears to be a genuine emphasis on students themselves becoming agents of change and, crucially, on understanding and developing the skills

staff need to support this. In addition, the focus was at times, most notably at Ashtree and Chestnut, moving beyond the school to include the influence students might have more widely in their communities.

5.5 Partnership

5.5.1 Role of partnerships and networking

Across all three cases, two common features recurred in the interviews with heads:

- a belief in a culture of collaboration
- a sense of being part of a wider educational whole, not just a single school

As a result, all three heads created new posts with a focus on partnership development. Moreover, all three were actively exploring ways to develop some form of all-through schooling.

However, it is equally significant that the view of all three leaders as to both the nature of partnership and their choice of partners changed, or, as two of them described it, '*matured*', over the two years of the research (see also BV2). The involvement with the school of key partners that each head identified at the start of the research altered, and several indicated they had nothing to contribute to the research in its second year. All three heads also clearly stated during the second year of the research that they would not

have identified the same partners for the purposes of the research by the end of the research period as they did when asked at the start. Experience had led them towards increased selectivity and greater focus in the partnerships they pursued.

In part this may be because of what Dhillon (2009: 701) describes as:

“the complexity and dynamics of the process of partnership working, including the multiple layers of collaboration, the networks and networking that underpin a partnership and the power differentials amongst participants that lead in effect to the operation of partnerships within a ‘partnership’”.

One of the key challenges of collaboration is that the type of leadership needed to achieve what Lasker et al. (2001) term ‘*synergy*’, or effective partnership, is not the most common form of leadership. They note that:

“traditional leaders frequently have a narrow range of expertise, speak a language that can only be understood by their peers, are used to being in control and relate to the people with whom they work as followers and subordinates rather than partners”.

Instead, they identify a need for:

“boundary-spanning leaders who understand and appreciate partners' different perspectives, can bridge their diverse culture, and are comfortable sharing ideas, resources and power”. (p.193)

The leadership style of each head was a key component in the effectiveness of partnership and synergy they were creating. Partners interviewed at the end of year one in all three settings highlighted distinctive qualities in the leadership of each head, their

commitment and follow-through (AH), their openness and humility (BH), and their values and purpose (CH).

5.5.2 Structures and participation

As with the strategies they adopted, the ways in which the three heads tried to structure opportunities for engagement combined a mix of formal and informal approaches.

Both Ashtree and Chestnut attempted to establish formal structures to engage with parents, using some form of council or committee. Both these initiatives struggled to secure a wide degree of participation. CH attributed this to the imposition of an alien model and the lack of self-belief and confidence of individuals (CH4). Birchgrove adopted a more flexible approach through open meetings and an open door policy, which led to some accusations of unfairness or lack of balance from other stakeholder groups, notably staff.

Student structures, in all three cases, appeared more successful in involvement of individuals. Students at Ashtree and Chestnut demonstrated in their focus groups understanding about the need for structure, but did not want it imposed, and talked about how they were learning about organising meetings and about politics and power. There was more variable evidence of success in terms of ‘democratic’, elected representation. Birchgrove had the most highly developed approach to this, but there were clear

indications that success was variable, depending to some extent on the commitment of individual form tutors to create space and energy with their tutor groups. As one student remarked:

“I think the school’s system of getting things done through student voice is very much like the government we have. Generally it takes years to get anything done, and by the time you have, it’s not a problem anymore”. (BLh3)

The most structured attempt at staff participation lay in the semi-formal working groups adopted by BH to pursue each of his four strategic themes, including partnership. The evidence from staff suggests these attracted significant participation for brief periods, but highlights a significant role for self-interest, for instance around working conditions, in the issues on which this energy was most focused. As a result, the model of the working groups was modified within a short period of time to allow greater flexibility and focus in terms of participation.

The relationship between trust and participation is complex, requiring active management. This includes clarity of expectation and agreed protocols. The case studies provide evidence to suggest this does not necessarily, or even helpfully, lead to formal representative structures. However, there are also dangers present within informal methods, as when BH’s open door policy is criticised by those staff who felt *‘some people see more of the head than we do’*. Both formal and informal approaches

have the potential to diminish trust and engagement if they are perceived to be either unfair or not understood.

Looking beyond the school, Ashtree had sought to cement its wider partnerships with local schools within a formal charitable trust, but this did not happen quickly or immediately or easily. Indeed, it is possible that trying to move too quickly into a structure created an undercurrent of dis-trust among partners in the first year (AW2). Feelings on all sides with regard to academy status were also a factor in this (AYa1).

All three schools also experienced the impact of academy status during the research period, albeit in quite different ways. For none did their new ‘independence’ as an academy result in a withdrawal from collaboration; if anything, the reverse was true. However, it did affect variously the nature of some existing partnerships.

The experiences of all three revealed challenges as well as opportunities in this new status, and the responses they made were determined primarily by the prior values of the headteachers, as in the way CH went about seeking a new sponsor. Chestnut became an academy originally as a sponsored academy under the programme for schools in very challenging circumstances initiated by the 1997-2010 Labour government. However, the weakness of the partnership development that had taken place prior to the opening of the academy contributed to problems at the end of the first year, culminating in the

withdrawal of one of the original sponsors. The lack of definition and agreed understanding of their role was probably a contributory factor in this.

Birchgrove, by contrast, became an academy mid-way through the research period, under the new dispensation of the incoming Coalition government, as an outstanding school. Their transition was by far the smoothest, but was preceded by a robust ethical debate within the governing body.

Ashtree, a National Challenge Trust school at the start of the research period, converted into an academy with its trust partners, at the end of the research period in response to government policy and pressure. However, the demands of the conversion process placed a heavy load onto the headteacher coinciding as it did with illness in her senior team, and may have been one factor in the school making apparently slower progress, according to one interviewee with a knowledge of many different schools (AGa2). The example of Ashtree also serves to highlight the significance of building critical mass.

5.5.3 The critical mass

The overview analysis of survey responses tends to disguise individual variations within each stakeholder group. In none of the three cases, however challenging the context, were there signs of a complete absence of social capital, either within the school or

beyond. Some individual staff, students and parents all demonstrated trust and engagement in the school, in both its old and new directions.

It may, therefore, be that the prevalence of social capital is not directly related to the nature of the intake in the school. Rather, its form may need to be understood differently in its manifestation among different social groups, with their different norms and cultures. This proposition was considered earlier in Section 5.3.3.

The issue for each head lay in identifying and mobilising sufficient numbers of trusting and engaged individuals, sharing positively the new direction, to make a wider impact. During the research period, it appears that, among all stakeholder groups, those who began with a level of engagement for the new direction either maintained or extended that engagement. The numbers of individuals within each stakeholder group who were engaged also increased, albeit by varying amounts for both groups and schools.

What was crucial for each head was building a critical mass of support and engagement in change. Penuel and Riel (2007: 615) comment from their research in 23 Californian schools that:

“That trust ... [which can help build a shared commitment to reform ideal and contribute to positive norms in a school] ... gets built up interaction by interaction, tie by tie, within a school. And at some point it becomes a characteristic of the network as whole. ... no-one can say exactly what the threshold is for (its) emergence. Even in the best schools, trust is not likely to exist within every relationship”.

The evidence here did not suggest any of the three schools reached a sudden tipping point during the research period. Rather, what was occurring might best be understood as that steady accumulation of a range of changes in attitude and behaviour, each beginning to interact with others, for instance in changing the relationship between some students and staff at Chestnut, between external partners and the school at Ashtree, and between some staff and parents at Birchgrove. Some of these changes built from existing relationships, some involved a wider change, as in recruiting new staff or adjusting existing roles. It was the combination of a varied range of steps rather than any single step that was beginning to make a difference.

5.5.4 Balancing and reconciling competing demands and expectations among stakeholders

The literature review highlighted particularly a need to understand more about the way in which school leaders meet, balance and reconcile the range of competing demands, expectations and hopes, which will confront any school today from its wide range of stakeholders.

It also noted Philips' (2003) delineation of normative stakeholders, those to whose wellbeing the organisation has a direct moral obligation to attend, in contrast to derivative stakeholders, those who can either harm or benefit the organisation, but to whom the organisation has no direct moral obligation. For schools, normative

stakeholders clearly include students, parents, staff and some definition of wider community. His principle of stakeholder fairness also indicates that this status involves reciprocal obligations, and he makes the important point that equitable treatment of stakeholder interests is not the same as equal treatment.

Reynolds et al. (2006: 286) observe, in a business context, that most of the literature on balancing stakeholder interests has focused exclusively on the role of the organisation. It has yet to consider sufficiently the role the individual manager or leader plays in determining whether and what sort of balance is struck between stakeholder interests.

In English schools, the notion of organisational balance in stakeholder interest can perhaps be found most clearly in the model of governance proposed by the Taylor Committee (1977), with its proposals for equal representation on a school governing body of the local authority, parents, staff, and the local community, although of course no mention was made of students at the time.

To a considerable extent, such notions of balanced organisational stakeholding have been increasingly superseded by the structures of academisation, with increasing emphasis in school governance on professionalism and accountability to central authorities, allied to a more explicit focus on what might be termed ‘consumer choice’ and ‘customer satisfaction’, specifically in terms of parents.

The three case studies all lend considerable weight to the point made by Reynolds et al. (2006). In schools as much as in business, it may be the individual leaders, and their decisions and actions, that are central to the way stakeholders perceive their interests as being fairly recognised. Their paper then proposes two key factors that influence leaders in achieving a balance of interests: resource divisibility, how easy it is to divide and share resources, and relative stakeholder saliency, the power, legitimacy and urgency of the stakeholder group making a claim. From this, they draw a contrast in responses between a 'within-decision', short-term resolution and a longer-term 'across-decision' resolution:

“When a resource can be easily divided, a manager can seize the opportunity to balance the resources on that decision and through the within-decision approach immediately satisfy the demands of those stakeholders. In contrast, when resources are highly indivisible, the difficulty of balancing stakeholder interests on that particular decision will instead lead the manager to choose a long-term approach, an across-decision approach”.
(p. 289)

Each case study provided evidence of school leaders having to balance competing demands, short-term and long-term, needing 'across-decision' approaches. However, in doing this, the leaders also demonstrate a concern to help individuals and groups understand and build bridges towards other perspectives than their own. This can be seen, for instance, in the pressures around BH as he sought to reconcile the perceived interests of staff and parents, and his own aspirations for the school, or in the way CH had to act in what might be perceived as a cavalier way with regard to community or student wishes in order to secure a longer-term good, such as a new school building.

This was not just a matter of finding the settlement each party would accept, or the lowest common denominator around which different interests could cohere. It was also about seeking to move each group to a different point in their understanding of the whole. In this respect, the reconciliation of stakeholder interests in these schools may demonstrate a more sophisticated process than that suggested by the Reynolds et al. (2006) paper.

This can, in turn, expose an increased potential for conflict, and resulting lack of trust, between the demands and expectations of different stakeholder groups, as was evident, for instance, in the first year at Chestnut. It is too easy an assumption that growth in trust and engagement, fostered by good leadership, removes all tension. There is also an important sense in which an element of tension or conflict can be a positive factor. The observation by Seashore Louis (2007) that distrust was insufficiently studied and understood was noted in the literature review.

Gordon and Seashore Louis (2010: 25) argue that the development of trust and common purpose among school stakeholders has a significant part to play in conflict resolution, and this is beyond the type of mathematical exercise that may be suggested by such concepts as resource divisibility:

“Schools that are open to parent influence are also open to teacher influence: it is not a ‘zero sum’ power game, but an expanding pie. Open and shared patterns of influence may produce the settings in which professionals and teachers can solve problems of learning that they share because both are invested in the development of the same children. In addition, by discussing possible differences in an open and accepting culture, opportunities for resolution and compromise may be increased”.

The goal of engagement cannot be the elimination of conflict across stakeholder expectations, but rather a climate in which differences can be explored and understood with respect. In this, the role and behaviour of leadership is central.

Seashore Louis (2007) and Fullan (2003) both note a number of behaviours that leaders and followers identify as central to a trusting relationship, summarised in Table 30.

Seashore Louis 2007	Fullan 2003
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrity (honesty and openness) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern (regard for others) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal regard for others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliability (consistency) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect

Table 30: Comparison of behaviours noted by different researchers as central to relationships of trust

The similarity of these accounts is striking, and matches closely characteristics evident in the three case study leaders. The significance of the behaviour and the values of those

leaders has been a recurrent theme of the analysis of this research, which noted, in particular, their openness and transparency, willingness to challenge and be challenged, resilience and purpose (see 5.2.2 above).

The need to understand the importance of emotionally intelligent leadership and then of developing emotionally intelligent teams in any organisation has been emphasised by Goleman et al.(2002). They identify four leadership styles they suggest encourage team harmony and inclusion:

- Visionary - moves people towards shared dreams, creates a sense of direction, encourages
- Coaching - helps individuals improve their performance and align employee goals with those
- Affiliative - builds relationships and teams, and helps to deal with problem situations
- Democratic - helps to create buy-in or consensus by involving people and valuing their input

Their other two leadership styles, pacesetting and commanding, are more directional, and focus more on the setting down of expectations, and can give rise to dissonance and discord:

- Pacesetter - sets challenges that high performers can achieve and this can leave less competent people falling behind and obviously potentially uncomfortable and dissatisfied
- Commanding - gives direction when problems arise or calms things down in a crisis

A key point of Goleman's argument is that good leaders must be emotionally intelligent, or sufficiently sensitive and interpersonally aware, to know which styles to adopt for different situations. All three case study heads scored most highly for their self-awareness.

Druskat and Wolff (2001: 86) extend the argument from emotionally intelligent leaders to emotionally intelligent teams:

"Group emotional intelligence is ... not about harmony, lack of tension, and all members liking each other; it is about acknowledging when harmony is false, tension is unexpressed, and treating others with respect".

This serves as a fair summary of the understanding AH, BH, and CH variously demonstrated as they sought to balance and reconcile the varying interests of stakeholders on behalf of the wider organisation.

Crawford (2009: 141) also argues for a *"closer connection between emotion and leadership in the practice of schools"*, commenting further that *"present understandings*

of emotion in the leadership field are at best partial” (p.153). This research has confirmed her first point and contributed some further data to the second.

5.6 Addressing the research questions

5.6.1 Overview

The literature review concluded by quoting Leithwood and Jantzi’s (2000: 429) view of the nature and stages of enquiry in new areas as relevant to the concepts underlying this research. They said:

“Most areas of inquiry touching on school effects have proceeded through an initial phase of enthusiastic advocacy, followed by a phase of largely qualitative research in small numbers of exceptional cases aimed at better understanding the phenomena, to a more mature phase which includes quantitative testing of effects on a large scale”.

The process and outcomes of this research, focused on small-scale, largely qualitative research with a small number of outliers, have served to reinforce the relevance of that analysis. In the spirit of that positioning, consideration is now given to the three questions which guided the research.

5.6.2 How school leaders look to build trust and engagement within and beyond their schools (RQ1)

The research findings provide strong support for the pivotal role of school leadership. They were the main engines of change focusing on strengthening the acquisition of

social capital around their school, whilst also paying close attention what was happening in their classrooms. It is clear that over time the performance of their schools improved against standard measures, even though causation cannot be directly attributed.

In all three settings, some changes were evident in relation to trust and engagement among stakeholder groups that can be attributable to the intentions and actions of leaders, although this was not always linear or consistent. This finding provides tentative support for a view that trust and engagement are not simply bound to socio-economic status but susceptible to change, although their forms of expression may differ according to context and history.

However, the picture of leadership that has emerged as capable of addressing the improvement both of school performance and of social capital does not easily fit into any single established leadership model. Understanding the way in which leaders consciously and unconsciously adopt, blend, and adapt components of leadership models to meet the needs of particular contexts and moments in time may be an important area for future research.

The leadership exemplified in the case studies does, though, provide some important elements to consider. It has highlighted the considerable importance of leaders personally modeling behaviours they expect of others, in order to promote trust and

engagement. It has suggested such leadership is characterised by strong self-awareness, and is highly emotionally intelligent.

Such leadership is also able to recognise the inevitability of conflicting interests and the need to continually re-balance these around a sense of common purpose. The power held by the leader can assist this task, and there are situations where the leader had no choice but to impose a solution. In all the cases studied, this decision was driven by their own values rather than the expediency of circumstance.

The account of leadership that emerges from the consideration of strategies adopted by case study leaders to build trust and engagement is complex and subtle. Each leader has combined flexibility, and listening to a range of voices, with conviction and consistency of purpose. They have used judgement and opportunism in the choice and timing of their strategies, and understood and accepted risk in doing so. The role of leadership in modeling the behaviour desired from others lies at the heart of change.

5.6.3 The effects of trust and engagement on schools and their wider communities (RQ2)

Reflecting the approaches taken and strategies adopted by the three leaders, the growth of trust is a complex and subtle process. Trust is related to both the perceived competence of the receiver and to the giver's and receiver's confidence in each other.

It is necessary, but not sufficient, to increase engagement. Engagement involves a two-way relationship between the givers and receivers of trust, and this happens on a multitude of different fronts, in many small steps simultaneously. Structures to promote engagement need flexibility and responsiveness, and may come later rather than sooner in the process.

The impact of engagement can be reflected in increased autonomy and empowerment. However, this is also likely to give rise to challenge and conflict between the perceived interests of stakeholder groups. While these interests may be perceived individually by those concerned, without a wider sense of common purpose it is difficult to build the basis for change.

All the leaders studied also had a wider perception of their organisation, of how it was just one part of a broader educational mission, and saw a need to align their school positively with others outside in order to secure the best outcomes for their students.

In an unexpected finding, all three leaders identified their students themselves as key agents of change within the school and more widely. The approaches to student leadership each developed were seen as a key element in supporting a wider transformation, although this was not without tensions. Students involved were able to identify clear benefits for themselves and there was some evidence of wider impact

emerging, though the numbers involved at the time of the research remained relatively small. Skilled facilitation, clear roles, and training all appeared to increase impact.

5.6.4 The impact of leadership, and the internal and external development of trust and engagement, on education outcomes (RQ3)

In these three schools, a commitment to increasing trust and engagement sits alongside a distinctive broad vision of what educational outcomes should comprise, what schools should be like, and how people best learn.

Their goal is not therefore simply to respond to national measures, whilst recognising the need to be measured appropriately in such ways. They also looked beyond these to develop the enterprising citizen and worker of the future. In their view, these are not antagonistic or separate goals, but necessarily inter-connected. However, the challenge of establishing and securing wider agreement about broader outcomes and how they might be usefully measured is significant, and progress is currently only rudimentary, at best, even within the case study schools.

Although all three schools also made an overall improvement against the standard national KS4 outcome measures during the period of research, each significantly above the national trend, it would be neither possible nor appropriate for this research to

attribute causality to this. However, it seems fair to say that the energy devoted by leaders to their wider conception of their role did not appear to detrimentally affect school performance.

In the light of this analysis and its findings, Chapter 6 now goes on to reflect further, and to construct a fresh model for understanding the processes which have been observed. It suggests possible emerging patterns of understanding for further investigation, as well as evaluating the research methodology adopted, and making recommendations for how further investigation might be approached.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

This research, located clearly within Leithwood and Jantzi's (2000) second phase of understanding new areas of enquiry, has sought to develop a better understanding of the phenomena associated with key concepts of social capital - particularly trust and reciprocity, stakeholder engagement, and networks and partnerships – and investigate their relationship to school leadership and educational outcomes. The research, based on three quite different schools, each of which might be regarded as an outlier in terms of the head's advocacy of a family and community engagement strategy as central to their school improvement thinking, has encountered at first hand the difficulties both of quantitative detection of change and of inferring causation.

However, there remains sufficient convergence within the three case studies, each within their very singular context, to suggest the outline of a possible pattern. The understanding that has begun to emerge remains at an early stage. It is set out in Section 6.2 following. The chapter then concludes by reviewing the significance of these research findings (6.3), and the methodology used and its limitations (6.4), before finally considering suggestions for further research that might build on these initial insights (6.5), and offering a concluding post-script (6.6).

6.2 Rethinking relationships

6.2.1 Purpose

The justification for a focus on social capital by and in schools rests, first and foremost, on benefits and outcomes for students, as was clearly understood by all three case study heads. The nature of educational outcomes are not necessarily always as clear-cut, or as uncontested, as many health outcomes, and it is not yet possible to make any form of direct correlation between levels of social capital and student outcomes, in the way that happened in Roseto. However, Roseto was a subject of study for 50 years, and, in schools, that task may be only just beginning, and is not yet clearly defined or fully understood. Impact is necessarily long-term, and not susceptible to even a two-year study. What this research has been able to do is to gain some insight into the processes of change operating in specific schools, and through that, open up ground for further exploration.

Building on the analysis of the three case studies and further reflection on the literature, this section now attempts to construct a fresh model for understanding the processes observed that can have wider application for school improvement. This will inevitably be to a degree somewhat speculative. To the extent that it is successful, it will open up areas for further testing and research rather than arrive at a definitive outcome. In drawing together insights derived from analysing and reflecting on the data collected,

the approach taken here also charts the development of insights as the research has unfolded.

6.2.2 Beyond simplicity

The original diagram presented in the Introduction as a starting point for thinking about the relationship of core concepts underpinning this research, reproduced below (Figure 16), has proved to be too simplistic, as was suspected at the outset. Whilst helping to focus on the inter-relationship of key components of social capital, it did not address sufficiently the process of change.



Figure 16: Initial analysis of relationship of key research themes

The three case studies each reveal these elements and illuminate their relationship. They also demonstrate that all three school leaders are involved in processes of change which are complex, non-linear, and multi-dimensional. Trying to understand these processes involves attempting to develop some understanding of the inter-action of schools, families and communities, and individuals, over time.

The discussion of methodology in chapter 3 postulated the possible relevance for this task of insights drawn from complexity theory. In particular, that discussion postulated the potential benefit of making use of certain key concepts, emergence, connectedness and feedback, to assist in understanding phenomena observed.

The notion of emergence, it was suggested, implies that, given a sufficient degree of complexity in a particular environment, new (and to some extent unexpected) properties and behaviours emerge in that environment. New properties and behaviours emerge not only from the elements that constitute a system, but also from the myriad connections among them, which multiply exponentially when the scale is right. The part played by positive feedback is crucial in this process. Whilst the circumstances that give rise to feedback may have been random, self-reinforcement leads to lock-in of a particular phenomenon through a process of autocatalysis, that is, where the product of the reaction is itself the catalyst for that reaction.

Reflecting on the data collected, all of these concepts of complexity theory seem to have some resonance in illuminating the processes of change fleetingly observed in the three case studies. They may, therefore, be able to help shape the foundations for a more organic and holistic theory of school change than the current paradigm of school improvement discussed in the Introduction (1.2). At the heart of that paradigm lies a belief that it is most effective for a school to focus all its energy on that which is in its direct control and influence. This has led to an increasingly exclusive focus on the importance of teaching, particular subject knowledge and a single type of assessment measure. The counter-argument derived from the evidence of the case studies rests on the belief, not that any of those things are unimportant, but that they are not sufficient on their own, to grow confidence, self-esteem and motivation to learn (AH1), to equip students to thrive in a changing world (BH1), or to sustain raised aspirations in a challenging environment (CH5). Those improvements, these heads suggest, come most effectively from a focus beyond the school on engagement with families and communities around common purposes.

6.2.3 Understanding the growth of engagement

This analysis of emerging data led me to wonder whether it could be possible to construct a model around the journeys of these three schools that might help to shed fresh light on the development and impact of a school's wider engagement in building social capital. I was looking to move beyond that early sketch to illuminate the

processes at work, and the different agencies on which they operate, bearing in mind possible processes of emergence, connectedness and feedback.

The initial process of coding interview data revealed apparent features of the development of engagement that characterised each of the three schools. These were initially captured in a set of descriptors, set out here in Table 31 (Step 1). The descriptors were all drawn directly from words used by the school leaders, organised through the initial coding and analysis of their early interviews, and reflected also in the list of school strategies identified in Table 24 (p. 297). They were tested for accuracy and meaning at a collective meeting of all three heads in November 2011.

Consideration was then given to grouping these into stages reflecting, to some extent, the experience of each of the schools, given the starting points of their different individual journeys (Step 2). This carries some similarities with the school improvement model suggested by Day et al. (2009) of low starting, moderate starting, and high starting schools.

STEP ONE Identifying elements of growth of baseline coding and review of strategies adopted	STEP TWO Initial attempt to frame these as possible stages of development	STEP THREE Comparison of original sources
Gaining respect and self-esteem – internally then externally	<i>Possible Stage 1</i> Emergent	AH1, CH1
Expanding horizons – beginning to turn outwards		AH1, CH1, BH1
Levering change - seeking champions and allies		CH1, BH1
Building capacity - creating space, resource		CH1, AH1
Growing confidence – initiating contacts	<i>Possible Stage 2</i> Developing	AH1, CH1
Choosing partners – finding common ground and purpose		AH1, CH1
Building structures – not necessarily formal or permanent		AH1, BH1, CH1
Learning for real – influencing the curriculum formal and informal		AH1, BH1
Making choices - with selectivity in partnership growing with experience and understanding	<i>Possible Stage 3</i> Confident	BH1
Looking ahead - not dwelling on past		AH1, BH1
Growing moral purpose		BH1, CH1
Leading beyond		BH1, CH1

Table 31: The steps and initial descriptors used in attempting to identify potential stages of development in engagement, matched against data sources

But, on further analysis (Step 3), it became apparent that all three schools showed some elements of all these components, and the structure that was being imposed on them was, to a degree, simply arbitrary. I concluded that the developments implied in these descriptors could not therefore be viewed as a linear progression, nor represent a set sequence of stages through which a school moves as it develops its wider engagement.

As a result of this failed analysis, I began to consider if the underlying processes may be better understood as a series of expanding waves, or perhaps rather as a growth model strengthening in all directions simultaneously, albeit with certain sequences possibly inbuilt. In this understanding, it would be more akin to a living organism. A body does not grow an arm and then grow a leg. But, for both to grow in concert, certain other developmental conditions, such as nutrition or age, need to have been met.

Consequently, I looked for an alternative way to present the linkage of the elements suggested by the study of the three schools, one which reflected this more holistic understanding. Figure 17 therefore attempt to capture these features of change in a non-linear, non-sequential way, whilst suggesting that they are inter-connected and reinforcing.

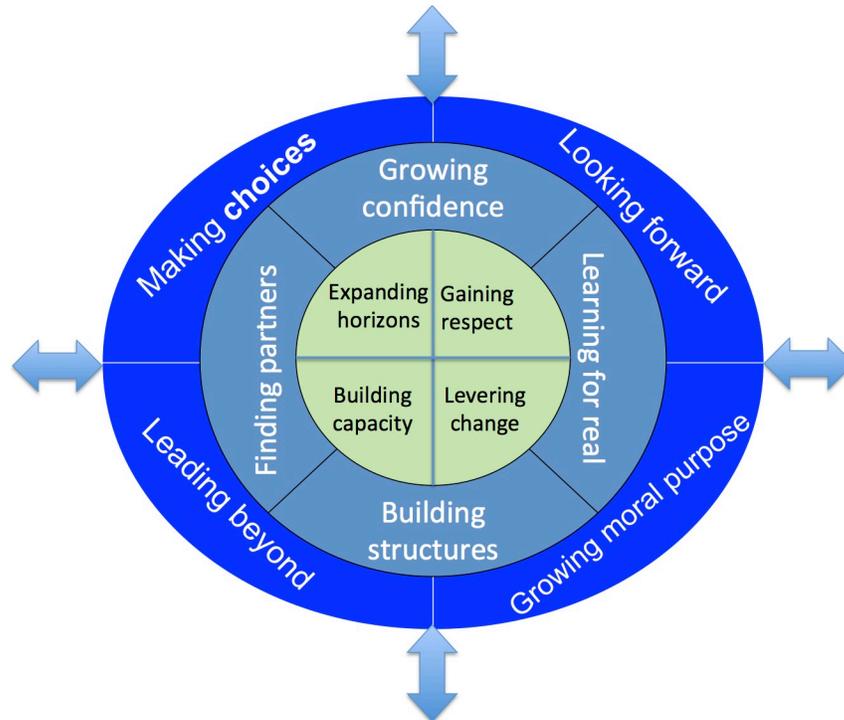


Figure 17: A 'growth' model of change processes in the research schools

Whilst Figure 17 contains some idea of stages in terms of the inner, middle, and outer rings, in this image the component elements are much more inter-connected. They feed into each other and can flow between different elements in different patterns.

The placing of components at particular points in the ring here is neither arbitrary nor fixed. There is a potential connection between each as drawn. There is a link between capacity, structures, partners and choices, for example or between change, structures and

moral purpose. However, each circle may also be better conceived as a wheel that could rotate, as needed, against the others in either direction.

Moreover, as each case study makes clear, whilst a school may be growing over time through its wider engagement, the environments with which it interacts and in which that growth is happening – policy, personal, community – are also changing at the same time. This inevitably influences and affects, in turn, the process of school growth. This is not, though, growth as in the annual rings within a tree trunk, nor are the circles perfectly round or even. It is a much more complex picture of growth.

The period of research provides just a glimpse of a still evolving, multi-faceted, complex pattern of development, reflected in these patterns. Though the experience is incomplete, it does hold out the prospect for further testing of such a ‘growth’ model, in which all elements are present the whole time and developing simultaneously, but the scale and scope of their reach is determined both by maturation and by processes of emergence, connectedness and feedback.

6.2.4 Making connections – the role of leadership

In this model the catalyst for growth lies in the role of trust in making engagement possible. However, the case studies show clearly that it requires leadership to create, promote and nurture such growth. The pace, perhaps sequence, and the exact shape of

growth and development is influenced directly by leadership, and the choices made by a leader as a result of their predisposition, values, and their understanding of context.

Moreover, the school is not the only agent involved here. Individual learners and their families and wider communities are also party to the process. They both respond to, and can exercise, leadership.

The model being presented here is focused on a school. But AH in particular argued very strongly that the growth of organisational self-esteem and confidence, in both a school and a community, closely mirrors the growth of self-esteem and confidence in an individual. If so, it is conceivable that a not dissimilar model of growth might be appropriate for families and communities. However, if this were not just a school-focused model, then the features that may apply for individuals and for families and communities, while possibly similar, are, nevertheless, not likely to be exactly the same. Understanding the more exact nature of what they might look like, though, lies far beyond the scope of the present research, which can only focus properly on the school.

The contribution of this research is to begin to consider, with a longitudinal perspective, the way in which school leadership can act as a catalyst for the emergence of changes in social capital in and around a school. The extended understanding of leadership for engagement developed in previous sections, therefore, is crucially about making

connections across all three agents, the school, the learner, and their family and community, helping to shape the influence each has on the others.

The term ‘connected leadership’ is chosen to convey this wider conceptualisation of leadership, which is illustrated in Figure 18. However, after proposing this term as arising directly from the research insights, I discovered that it had been used previously by others (Drath 2001, Hobby et al. 2006). For Drath, it means ‘*more inclusive and collective leadership*’. For Hobby et al., it is ‘*a model of influence for those without power*’.

The intention here includes, but goes beyond, those two insights. With Drath’s work it shares an understanding of leadership as process rather than task, but adds an emergent model of organisational change. With Hobby et al. (*ibid. p. 9*) it shares a model of influence which is both multi-dimensional and two-way. Where it differs is that Hobby et al. look purely within the closed environment of a school organisation, and at the inter-actions between members of that organisation, whereas the model of connected leadership proposed here is also focused on leadership beyond the organisation, albeit for very specific purposes connected with learning.

Thus, in the model of connected leadership being proposed here, the role of the school leader, albeit with a clear role within the school, is equally clearly understood to be:

- not just inside the school.
- not just as the school's leader.

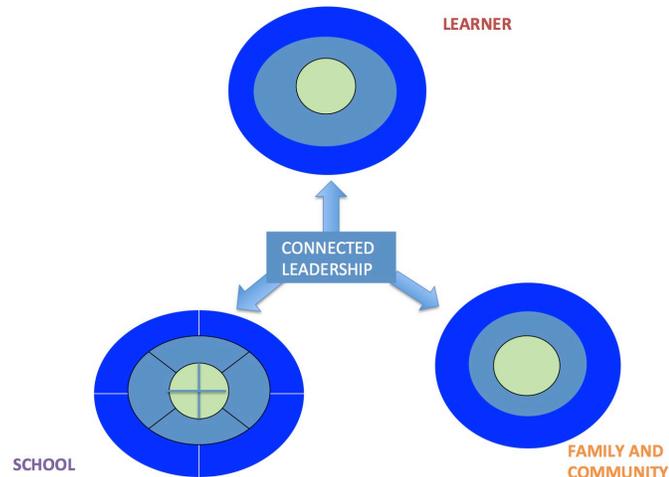


Figure 18: An initial new model of connected leadership

It is important to note that the model of connected leadership being proposed here goes beyond the current concept of 'system leadership', as derived, for example, from the work of Hargreaves (2011), even though there are similarities, for instance in the emphasis of both on the importance of trust and reciprocity.

System leadership is about the connections between schools and the way schools can support other schools to achieve school-focused ends:

“A maturity model of a self-improving school system is a statement of the organisational and professional practices and processes of two or more schools in partnership by which they progressively achieve shared goals, both local and systemic”. (ibid. p.8)

By contrast, connected leadership re-locates the locus of leadership between the school, the learner, and their families and communities, seeking to act on and to cause each to interact differently with the other, so as to promote broader and improved learning outcomes. Whilst, in the three case studies, it was the headteacher who was the main instigator and driver of connected leadership, it is not intended to suggest that such leadership resides only in one individual. Indeed each case study head was developing strategies to draw others into that role and saw clearly a need to extend that further.

This understanding of connected leadership resonates strongly with notions of responsible leadership (Maak 2007) referred to in the Introduction (p.22). Most recently Stone-Johnson (2013), drawing on three school case studies identified as part of the Performing Beyond Expectations large-scale international study, follows Maak in characterising the responsible leader as ‘*a weaver of relationships*’.

“Responsible leadership in practice means weaving those who have typically only been recipients of leadership to full-fledged participants, and developing relationships with them that serve to benefit not only students but also the stakeholders themselves”. (p. 670)

This metaphor of the leader as weaver complements well Bottery’s (2003) metaphor of the gardener (p. 49) for role trust development.

6.2.5 Towards an alternative model for school improvement

The evidence from the case studies provides some basis for beginning to look at and understand more fully the forces that may flow, and can be channeled, through the model of connected leadership outlined above. These forces are generated through a process of growth occurring in all of the constituent cells, most notably in terms of this research the school organism, and it is these forces which in turn help to drive forward the broader range of outcomes which the three case study school leaders each defined as essential for all their students.

If substantiated through wider investigation, this would represent an explicit challenge to a view that schools should only focus on those factors directly within their control which is reflected in much current political orthodoxy (DfE 2010). It would also present a challenge to some research orthodoxy, represented, for example, by Silins and Mulford's (2002b) comment that:

“We suspect a school’s community focus may act to counteract system, teacher and student learning outcomes because of the additional demands it makes on student and teacher time”. (p. 443)

For many years, school improvement has been associated with the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms (e.g. Hopkins, Reynolds and Gray 2005). The necessity for that focus is not in any way challenged here. Rather, the argument is that, on its own, this can only achieve so much, and it is insufficient either to develop fully that broader

set of skills and attitudes which will equip young people to flourish in a rapidly changing, described here in shorthand as ‘personal and social development outcomes’, or to bring about sustainable change where there are local cultures of educational indifference and low aspiration.

Figure 19 represents a first attempt to understand and represent the interaction of these wider forces, as glimpsed in the case studies, and to begin to theorise around them. Broadly speaking, it may be argued that the grey triangle (in the top/left area of the diagram) represents the insights and focus of the established literature on school improvement, focused on the school as a self-contained entity and the quality of teaching and learning therein. Leadership exerts a major influence (the blue arrows) on that and on securing recognised attainment outcomes for learners (purple and red arrows).

Of course the great majority of schools also pay some attention to outcomes connected with personal and social development for learners. These are not however in most cases the prime concern and are only partially addressed. Moreover, parents and students often feel excluded from leadership for school improvement. (Foster 2005).

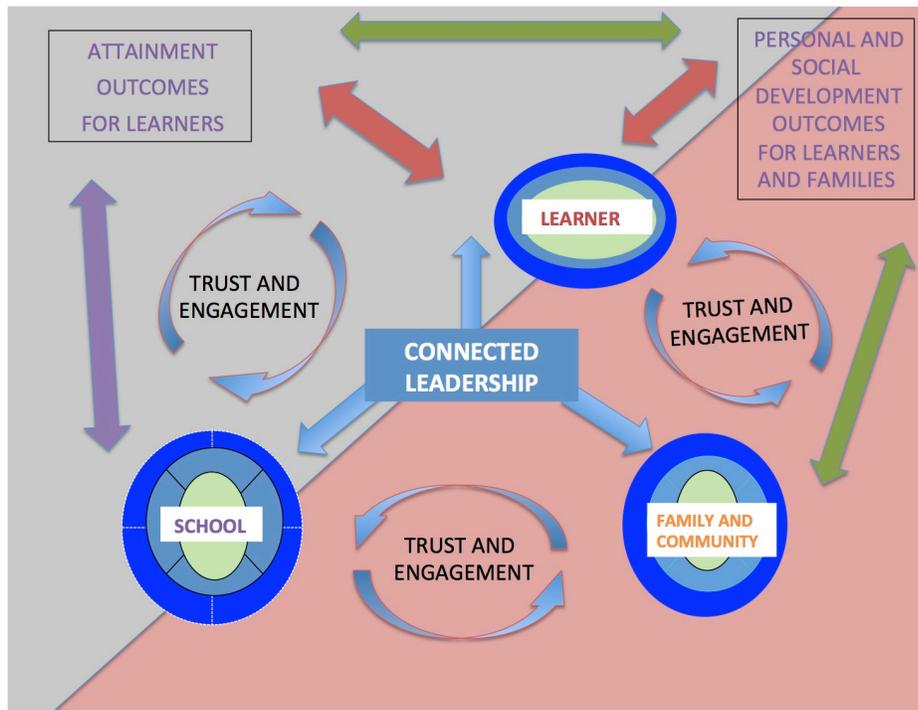


Figure 19: An emerging alternative model of school improvement through connected leadership

- Key:*
- Straight blue arrows* - The mutually reinforcing influence of connected leadership on learners, school and family/community
 - Curved blue arrows* - Trust and engagement - the catalyst for change
 - Purple and red arrows* - Reciprocal effect of leadership on outcomes
 - Green arrows* - The potential gain for a future school improvement model

In contrast, the pink triangle (in the bottom/right area) represents the area of additional emerging understanding and leadership into which the three case study schools were beginning to move, and which, if secured, might afford a more complete picture of educational development.

In this view, students and their families and communities share significant responsibility for outcomes, both attainment outcomes in the accepted sense of the term and those wider personal and social development outcomes. The diagram is further suggesting that these wider outcomes have importance in their own right, but in addition can also contribute to the achievement of more recognised attainment outcomes through increased motivation, confidence and self-esteem. Moreover, those qualities of confidence and self-esteem and motivation may influence the long-term development of families and communities. The green arrows represent the potential gains from this more holistic understanding of improvement.

The notion of connected leadership stands at the centre of these two arenas of school improvement and wider engagement. It seeks to harness the forces of growth and impact within each and to bring greater alignment between them in order to improve learning both within and beyond the school. The role of both trust and engagement is central to developing the conditions for such growth.

By exerting leadership in this way across both domains, the theory suggests it is possible to create a virtuous cycle of growth and development at the inter-personal, meso and macro levels (Bottery 2003). The three case studies do not provide ‘*statistical generalisations*’ for this view, but have strong potential to offer ‘*analytic generalisations*’ (Yin 1994). Their contribution is not essentially to predict what will happen in other circumstances, it is to help understand the conditions under which change has begun to happen in these cases so as to learn from that.

6.3 Significance of this research

This research has examined the nature and processes of leadership that may contribute to the broader approach to improvement outlined above. Whilst it has not at this stage been able to make any direct correlation between the growth of trust and engagement, on the one hand, and the rate and spread of outcomes, on the other, its evidence postulates a link between the growth of engagement, the personal development of students, supported by families and communities, and potential sustainable improvement in their resulting academic achievement in relation to their starting points. These early indicators cannot yet represent conclusive evidence, but do carry sufficient weight to warrant further investigation.

The research has offered some important insights into understanding the nature and role of leadership in these change and improvement processes. The three case studies show significant common features of leadership, articulated in outline summary in Table 21 (p.290) and in detail in the subsequent discussion, despite the wide variation in their context. These studies also provide strong encouragement for developing further understanding of blended or hybrid leadership, and particularly the ongoing choices and adaptations that individual leaders make. In so doing, they also serve to highlight the limitations of single models of leadership (Yukl 1999), and they further emphasise the need for researchers to describe rather than prescribe leadership practice (Gronn 2009b). This research has also generated some surprising, and quite striking, findings, unforeseen in the research design, in relation to student voice and student leadership. These open up a real possibility to extend current understanding in this field. In particular, it has suggested emerging models that move beyond mere 'voice' or simply operational, task-oriented roles. The research has begun to identify some of the requirements of adult leadership to make this possible, acknowledging that this requires distinctive support, skills and judgment from adults, which are not the same as those normally associated with classroom teaching.

Understanding these skills and developing them, also involves addressing the tensions that will flow if other staff do not also understand them. In doing this, it is necessary to acknowledge, with insightful sensitivity, the inescapable presence of a power dimension.

Clearly this is, at this stage of the research, a partial and preliminary view. It opens up lines for further enquiry and more extensive study over time to develop fuller understanding of the processes at work, of the real possibility and impact of student leadership in terms of transformation, and of its wider implications both for school leadership and for teaching and learning.

In all the above ways, as well as in its response to perceived gaps in the literature, this study has extended the basis of existing knowledge and understanding.

Finally, the research has also tried to be creative in its methodology. This has been designed to try, insofar as this is possible within a doctoral thesis, to avoid reliance on prior assumption and to follow paths indicated by the data. It has tried to find ways to engage with students and parents, albeit with limited success, to an extent not evident in a good proportion of the literature reviewed. It has deliberately taken more than a single snapshot of each case in order to gain a deeper insight into change processes and the nature of leadership involved.

6.4 Review of research methodology

There are nevertheless some important methodological issues that limit the significance of the research findings.

The first limitation of the methodology is that which inevitably befalls all studies undertaken by a single researcher. This is particularly the case when the scope and reach of the research is potentially as wide as it was here, both in its longitudinal approach and in the breadth of the change project in each school.

Although the initial research design attempted to acknowledge this inherent difficulty by adopting a very clear and focused approach, centred in particular on specific groups of students and their parents, the reality of the research process quickly demonstrated that the initial assumptions about access were over-simplistic.

As a result, it was necessary to make ongoing adaptation to the original research design. The decisions made, and the rationale behind those, have been set out in Chapter 3, where it is argued that it was preferable to respond to individual contexts and seek out alternative possible means to engage with those likely by background or temperament not to respond to a formal 'official' approach, rather than stick to a fixed model that was excluding the participation of significant groups.

A key area of difficulty arose through the formal process of seeking informed consent, both in a written form and as a distant, unknown outsider. A particular problem was the involvement of parents who were less engaged with, or hostile to, their children's

schools. The process of seeking informed consent through written documents proved inhibiting. There was a real challenge in fulfilling the need for ethical approval whilst remaining as inclusive as possible. Future research needs to consider carefully what lessons might be drawn from this to help remove obstacles to participation whilst respecting ethical integrity.

Whilst it may be argued that the changes made to the research design in response to these difficulties undermined the validity of the study in some ways, and it would certainly be the case that some of its direction was modified as a result, it is also possible to argue that the result was a more representative and, to that extent, more accurate picture.

The study may also be limited by the risk of bias inherent in its choice of sample. The deliberate use of outliers as case studies will have had an effect on the findings and their replicability, but, as was argued earlier in the case of Roseto, particularly useful insights and evidence can be gained from outliers.

A longitudinal perspective, although demanding of time and challenging to sustain, was deliberately adopted in order to try to minimise some of these risks. This also served to deepen insight into the context and practice of leadership in each case.

6.5 Recommendations for further research

The findings of this study have been augmented with insights from complexity theory to suggest a more organic and holistic theory of school change than current models of school improvement allow. These findings, whilst necessarily inconclusive and with the limitations in methodology described above in mind, do nevertheless offer grounds to warrant further investigation and study. There are four areas where this might be of particular value.

- a. A longer-term study of the existing case study schools and their leaders has the potential to yield fresh insights, and help provide confirmation or otherwise of these initial findings.

- b. There is also a need to test the wider applicability of emerging findings in terms of whole-school development over time, whilst still positioning such research within the second phase proposed by Leithwood and Jantzi (2000). This implies seeking further ‘*exceptional cases*’ for largely qualitative investigation. These should include schools in the primary sector.

- c. There are certain key areas in which this research tried with very mixed success to develop innovative methods for investigation from which others may be able to build.

In particular:

- There is a need to understand much more about trust and engagement from the parent and community perspective, especially those parents who are most disengaged from schooling.
- There is a need to refine and develop better tools and instruments to gauge changes in levels of trust and engagement among parents and students.
- There is a need to understand more about how to capture and validate the wider outcomes each school was seeking for their students.

d. There are a number of specific findings in relation to leadership that also lend themselves to a more sharply focused investigation. In particular:

- There is scope to open up fresh understanding of the nature of student leadership, its impact on personal development, and the nature of adult facilitation skills required to bring this about.
- There is scope to understand much more about the way in which leaders blend and adapt their behavior, and the part played by the inter-action of values, predisposition, emotion and context, in bringing about change and improvement.

6.6 Post-script

Although this research began in an unusual place, it hopefully concludes somewhere slightly less strange and a little more secure. The journey from the one to the other has taken some unanticipated directions. In reflecting back, what stands out above all is a sense that, while a destination has not been finally reached, the direction and means of travel are significant.

This metaphor of journey is indeed a powerful one. Milne, Kearins and Walton (2006: 811) observe that: *“The use of journey as a domain term within a metaphor is particularly powerful because it embraces change, as opposed to the more static conception of [research]”*. Change has been implicit in the construction and development of this research. Yet just as the research has been about, and been subject to, change, so has the researcher been changed by the research process.

Mackenzie and Ling (2009) extend the use of the journey metaphor, suggesting that when the research traveller decides, with a good travel guide, the way to be taken and the mode of travel to be utilised, it is more likely to lead to divergent and creative outcomes than the somewhat convergent outcomes of a standard ‘package tour’. Their conclusion summarises neatly the experience of this research journey: *“The most memorable travel experiences are often those that are unexpected, and the finest discoveries those you make yourself”* (p.59).

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APPENDIX 1:

THE FORMAL AGREEMENT SIGNED BY SCHOOL RESEARCH SITES

September 2010

Dear Headteacher

I hope you had a very a very good summer.

Thank you once again for your initial interest in and commitment to my doctorate research programme and to being involved as one of up to four schools contributing to this research.

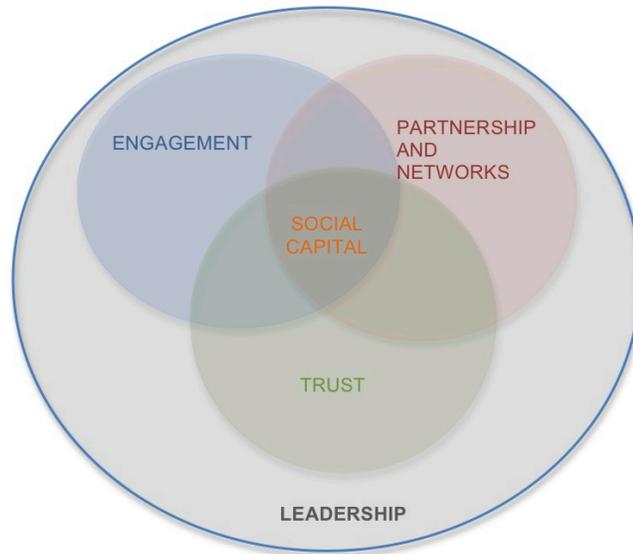
As you know my research is investigating the interconnectedness of trust, community engagement, school leadership and educational outcomes in English secondary schools. The key research questions as currently framed are:

- a) How do school leaders look to build trust within their schools and across their schools' wider communities?
- b) What effects do levels of trust have upon schools and their wider communities?
- c) To what extent do levels of trust within schools and across their wider communities influence their educational outcomes?

The key elements and the relationship between them that the research seeks to explore can perhaps be represented diagrammatically at this early stage like this:

It is expected the field research will take place during the period October 2010 to December 2012. At this stage I am planning within that period to undertake field research in the school each alternate term for a couple of days at a time. It is my intention at present to submit the final thesis for assessment at the beginning of 2014. The research will be conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the British Education Research Association and has been approved by the Ethics Officer of the University of Warwick Institute of Education.

In order to formalise our agreement and working practice I am setting out in this letter the details of the data gathering I would like to undertake, as things currently stand, along with the protocols under which this work will be conducted, for us to jointly agree and sign off.



A: DATA GATHERING

The methodology is likely to evolve over time in the light of experience and through discussion with yourself. At this stage I plan to focus it in the following ways:

- 1. An initial baseline visit** during November 2010 to:
 - carry out an initial interview with yourself
 - form a view about the school's intentions with regard to its community engagement strategy over the next two years and how best to key the research into that
 - pilot some of the data gathering instruments

One of the intentions within the research is to develop some tools and models for measuring trust, engagement and partnership networks across stakeholders, and I hope to explore ways on this occasion to do that across all the other groups identified below.

2. Further one-hour interviews with yourself

I anticipate these will happen in June 2011, February 2012 and November 2012.

3. Leadership team

I would like to meet with perhaps, two senior leaders, if appropriate including one with a lead role in terms of community engagement strategy and one with other responsibilities for one hour interviews during my four main visits, in addition to a contribution from them to the baseline visit.

4. Governor

I would like to invite you to nominate a governor to contribute to the data gathering. This might be either the Chair of Governors or a governor with key relevant interests. You may feel that more than one governor should be included and that would be fine. I would again expect to meet with them four times, in addition to the baseline.

5. Staff

I hope to carry out a short on-line staff survey – near the beginning and towards the end of the research period. I would also look to meet with a focus group of 6 staff - long-serving, new, teaching, non-teaching, middle management, not management – on two separate occasions across the research period for about an hour each time.

6. Students and parents

I want to ask you to select at random one Y7 and one Y9 tutor group, or two vertically grouped tutor groups, which I will work with and track through the two years. Their involvement will include questionnaires to students and their parents in November 2010, 2011 and 2012. I hope it might be possible to provide this on-line. I also plan a limited sample of follow-up interviews with volunteer students and parents drawn from the questionnaire sample in June 2011 and 2012.

It may be you would want to use the survey more widely within the school. This would not be analysed as part of the research, but if carried out on-line, I could easily make a summary analysis of the results available to you.

7. Community partners

I would like to ask you to identify four community partners who have particular strategic significance for you at this point in time in terms of their potential for impact on student outcomes. I am looking for them to represent between them both new and longer established community partnerships and also if possible those who might be described as formal and less formal partners.

I envisage holding four interviews with them together as a focus group across the research period.

8. Documentary evidence

I would greatly value copies of key school strategy documents and other information relevant to the research you could make available initially and on an ongoing basis over the two years

9. Observation

It may be that there are some events or activities that you feel might be particularly significant in terms of illuminating the research and so would be useful for me to observe. I do not know how feasible this will be in practice but it is something we can perhaps discuss during the baseline visit.

B: PROTOCOLS

The personal code of values that underpins my research rests on five commitments:

Integrity

I will:

- carry out the research objectively following agreed protocols
- alert you promptly should any conflict of interest appear to arise

Openness

I will:

- ensure the maximum openness and transparency throughout all aspects of the work compatible with the promises made about confidentiality
- endeavour to communicate clearly and frankly
- provide good notice of plans and intentions and any changes

Respect

I will:

- treat all participants with courtesy and professionalism
- respect their right to make their own decisions and choices about their involvement
- adhere to full protocols in terms of the safeguarding of young people

Confidentiality

I will:

- respect the confidentiality of all information received during the research
- ensure that all identities are anonymised through the use of coding in any published work

Accountability

I will:

- exercise good management through careful planning, regular progress reviews, and effective controls

To help translate these values into practice, I suggest the following protocols should form the basis of the way we together during the course of the research around the activities outlined above in part A, but would welcome your comments.

Making arrangements and forward planning

At the end of each term an update of the arrangements for the forthcoming term will be jointly agreed and dates and outline times fixed. The school will undertake to make arrangements for the organisation, timing, and accommodation for staff and parent interviews and groups, which may be within or outside the school day as the school chooses. Should either of us subsequently, and exceptionally, need to vary these arrangements, we undertake to give the maximum possible period of notice.

Consent

The school agrees to obtain the consent of students, parents and staff to take part in the research in advance of their involvement. I will provide separate briefing notes for adults and for young people which can be used as the basis for this.

Taping of interviews

All interviews will be taped and transcribed for ongoing analysis and reference.

Confidentiality

The identities of all participants will be disguised in the transcripts, identified only by role and code letter. I will take all steps to ensure neither they nor the school are directly identified in the final thesis nor in any reports or publication that might be associated with it. The school will likewise not seek to publicise its involvement in the research.

Data protection

Data will be held on secure servers in line with the requirements of the Information Commissioner and the Data Protection Act.

Feedback

Whilst the interpretation and articulation of the findings of the research remain my responsibility, I will be pleased to provide twice a year a brief account of the emerging issues and progress and also to provide an ongoing check on matters of factual accuracy. The school will not have access to interview transcripts nor to any raw data.

Ownership

The ownership of all materials generated in connection with this research rests with the researcher and the university. In addition to submission in connection with a doctoral thesis they may also form the basis of other publications. The school will be notified when this happens, even though not directly identified in the publication, but will not have any other control in that regard.

Wider network of schools participating in the research project

Some interest has been expressed by more than one participating school to use the opportunity to share experience and ideas with the others taking part. I undertake to explore ways to facilitate this appropriately if that wish remains.

Complaints

If at any point the school has grounds to think there are grounds for complaint in the way that the research is being managed and conducted, the first point of contact is to raise the issue with myself. In the event that no resolution is achieved, the school may refer the matter to my supervisor, Dr Justine Mercer at the University of Warwick, J.E.Mercer@warwick.ac.uk.

If you are happy to go ahead with your involvement on this basis, I wonder if you could sign and return a copy of this letter to me to confirm that. I will then get in touch straight away to arrange initial visits. If you have any questions or other suggestions to raise first, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I very much look forward to working with you. Thank you for your support and interest.

With good wishes

Malcolm Groves **Part-time Doctorate Researcher, University of Warwick**

APPENDIX 2

ETHICAL APPROVAL

**Application for Ethical Approval for Research Degrees
(MA by research, MPhil/PhD, EdD)**

Name of student

MALCOLM GROVES

MA
By
research

EdD

PhD
X

Project title:

An investigation of the interconnectedness of trust, community engagement, school leadership and educational outcomes in English secondary schools

Supervisor: Dr J Mercer

Funding Body (if relevant) PPD

Please ensure you have read the Guidance for the Ethical Conduct of Research available in the handbook.

Methodology

Please outline the methodology e.g. observation, individual interviews, focus groups, group testing etc.

The project involves working with up to six English secondary schools over a two year period commencing Autumn 2010 to develop extended case studies which examine the nature and effect of school interventions in relation to their community engagement over a period of time.

Key research questions:

The relationship between trust, community engagement, school leadership and educational outcomes in English secondary schools

- a) How do school leaders look to build trust within their schools and across their schools' wider communities?
- b) What effects do levels of trust have upon schools and their wider communities ?
- c) To what extent do the levels of trust within a school and across its wider communities influence the educational outcomes a school achieves?

- A detailed brief and programme for the research will be agreed in advance with the headteacher of each participating school.
- A summary of this brief will be shared with all participants along with the opportunity to volunteer to participate. There will be a need to stress the right to withdraw so no individual feels pressured through position or status.
- Parental consent will also be sought in relation to school students involved.
- Consent is seen as an ongoing negotiation not just a once-off event.

- will participants be explicitly informed of the student's status? Yes

Competence

How will you ensure that all methods used are undertaken with the necessary competence?

- Allowing good time for personal and practical preparation
- Piloting during Autumn 2010
- Drawing on own 30 year career experience as evaluator and inspector
- Use of supervision sessions to check rigour and appropriateness

Protection of participants

How will participants' safety and well-being be safeguarded?

All meetings connected with the research will take in school or other public buildings at set times and places according to a published schedule agreed in advance with the headteacher of the school.

Child protection

Will a CRB check be needed? Yes (If yes, please attach a copy.)

Addressing dilemmas

Even well planned research can produce ethical dilemmas. How will you address any ethical dilemmas that may arise in your research?

I am conscious of the issue of power relationships – my own with school, heads with staff and students, and the need to continue to be sensitive to these dynamics. Ongoing discussion and reflection with my supervisor has a key part to play in retaining a balanced perspective.

It is also possible that mismatches will arise with respect to school and community perceptions or between groups of participants such as staff and leaders. There is likely to be a need to reinforce published protocols of confidentiality and anonymity and to provide reassurance or to negotiate in each session what may and may not be more directly shared.

Misuse of research

How will you seek to ensure that the research and the evidence resulting from it are not misused?

- Careful version and circulation control
- School protocols and expectations of them explicit as part of initial agreement ✓

Support for research participants

What action is proposed if sensitive issues are raised or a participant becomes upset?

- Reassurance of both confidentiality and appreciation of their situation
- The opportunity to terminate the session
- Offer to seek family or school support ✓

Integrity

How will you ensure that your research and its reporting are honest, fair and respectful to others?

- Debrief with participants at end of each session
- Cross-checking emerging interpretations with participants and school overall

What agreement has been made for the attribution of authorship by yourself and your supervisor(s) of any reports or publications?

None at this stage. Prior negotiation in relation to any subsequently arising article or publication.

but...

The methodology will involve a range of approaches drawn from:

- Individual interviews with adult participants
- Focus groups
- Questionnaires
- Data and document analysis
- Observations of meetings and community engagement activities

Participants

Please specify all participants in the research including ages of children and young people where appropriate. Also specify if any participants are vulnerable e.g. children; as a result of learning disability.

Participants will be drawn from:

- Headteachers and other school leaders
- Governors
- Teaching and non-teaching staff
- Parents
- Community representatives
- Groups of students within an 11-19 age range

Respect for participants' rights and dignity

How will the fundamental rights and dignity of participants be respected, e.g. confidentiality, respect of cultural and religious values?

- Care with arrangements – e.g. timing, settings
- Explicit code of values shared as part of consent process
- Opportunity for periodic personal/group feedback from research participants
- Opportunity for complaint through school

Privacy and confidentiality

How will confidentiality be assured? Please address all aspects of research including protection of data records, thesis, reports/papers that might arise from the study.

- All data records will be maintained on a secure local network, providing both storage and off-site backup
- The researcher is already registered with the Information Commissioner under the Data Protection Act
- All reporting to be anonymised, through use of pseudonyms for schools and participants referred to.
- Interview tapes will be transcribed using agreed pseudonyms, then wiped

explain

coding

Keep

Consent

- will prior informed consent be obtained?

- from participants? Yes from others? Yes

- explain how this will be obtained. If prior informed consent is not to be obtained, give reason:

Please specify other issues not discussed above, if any, and how you will address them.

None

Signed

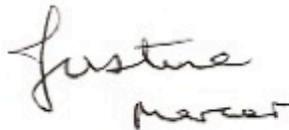
Research student



Date

17.05.10

Supervisor



Date

24.05.10

Action

Please submit to the Research Office (Louisa Hopkins, room WE132)

Action taken

Approved

Approved with modification or conditions – see below

Action deferred. Please supply additional information or clarification – see below

Name

G. Lindley

Date

8.6.10

Signature



Stamped

Notes of Action

- Good overview but couple of points
1. Explain 'secure'. I assume you mean password protected as part of security
 2. Code data (eg interviewees) + keep coding frame separate from the data.
 3. Do not wipe anything at least until you are successful in the degree. Then consider keep data - for publication. PTO
 4. I support your decision in principle opposed to author's view.

APPENDIX 3

HEADTEACHER BASELINE INTERVIEW

RECORDING FORM

HEADTEACHER BASELINE INTERVIEW

DATE:

SCHOOL:

OPENER	PROMPTS	NOTES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I want to explore at the start something about your own understanding of community and stakeholder engagement, what it is and why you think it is important for a school 2. How would you describe this school's community, or communities, in terms of scope and in terms of nature or character? 3. How well developed is the school itself as a community? 4. How do you know? 5. Have you used the term social capital at all within the school or more widely? 6. In what ways? 7. Have you tried at all to gauge its levels? 8. Can we turn now to the start of your headship and what you found in terms of this school's community and stakeholder engagement and what you set out to do in relation to that 		

<p>9. How do you think the current situation has changed from then?</p> <p>10. What are you now looking to achieve over the next 2-5 years in terms of change in relation to community engagement?</p> <p>11. What strategies are you using/planning to use to do that?</p> <p>12. What are the outcomes you expect?</p> <p>13. What tensions or conflicts around this development are you experiencing or anticipating?</p> <p>ANYTHING ELSE?</p>		
--	--	--

APPENDIX 4

INTERVIEW EXTRACT WITH EARLY ANALYSIS

BASELINE INTERVIEW EXTRACT

BIRCHGROVE HEAD

1 **School B Tape 1- First baseline Interview with Headteacher (HB1) 30.11.10**

IB1 2 Lets begin by exploring something about your own understanding about community and
3 stakeholder engagement within the school
4

HB1 5 Oh goodness me! I passionately believe in the notion of not just an open door school
6 but a wide open school. I completely recognise the notion of the ways schools evolve,
7 starting with the type of school that I went to as a child as being very closed
8 environment..... (this part of the tape is inaudible above background hiss)

Malcolm Groves 20/12/10 08:38

10 And also were I visit lots of schools, schools are at very different
11 what extent they involve their communities and what engaging communities means to
12 different schools. First and foremost we are here because their young people to live in

Malcolm Groves 20/12/10 08:39

13 the world not in a closed community which is the school of the
14 the beginning of the C21. I am mindful of the fact that I believe
15 believe that to thrive in the C21, in a global post information age, young people are

Comment [2]: Different schools and contexts 2100

16 going to have to come out of school. Even the concept of coming out of school doesn't
17 make any sense does it? I am going to have to come away from me and my people with
18 skills, competencies, capabilities, which we frankly didn't have
19 They are going to have to be clearly life-long learners because

Malcolm Groves 20/12/10 08:39

Comment [3]: Purpose 9300

20 invent themselves several times in very quick succession with sociological, economic,
21 and technological and environmental changes. There's no doubt about that. I don't
22 think anyone would question that anymore, but they are also going to have to be, not
23 just well qualified, because qualifications are going to have change, but they are going to
24 have to be incredibly powerful networkers, social networkers, so beyond emotional
25 intelligence, emotional literacy, they are going to have profound levels of social
26 intelligence. We have a duty to nurture that even now when we're less certain what
27 that future is going to look, feel and sound like, but certain that it's going to be different
28 to now and recognising, as I certainly do, the importance of the part that we are going to
29 have to play. So for me it starts with the child and what we should be doing as a school
30 to help prepare them to thrive in a very different world. I

Malcolm Groves 20/12/10 08:41

31 with the community and what we can do with our communities
32 and what they can do for us. Naturally that comes later but
33 of it. I come at it from a fairly unconventional attack, that
34 reading has lead me to that point, that we are here first and

Comment [4]: purpose 9300

student outcomes 12300

emotional intelligence social intelligence 12500

Malcolm Groves 20/12/10 08:42

35 children and prepare them for the world, so I always want
36 There is very little merit, in my view, as a headteacher in creating a vision around
37 community engagement which doesn't impact ultimately on learning and life-chances of
38 young people.

Comment [5]: purpose 9300

to come back to that point.

Malcolm Groves 20/12/10 08:43

IB1 40 Can I just turn to this school's community or communities
41 that?
42

Comment [6]: purpose learning first 9600

HB1 43 Internally?
44

IB1 45 That's my next question, so in terms of the community or communities for which it is a
46 part and which it is trying to engage in order to meet the needs of ?
47

HB1 48 So community context really? It's a school physically quite literally right on the edge of a
49 town trying to become a city with a promise of a westerly expansion zone which would
50 form about 80-90% of our city. So you could argue therefore, that by default, that we
51 have only 10-20% of our city has been built. That in itself poses a big question, we still

52 have 8 form entries, we have 240 children per year but still only between 100 and 120 of
53 our students come from in area. The remainder come from between 20 and 30 primary
54 schools the length and breadth of the town, and in the 5 years that the school has been
55 in existence, in its 6th year now, there has been no significant growth outside of one
56 area. No major indication that that physical community would be built up. So as we
57 stand now in 2010 we are a school that serves the whole **Malcolm Groves 20/12/10 08:43**
58 school with a very good reputation and now with the trac **Comment [7]: community geographically spread**
59 good and outstanding results, increasingly, parents form **new community not complete 2000 2200**
60 community are wanting to send their children to school here. **What you might see outside the**
61 already in the school and so they have a better chance of **Malcolm Groves 19/12/10 18:29**
62 isn't an issue, but it is an issue because I want a real com **Comment [8]: school reputation**
63 show any signs of abating until the building programme bounces back into life. Which
64 ironically, on the other side of the town, the east side is growing beautifully but no sign
65 here. So that in itself is a dilemma, on the one hand I see the glass half-full though and
66 so the spin that I put on that, the angle that I put on that, is that we are here to serve
67 the children of MK, first and foremost. Whereas perhaps some of the earlier parents
68 thought that they were sending their children to a grammar school here, on the western
69 flank but it's a very inclusive and very comprehensive school.

70
71 IB1 What about the school as a community itself? How well developed is that?

72
73 HB1 It is increasingly well developed. It is a harmonious community and when Ofsted said in
74 writing that the extend to which pupils feel safe and are happy with the school is
75 outstanding and HMI was at pains to overstate that in the meetings at the end of the
76 Ofsted process which was exactly a year ago. He had rarely been in school where he felt
77 that relationships between students were so good, there **Malcolm Groves 20/12/10 08:43**
78 tensions and we are quite a mixed community demograph **Comment [9]: school as community 2400**
79 was a real harmony and a happiness here. A lot of people talk about the school seeming
80 to be a happy school, although attendance bears that out – 97.5% - well above both
81 national and county averages. Children like coming here and don't tend to be ill. There
82 are all sorts of indicators that suggest that the community **Malcolm Groves 20/12/10 08:43**
83 is a great sense of pride in the school. A good example of **Comment [10]: school as community 2400**
84 school, from time to time, standards of uniform slip and s **Malcolm Groves 20/12/10 08:43**
85 into getting them back up again, well in this school, you ju **Comment [11]: identity 2800**
86 once and talk about the importance of presentation and the impact on the community
87 as you come to and from school and almost overnight, without any real effort, children
88 lift their game and see sense in it and then its several weeks before it slips again. I know
89 its an anecdote but it gives a sense that the community is keen to be proud and
90 celebrate being part of the community. I think it's better established actually in the
91 student body than in the staff which is a quite different kettle of fish altogether, where
92 because the school started with just 20 staff, head and de **Malcolm Groves 20/12/10 08:44**
93 2005 and grew up slowly but surely, we had nothing in de **Comment [12]: school as community 2400**
94 resources, policies, procedures, protocols etc and then suddenly there's KS4, then
95 there's KS5 2 years later. You have this situation were departments have grown up in a
96 great silo culture which is proving very difficult to break down even in the year that I
97 have been here. Staff see the necessity, they recognise that that's the way it evolved, it
98 was not a one style school. There wasn't negativity at all but you brought the staff
99 together you could quite literally hear a pin drop and I'm not used to that. There was no
100 sense of group rapport as a whole staff, and a year on its better, but compared to what
101 I'm used to when you go into a challenging situation wher **Malcolm Groves 20/12/10 08:44**
102 enormous body supporting each other, it's a world away f **Comment [13]: school as community staff 2400**

103 be done still to bring together the staff, relationships between staff and students are
 104 good and within departments are exceptional but still a lack of joined-up. A lot's been
 105 done to change that but we're still working on it.

106

IB1 107 You eluded in aspects of that, to elements of what you an **Comment [14]:** school as community 2400
 108 refer to as social capital, is that a term that has been part of the currency?
 109

HB1 110 I believe I've used it in the 3 year vision. It is language I use and it meets with differing
 111 responses. Because I'm fundamentally academic I see myself sat in your seat in a few
 112 years time, I'm passionate about learning myself and the need to learn I tend to talk alot
 113 both via emails and communicas and staff briefings and g **Comment [15]:** social capital 10000
 114 lot of academic language and I can probably get shot down **Comment [16]:** head's role head as learner 7100
 115 inappropriate. It's not the right language for this type of **Comment [17]:** social capital 10000
 116 sounding as if I knew what I was talking about that got me
 117

IB1 118 Has you or the school made any attempt to measure it, or **Comment [18]:** measurement of social capital 10300
 119

HB1 120 No we haven't for 2 reasons, 1) My goodness me, it became apparent as the year
 121 progressed how much I had to invest in just simply in standards in the school. The
 122 school had begun to drop off to school in the last 2 terms before I came because the
 123 head was already doing 2 days a week at his new school and the deputy head was on
 124 maternity leave, so there was a lot of work to be done in those first 2 terms in getting
 125 the school back on course. Even behaviour had been on the slip, the staff had gone back
 126 into non risk taking satisfactory teaching. An awful lot of work was done there shoring
 127 those results off so that we could get a set of outstanding results and start back on the
 128 outstanding journey so in many ways in terms of strategically planning the bigger job
 129 around community engagement and playing a part in built **Comment [19]:** social capital 10000
 130 own organisation and then beyond, there are a lot of idea **Comment [20]:** strategy 7000
 131 nothing strategised about that. In many ways, I want to use the appointment of the **Comment [21]:** leadership 7000
 132 seconded assistant headteacher as a vehicle to begin to put down a way forward. I want **Comment [22]:** change 1000
 133 that, in fact they will have to as part of the presentation next week, articulate what they
 134 understand by all of these things, community engagement, social capital, and so on, in
 135 whatever level they research and engage with that. It's going to become a feature of
 136 the secondment because the assistant head who is on maternity has already gone
 137 through the programme she will have an understanding of that. We have had some
 138 long debates about it but it's yet to find its way into strategy. So what a community
 139 strategy to be written, its alluded to in a 3 year vision, well alluded to, it has to be
 140 written during the course of this 3 year plan and we're almost a term into the first year
 141 of it, so it will emerge.

142

IB1 143 There are 3 things that I'm trying to explore and I thing yo **Comment [23]:** social capital 10000
 144 just to give you chance to fill in any bits. What you found **Comment [24]:** strategy 7000
 145 What you set out to do; Where you think things are now **Comment [25]:** leadership 7000
 146 see them 3 years down the road. **Comment [26]:** change 1000
 147

HB1 148 What I found when I arrived in the school was a communication blackhole, a very
 149 inadequate communication across the board really. With the exception of within the
 150 departments communication was at least good and in some cases outstanding.
 151 Communication between the senior group, I won't call them a team because they had
 152 not evolved like that, and the rest of the staff was wanting in a big way, communication
 153 between senior staff and governors was wanting and communication and staff and

154 parents and other stakeholders was desperately wanting. This was born out by
 155 observation it was born out by early questionnaires, by a ‘mocksted’ when I brought in a
 156 team of inspectors and by ofsted themselves who recognised that there was work to be
 157 done there. They were kind enough not to make a big thing of it in their inspection
 158 because their focus was on teaching and learning although you will notice that we only
 159 got a satisfactory for partnership working and community engagement, and community
 160 cohesion. I have to say that I steered that because I wanted that out and we had a long
 161 long way to go. I guess that sets the scene for when I arrived. **Malcolm Groves 20/12/10 08:46**
 162 for many reasons, but one was that they had not even been. **Comment [20]:** communication 1600
 163 be like to work in this kind of way, and to think in this kind of way about your
 164 communities. School, ,local, regional, national, international and e-communities as well.
 165 **Malcolm Groves 20/12/10 08:47**
 166 So a year in, on reflection, I have only found 8 days in a week. **Comment [21]:** 2000 2100
 167 more time than I ever imagined to ensure that we were data savvy, getting the target
 168 setting tracking intervention into place, getting really robust quality assurance in place,
 169 getting an understanding, finally they had results, getting understanding of what
 170 accountability actual means in senior and middle leadership. Helping the governors
 171 working strategically and not quite so operation hand on as they had been while the
 172 school was being build. I was frustrated how little time I had to invest in getting a better
 173 understanding along the lines of what we are talking about. **Malcolm Groves 20/12/10 08:47**
 174 that year to sow seeds. I moved the goal posts, whether it was. **Comment [22]:** inside school first 7600
 175 looking at a structure now formally so that (Louise Baldwin) **Malcolm Groves 20/12/10 08:47**
 176 Specialism and paid as an assistant Headteacher so I changed. **Comment [23]:** timing school first 7600
 177 her to now more coherently represent somebody overseeing partnerships in a bigger
 178 way. As a said earlier off recording the logic being if there was any work around a
 179 broader community going on it was going on within the specialism and even then it was
 180 early days. That’s been very successful, she went on the community leadership
 181 programme as well but really it was her and me and (Vane) **Malcolm Groves 20/12/10 08:47**
 182 when I first arrived, felt under community cohesion, almost. **Comment [24]:** managing links 8300
 183 school and she felt that anything beyond that was to do solely with the extended
 184 schools agenda. It took quite some time to try to get an understanding that it’s bigger
 185 than that, there’s a bigger story, a bigger narrative to explain. **Malcolm Groves 20/12/10 08:48**
 186 struggling a little bit. She is very keen, but you’ll hear the **Comment [25]:** change 1200 1000
 187 that relates to partnerships, community agenda must come. **Malcolm Groves 19/12/10 18:48**
 188 learning and student outcomes for our children which is good. **Comment [26]:** change
 189 we’re not careful, in that language , there’s also deficit modelling, a limiting model in
 190 terms of what’s possible. She has not get been out to some of these schools and soon
 191 as she has we’ll have a much more coherent and critical mass a senior staff talking the
 192 same language. So we’re at stage, frustratingly not as far forward as I’d hoped we
 193 would be, but it’s early days, I’m not going to spend just 2 years at this school, I’m here
 194 for longer.
 195 **Malcolm Groves 20/12/10 08:49**
 IB1 196 So over that 2,3,5 year period what are the differences you **Comment [27]:** change 1200 purpose 9400
 197
 HB1 198 First of all in the same way as the 3 year vision and the way in which I’ve very bravely
 199 created, I’ve done a far bit of work with Brent Davies on the last couple of years. I went
 200 out to Los Angeles with him, I’m very interested in his models of distributed leadership
 201 and one of the ways in which I’ve tried to break down the silo mentality within the
 202 school and create more cross-fertilisation of strategic ideas is to do an early launch of
 203 a distribution leadership model with those 4 leadership groups we spoke about earlier. I
 204 will want the partnerships group to start working, I want **Malcolm Groves 20/12/10 08:49**
Comment [28]: distributed leadership 7200

APPENDIX 5

EXAMPLE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE AND RESPONSES

ASHTREE SCHOOL

SECOND STAFF SURVEY

A. QUESTIONS USED

No.	Theme	Goddard	Question
1	A		This school has good facilities Its facilities are well/easily used by students and the wider community
2	A		
3	A		This school is a good place in which to work This school is seen as an important part of the community
4	A		
5	A		I am proud to be associated with this school
6	E		Communication is good in this school
7	E		The school takes account of my suggestions
8	E		I know who the school's leader are I have confidence in the direction in which the school is being led
9	E		
10	T		The school is an honest place
11	T	Y	Students here are caring towards each other The involvement of the wider community supports learning
12	S	Y	
13	E		I can make a difference in this school
14	T		This school keeps learners safe
15	T	Y	Parents here meet their commitments
16	T	Y	Staff trust parents
17	T	Y	Staff trust students
18	T		Students trust staff
19	T	Y	Parents encourage children to learn
20	T	Y	Students can be counted on to work hard The people I work with help each other even if it means doing something outside the usual
21	T		
22	S	Y	Parent involvement supports learning
23	S		Staff here want best for all students
24	S		I am encouraged to learn and develop myself

B. SAMPLE RESULTS REPORT PAGE - QUANTITATIVE

SCHOOL A - Staff Survey Final



1. This school has good facilities			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree		44.4%	12
Agree		55.6%	15
Neither agree nor disagree		0.0%	0
Disagree		0.0%	0
Strongly disagree		0.0%	0
If you would like to add a comment on your answer, please do so here			1
answered question			27
skipped question			0

2. Its facilities are well used by students and the wider community			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly agree		11.1%	3
Agree		51.9%	14
Neither agree nor disagree		25.9%	7
Disagree		11.1%	3
Strongly disagree		0.0%	0
If you would like to add a comment on your answer, please do so here			3
answered question			27
skipped question			0

C. SAMPLE REPORT PAGE – QUALITATIVE COMMENTS

Page 1, Q1. This school has good facilities

1	But we are permanently short of money and cant even afford proper textbooks or enough photocopying of past papers for student practise	May 10, 2012 9:50 AM
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Page 1, Q2. Its facilities are well used by students and the wider community

1	Could be used by many more community members if we did not have to pay BAM for room hire.	May 11, 2012 10:13 AM
2	Could develop more for staff	May 11, 2012 8:16 AM
3	The community struggle to use the school facilities as the building is PFA which makes the cost prohibitive.	May 10, 2012 8:55 AM

Page 1, Q3. This school is a good place to work in

1	Behaviour of some students detracts from the school as a good place to work	May 10, 2012 5:19 PM
2	There is a massive workload issue and refusal to deal with certain problems that impact teachers on the chalkface	May 10, 2012 9:50 AM

Page 1, Q5. The school is seen as an important part of this community

1	Our students need the support this school offers	May 10, 2012 9:50 AM
2	I think we are getting there and moving in the right direction; with the Community Awards and Community Fun Day.	May 10, 2012 9:34 AM

APPENDIX 6

EXTRACT FROM SURVEY DATA ANALYSIS

CHESTNUT ACADEMY

Theme	Goddard	Question	Survey 1					Survey 2					Change y1/2	Gap +/-		
			Avg. Point score	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	% positive			% neutral	% negative
1 A		This school has good facilities	1.89	4.11	85.2	11.1	3.7	1.85	4.15	85.7	14.3	0	14.3	-0.04	0.04	-10.1
1 A	Staff	This school has good facilities	2.68	3.32	48.6	32.4	18.9	2.59	3.41	59.2	29.6	11.1	11.1	-0.09	0.09	18.4
2 A	Learner	Its facilities are well/easily used by students and the community	2.52	3.48	59.3	25.9	14.8	2.77	3.23	28.6	57.1	14.3	14.3	-0.25	0.25	-30.2
2 A	Staff	Its facilities are well/easily used by students and the community	3.26	2.74	29.4	29.4	41.2	2.8	3.2	44.4	37	18.5	18.5	-0.46	0.46	37.7
3 A	Staff	This school is a good place in which to learn/work	2.63	3.37	59.2	22.2	18.5	1.92	4.08	71.4	28.6	0	0	-0.71	0.71	30.7
3 A	Learner	This school is a good place in which to learn/work	2.53	3.47	58.3	25	16.7	2.92	3.08	37	33.3	29.6	0.39	-0.39	-34.2	
13 A	Staff	Making good progress	2.62	3.38	61.7	17.6	20.6	2.64	3.36	63	18.5	18.5	0.02	-0.02	3.4	
13 A	Learner	Making good progress	2.12	3.88	73.1	7.7	19.2	1.85	4.15	71.4	28.6	0	0	-0.27	0.27	17.5
5 A	Staff	I am proud to be associated with this school	2.82	3.18	44.1	32.4	23.5	3.02	2.98	33.3	33.3	33.3	0.2	-0.2	-20.6	
5 A	Learner	I am proud to be associated with this school	2.37	3.63	62.9	18.5	18.5	2.46	3.54	42.9	14.3	42.9	0.09	0.09	-44.4	
4 A	Staff	This school is seen as an important part of the community	2.59	3.41	50	38.2	11.7	3	3	22.2	63	14.8	14.8	-0.41	0.41	-30.9
4 A	Learner	This school is seen as an important part of the community	2.92	3.08	46.2	26.9	26.9	2.69	3.31	42.9	14.3	42.9	0.23	0.23	-19.3	
6 E	Staff	Communication is good in this school	3.03	2.97	39.4	24.2	36.4	3.19	2.81	25	35.7	39.3	0.16	-0.16	-17.3	
6 E	Learner	Communication is good in this school	2.65	3.35	53.8	30.8	15.4	2.69	3.31	42.9	28.6	28.6	0.04	-0.04	-24.1	
7 E	Staff	The school takes account of my suggestions	3.18	2.82	24.2	42.4	33.3	3.02	2.98	25.9	37	37	0	-0.16	0.16	-2
7 E	Learner	The school takes account of my suggestions	2.52	3.48	60	16	24	1.69	4.31	100	0	0	-0.83	0.83	64	
14 E	Staff	I can make a difference	3.18	2.82	21.2	48.5	30.3	3.43	2.57	18.5	37	44.4	0.25	-0.25	-16.8	
14 E	Learner	I can make a difference	1.46	4.54	96.1	0	3.8	1.85	4.15	71.4	14.3	14.3	0.39	-0.39	-35.2	
8 E	Staff	I know who the school's leader are	2.52	3.48	36.4	36.4	27.2	2.98	3.02	40.7	25.9	33.3	0.46	-0.46	-1.8	
8 E	Learner	I know who the school's leader are	2.58	3.42	53.8	26.9	19.2	1.62	4.38	85.7	14.3	0	-0.96	0.96	51.1	
9 E	Staff	I have confidence in the direction in which the school is being led	2.45	3.55	66.7	21.2	12.2	2.87	3.13	44.4	25.9	29.6	0.42	-0.42	-39.7	
9 E	Learner	I have confidence in the direction in which the school is being led	2.84	3.16	44	28	28	2.46	3.54	57.1	14.3	26.6	-0.38	0.38	14.5	
10 T	Staff	The school is an honest place	3.1	2.9	28.8	35.5	35.5	3.02	2.98	26.9	30.7	42.3	-0.08	0.08	-8.7	
10 T	Learner	The school is an honest place	2.4	3.6	60	24	12	3.08	2.92	14.3	14.3	71.4	0.68	-0.68	-105.1	
11 T	Staff	Students are caring towards each other	3.13	2.87	30	36.7	33.3	3.87	2.13	15.4	30.8	53.8	0.74	-0.74	-35.1	
11 T	Learner	Students are caring towards each other	2.84	3.16	51.7	22.6	25.8	2.87	3.13	50	30.8	19.2	0.03	-0.03	4.9	
15 T	Staff	School keeps learners safe	3.52	2.48	8	36	56	3.08	2.92	14.3	42.9	42.9	-0.44	0.44	19.4	
16 T	Staff	Parents meet commitments	2.96	3.04	24	56	20	2.85	3.15	28.6	42.9	28.6	-0.11	0.11	-4	
17 T	Staff	Staff trust parents	2.4	3.6	60	40	0	2.62	3.38	28.6	57.1	14.3	0.22	-0.22	-45.7	
18 T	Staff	Staff trust students	2.77	3.23	45.1	32.3	22.6	3.09	2.91	26.9	42.3	30.8	0.32	-0.32	-26.4	
18 T	Learner	Staff trust students	2.4	3.6	72	12	16	2.38	3.62	28.6	57.1	14.3	-0.02	0.02	-41.7	
19 T	Staff	Students trust staff	3.1	2.9	32.3	36.7	29	3.13	2.87	15.4	57.7	26.9	0.03	-0.03	-14.8	
19 T	Learner	Students trust staff	2.88	3.12	36	36	28	2.92	3.08	28.6	57.1	14.3	0.04	-0.04	6.3	
20 T	Staff	Parents encourage children to learn	2.92	3.08	28	52	20	3.08	2.92	0	71.4	28.6	0.16	-0.16	-36.6	
20 T	Learner	Parents encourage children to learn	2.74	3.26	45.2	32.3	22.6	3.04	2.96	23.1	42.3	34.6	0.3	-0.3	-34.1	
21 T	Staff	Students can be counted on to work hard	2	4	79.2	18.7	4.2	2.31	3.69	85.7	14.3	0	0.31	-0.31	10.7	
21 T	Learner	Students can be counted on to work hard	3.38	2.62	16.7	41.7	41.7	2.31	3.69	42.9	57.1	0	-1.07	1.07	67.9	
22 T	Staff	The people I work with help each other even if it means doing something	1.79	4.21	83.3	4.2	12.5	1.38	4.62	100	0	0	-0.41	0.41	29.2	
22 T	Learner	The people I work with help each other even if it means doing something	2.19	3.81	71	22.6	6.4	1.98	4.02	84	4	12	-0.21	0.21	7.4	
23 S	Staff	Parent involvement supports learning	2.94	3.06	42	29	25	2.84	3.16	44	20	36	-0.1	0.1	-5	
23 S	Learner	Parent involvement supports learning	2.92	3.08	33.3	41.7	25	2.62	3.38	28.6	57.1	14.3	-0.3	0.3	6	
24 S	Staff	Good range of extra curricular activity	2.17	3.83	69.5	21.7	8.7	1.77	4.23	85.7	14.3	0	-0.4	0.4	24.9	
24 S	Learner	Good range of extra curricular activity	2.58	3.42	42	41.9	16.1	2.8	3.2	40.7	25.9	25.9	0.22	-0.22	-11.1	
12 S	Staff	Involvement of the wider community supports learning	2.82	3.13	42	29	29.1	3.07	3.07	41.7	29.1	29.1	0	0	0	
12 S	Learner	Involvement of the wider community supports learning	2.17	3.83	69.5	21.7	8.7	1.77	4.23	85.7	14.3	0	-0.4	0.4	24.9	
26 S	Staff	Well prepared for future/encouraged to learn or develop myself	2.58	3.42	42	41.9	16.1	2.8	3.2	40.7	25.9	25.9	0.22	-0.22	-11.1	
26 S	Learner	Well prepared for future/encouraged to learn or develop myself	2.58	3.42	42	41.9	16.1	2.8	3.2	40.7	25.9	25.9	0.22	-0.22	-11.1	
Overall average			2.67	3.33				2.64	3.36							
Staff average	n=28		2.53	3.47		n=13		2.36	3.64							
Learner average	n=51		2.82	3.18		n=51		2.95	3.05							

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