The Beauchamp Papers 2

Growing Engagement

Re-imagining relationships between schools, families and communities

Growing Engagement: Re-imagining relationships between schools, families and communities

The Second Beauchamp Paper

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Finding your way round this publication

This publication is organised in seven chapters. Although each can be read independently, they do follow a sequence of thought and development. The seven chapters follow a brief recap of the origins and development of this series of Beauchamp Papers.

Chapter 1 - Andrew Hobbs looks at the impact of changing national expectations on school engagement and why it still matters.

Chapter 2. - In a keynote paper, Janet Goodall argues the need to rethink the basis of engagement between schools and their parents and families.

Chapter 3 - Ralph Tabberer and David Kelly respond with views about the application of new thinking to engagement with families.

Chapter 4 - focusses on the application of new thinking to engagement with communities. Richard Gerver makes a case for a range of community engagement, and Andrew Hobbs considers the impact of globalisation.

Chapter 5 - Malcolm Groves analyses a case study of change at Orchard School, Bristol.

Chapter 6 - John West-Burnham offers a concluding paper drawing out the implications of change for leadership.

Chapter 7 - This final chapter sets out Schools of Tomorrow's plans to take forward these ideas across 2014-15.

The story so far

Schools of Tomorrow, growing out of the work of its predecessor The Beauchamp Group, launched its first publication *'Towards a new understanding of outstanding schools'* at the RSA in October 2013. You can download this here.

In it, Professor John West-Burnham puts forward four evidence-based moral propositions to guide the development of the outstanding school of tomorrow.

Proposition 1

The outstanding school of tomorrow is one in which every child is entitled to a holistic educational experience which is rooted in personal well-being, delivered on the basis of equity and responsive to the personal needs of every learner.

Proposition 2

Tomorrow's outstanding school recognises that, to secure equity, it has to engage with the factors that are most significant and influential in determining educational success and enhanced life chances. This means that it is actively engaged in securing positive outcomes in terms of family life, community, poverty and social class, according to its context.

Proposition 3

Learning is a social experience rooted in family, community and school that is outstanding in the extent to which it is both personalized and rooted in authentic social relationships.

Proposition 4

Leadership for the school of tomorrow has to be seen in terms of collective capacity rather than personal, hierarchical status. Leadership is a resource to be developed as and when it is needed irrespective of age, status, or formal role. Equally, leadership needs to be seen in terms of a community rather than an organisation, and in terms of collaborative relationships.

Starting from this essentially moral values-base, Schools of Tomorrow believes truly outstanding schools offer much more than consistently high levels of achievement. They also lie at the heart of their communities.

As a new organisation founded by and for school leaders, we are gathering evidence of how this is being achieved by school leaders in practice and beginning to define how this can be validated rigorously. It has also been important for us to find ways

to involve students in this work, with eight schools acting as learner hubs for student-led research and development.

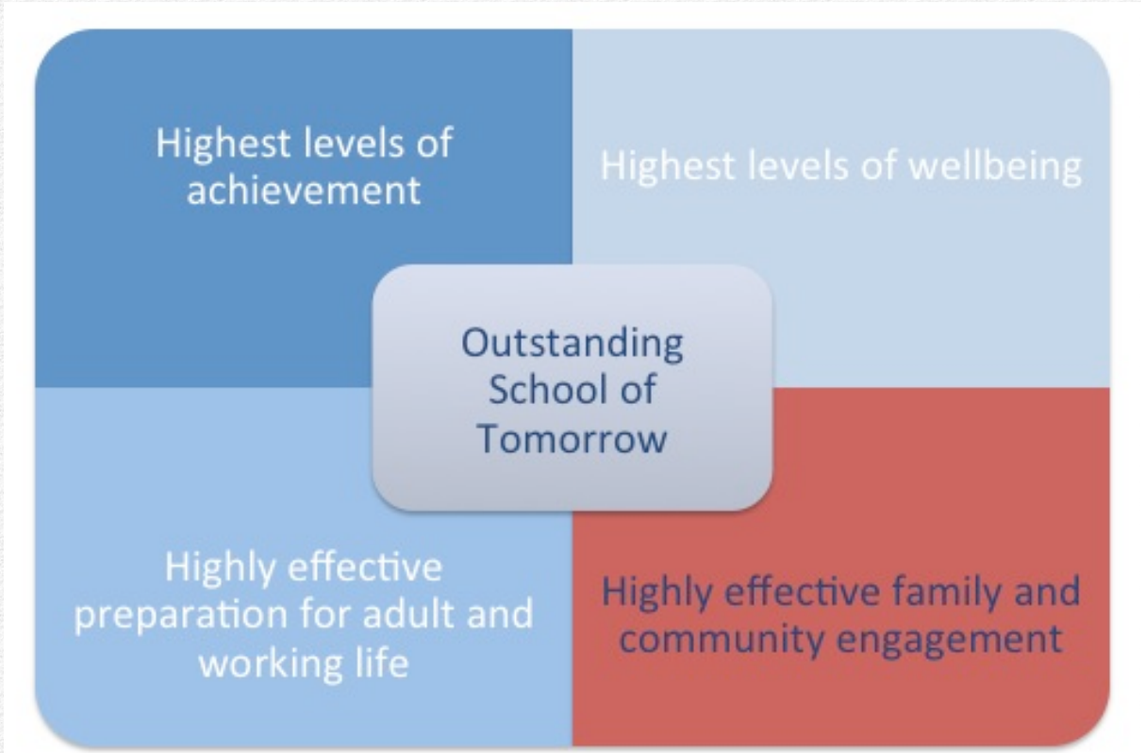
The emerging SoTo Framework identifies four fundamentals of equal importance if a school of tomorrow is to be of the highest quality, and thus beyond outstanding. It is able to secure at the same time:

- Highest levels of achievement and progress for all;
- Highest levels of well-being for all;
- Highly effective preparation for adult and working life.
- Highly effective family and community engagement;

If this Framework is to provide a basis for redefining what we mean by an outstanding school, then it is essential to think about these four fundamentals as inter-related and inter-connected – not as separate parts, but constituent elements that will demonstrate themselves in different ways at different times and in different contexts. Outstanding in one community context may appear very different to another, but the outcomes for all children and young people will be defined in terms of preparation for the future, not a limited measure of some of the things they have achieved (or not achieved) at points of time in the past.

Recognising that, our next publications will consider each element of this Framework in turn, whilst drawing out the common threads and linkage between them.

This second Beauchamp Paper addresses the need for new thinking in relation to family and community engagement.



Subsequent publications will address identity and learning, in terms of preparation for life, and wellbeing, as we look to open up a wider debate about what schools are for and how we recognise their success.

Changing expectations

Andrew Hobbs

1

In this scene-setting chapter, Andrew Hobbs sets out the context of change within which it is necessary to re-think what we mean by engagement and to understand why it matters.

Changing Expectations

For almost twenty-five years legislative changes made by successive governments have introduced, and then incrementally reinforced, a market-based model for the provision of state education in England and Wales. The initial policy drive was to offer increased 'parental choice', with parents (interestingly, not learners) defined as the consumers, and offered a 'choice' of schools.

This has been accompanied by an increasing autonomy for schools, with funding linked to pupil numbers and greater competition between schools (at least in localities where they both can and choose to compete to recruit pupils) in an attempt to drive up standards of achievement.

Inevitably this has changed the relationship between the school, its parents/carers and pupils. Assessing exactly how relationships have changed is difficult because of the limited research as well as the greater diversity that these changes have introduced. The changes also have to be assessed both in the changes in attitude and policy of schools, and also in the attitudes of parents and pupils and how they view their relationship to the school. For example, a parent and pupil who are unsuccessful in achieving a place at the school of their 'choice' may feel 'dissatisfied' and aggrieved if they are forced to find another 'supplier' school.

For schools, it raises the question of the degree of compatibility between the relationships they wish to foster with parents and the wider community, and the attitudes and expectations they encounter. To what extent is the basis of the relationship perceived on both sides as that of a customer, who chooses a school to provide an education as a commodity, and a provider who will 'deliver' educational success and achievement in the form of examination results and progression to further qualifications?

OFSTED's Inspection Framework now takes into account the views of parents through an on-line survey with prescribed questions. They also take account of parental complaints, which can be enough to trigger an inspection. A majority of negative comments will almost inevitably result in a downgrading of final judgements, particularly for leadership and management.

The interpretation OFSTED gives to 'parental involvement' is thus another element of the legal context within which schools have to operate and a factor to be considered in determining the policy and approach taken to parents and the wider community. This can be seen as a question of public relations rather than involvement or engagement - the parent as customer.

OFSTED also, undoubtedly, affects the attitudes of teachers, with consequences in turn for the ways they relate to parents. When teachers feel their performance is being constantly monitored and inspected by the outcomes attained by their pupils, it is possible that the contribution of parents will be viewed warily and with caution. But if the policy of the school is to involve or engage parents in learning, then the positive attitude and engagement of teachers and all other staff will be essential. How this is approached and achieved will be a key factor in determining the effectiveness of the policy.

The legal and regulatory framework within which educational provision, schools and parents/carers operate is thus very diverse, creating many complexities for the potential relationships between the parent/carer (seen as customer) and the school (seen as provider.) In such an environment it is very easy for misunderstandings, tensions and even conflict to develop.

Since 2010 the numbers of schools in all sectors becoming academies, in response to either soft or hard pressure from central government, has increased rapidly. The individual nature of the contractual relationship between each academy and the Department for Education means that even those with expertise in educational law and administration struggle with the current complexity. Given this, it is unlikely that the vast majority of parents will understand the implications for them and for the school their child attends.

The arrangements for governance of academies varies widely and in some cases has resulted in very limited direct representation from, or even knowledge of, local communities and stakeholders. This raises the question of the degree to which the school has any meaningful accountability to its communities. alongside the question of the extent to which parents/carers can in any meaningful way be considered as co-educators.

The Coalition Government published, in January 2014 ,new guidance on the governance regulations for maintained schools and initiated a consultation on proposed changes to governance regulations. This is part of "*a drive to improve standards of governance"* and to bring all schools inline with academies.

The intention is to ensure that governors "*will in future only be appointed if they have the skills and experience to drive school improvement*". The Department for Education statement goes on to say that *"governing bodies will be expected to act more like corporate boards, and only appoint people with the skills to help their schools succeed*."

The proposal is that it will be left to governing bodies to manage and decide for themselves whether they collectively have the requisite skills. There are no proposals to change the regulations with regard to parent and staff representatives, who will continue to be elected. However, the consultation document states that "*we think that governing bodies have an important role in informing elections*" by "*setting out for potential candidates what they expect of governors and publishing information for the electorate on the type of person or skills they ideally require".*

The full implications of these new regulations remain to be seen, but it is evident that this will be a further consideration for governing bodies in determining their relationship with parents and the local community. What is acknowledged in the draft of "The School Governance Constitution Regulations" is that, "*The specific skills that governing bodies need to meet their particular challenges will vary*".

Some would argue that the greater diversity of the current range of school provision also offers greater autonomy to heads and governing bodies to develop approaches personalised to their communities, and in some cases this may undoubtedly be the case. Other senior leaders (for example, some schools that are part of some academy 'chains', or are sponsored in other ways) may experience greater constraint and restrictions.

Whatever the position of an individual school, the diversity of current provision will result in personal assumptions and potential confusion, unless the school defines its own position.

So why engage?

Against this background of changing expectation, what then do we mean by engagement, for both families and communities? Why is it important or desirable? Why does it matter in the context of today?

The evidence from research by Desforges and others is that parents and family have a much greater influence on students' achievements than the school. In the words of John West-Burnham:

"Desforges argues that it is possible to quantify the relationship between the family and the school in terms of their relative impact on achievement with parental behaviours having an effect size of 0.29, compared to the school's effect size of 0.05. In his words, it is not who parents are, it is what they do'

There are two key messages here:

- Engaging with parents is important to increase the achievements of all students and to bring about a step-change in the equity of overall achievement;
- It is the behaviours of parents which are important not their background, class or other characteristics of 'who they are'.

Focusing on understanding and working with the parental behaviours that make a difference then becomes essential.

From a school's perspective, it may appear that it is harder to engage in this dialogue with some families than others. The reasons for this will vary with local social context. Analysing both data and anecdotal information can help to develop a deeper and shared understanding of those aspects which influence behaviours and attainment. It is beneficial if this can be undert aken with key partners, who will also be able to contribute to helping develop more effective strategies.

But what about the perspective of parents? Do they think you are a hard-to-reach school?

However outstanding a school, the answer for some families, at least some of the time, is likely to be *"Yes"*. Simply, asking all parents/carers, every day, in every contact with any member of staff that question for one week could provide a significant body of information to reflect upon. The responses are very likely to be challenging because they are informative. It would also send out to families and the wider community a very powerful statement of intent if reinforced with a further programme of actions to build engagement.

Learning starts in the home but should grow and extend into all aspects of living, throughout life. Rethinking the role and contribution of schools as co-educators in this process defines a shared responsibility with parents, families and the wider community. In the critical early years of childhood and adolescence, a shared, trusting relationship of home and school will provide the roots for children to grow and the wings to fly.

But this does also mean radically re-thinking what we mean by engagement. That is the theme explored in this publication.

Re-thinking Engagement

Janet Goodall

2

In this keynote chapter, Janet Goodall challenges us to rethink our assumptions about the relationships between schools, parents and communities.

When I was asked to make a presentation at a Beauchamp Group event in June 2013 as a critical friend, I readily agreed and set about tweaking my usual presentations on parental engagement, based on the findings of research. These show, for example, the importance of parental engagement to children's learning (Desforges, 2003) and how supporting parental engagement with children's learning can be seen as the best lever we have for raising achievement (Harris, 2008).

By ‘parental engagement’ I do not mean involvement with the school, coming to parents' evening, or perhaps even much in the way of action that can be observed by the school – what matters is the attitude toward learning in the home (Desforges, 2003). Getting parents into school may be a first step, but the end point – engaging with their children's learning – is the real goal, (Goodall, 2013; Goodall, 2011), particularly for families facing significant challenge (Harris, 2009). Even though there are still issues with the research base around parental engagement (See, 2013, Goodall, 2011), the literature is still clear that supporting parents to engage with their children's learning is vital.

A few days before the presentation, I realised that would be a friendly, but not a critical thing do to do. The people coming to that event already knew the value of parental engagement in children's learning. My presentation would have been familiar, cosy, and given us all a warm glow of doing the right thing.

Dr Janet Goodall is Lecturer in Educational Leadership and Management at the University of Bath. As a university teacher and researcher she has worked on a wide range of issues, such as federations of schools, the evaluation of the impact of CPD in schools, the implementation of workforce reform, and a multi-sector project looking at organisations which perform beyond expectations in education, sport and business.

Her most recent work has been around parents’ engagement in their children’s learning, particularly as a means of school improvement. Amongst other things, she co-authored the DFE literature review of Best Practice In Parental Engagement, which took an overview of the field and suggested practical ways forward for schools.

What it would not have done was move anyone's thinking along at all. It was friendly, but not critical.

So, with only a few days to go, I changed the presentation. This article is based on what I presented and the discussions that ensued. It is also based on almost 10 years of work around parental engagement in children's learning, and a deep conviction that if we keep doing the same things over and over again, we are going to keep getting the same results. Some of those results are good – but our children do not read as well as their grandparents, and we have worryingly high levels of poor numeracy (OECD 2013). Change, as the old saying has it, must come.

Radix, root, radical

One of the touchstones of Schools of Tomorrow is that change is needed. The original documents speak of "radical" change. But that word has a specific meaning. It means in-depth change, change that goes back to the rootstock (radix = root). The only reason to do that is to grow a different sort of plant, a radically different sort of plant - a radically different sort of school.

So much has been added to our existing model of schools in the last few years that we have run out of attachment points for new ideas. We need to stop bolting things on to the outside of what we're already doing and instead go back and rethink - re-tool - regrow. We need to get radical.

This is not as outlandish as it might seem, not when the call is addressed to teachers and others in schools. Simple logic would seem to indicate this. Consider a question to which I will return – what do you see as the purpose of education? Why do we have schools? What are they for, fundamentally? This is where the logic comes in, because I think that desire is built on three fairly simple (but still profound) propositions.

Three propositions

The first proposition is that the status quo is not optimal. This is almost axiomatic - we spend a great deal of time, money and effort on school improvement after all. Things could be better.

The next proposition is built on the fact that we have chosen to engage in that process of improvement: the system is salvage-able. If we did not believe this, we would be working outside, rather than inside the system. We may think the system is pretty badly broken, we may want to change a great deal about it, but we are still working to save it, to make it better. (I should say at this point that it is entirely possible to believe something without ever having given it much - or any - thought).

The third proposition is one which is slightly more tenuous than the first two. This is that those best placed to fix the system - or at least to affect it for the better - are those who are within it. Not everyone believes this, of course - I suspect we have all listened more than once to the "w*hat's wrong with our schools and how to fix it"* speech from someone whose last experience of school was picking up their O level results. However, I think this proposition, albeit slightly tenuous, will strike a chord with many in education. At this point, critical readers may well be asking why I, as a university lecturer, am commenting on schools - I am not in the system. And those readers would be quite right. But I am not trying to bring solutions or fix the system. Rather, based on years of research with schools, teachers, young people, and parents, I offer ideas for consideration. How often has the reaction to yet another initiative been to ask when the relevant government official was last in a working classroom? (Staged visits for photo opportunities do not count here).

So, taking these three propositions together, we arrive at a point where perhaps we have a system which we acknowledge to be suboptimal, and which we, from within, seek to change for the better.

Four questions

From this point, I have four questions.

Question 1 - Purpose

The first I have already asked - What are schools for? Why do we have them, why does the state support them? We take these things for granted but at times, we need to return to the basics, to the root of things, to see what is actually growing – and if we like the outcome.

There is a sub-question here – having decided what schools are for, do you think, do we think, they are able to accomplish this, whatever it may be? Why, or why not?

It is no good, by the way, blaming others if your schools are not all we would like them to be - even the ubiquitous "they", or the government, or Ofsted. We are part of this system, and if it is going to get better, we have to be part of that process.

My second question concerns one of the fundamental - one of the root, if you will - ideas of the 2012 Manifesto. This states, "Community engagement changes schools for the better." My question is simple - why are we seeing these as separate entities? We tend to think of the school over here, and the community over there, and we work diligently to build bridges between

them. But they comprise precisely the same people. Teachers may not live in the area, but by the nature of their connections to the school and the people in it, they are undoubtedly members of the community. Of course whether either party acknowledges that or not is a different matter.

You may object at this point that the school has to exist as a separate entity. Again I will take up the mantle of any random five year old and ask, "why?". There may be a very good answer to why a school must be an entity which is separate from the community of which it is a part (a subtly different phrase than, "which it serves"). In finding, and articulating that reason, we will be better able to see what lines (if any) need to be drawn between the community and the school, and what current barriers could become somewhat - or a lot - more permeable. In what way could the school and the community not build bridges but acknowledge that they already share the same space, the same constituents, values and goals?

Question 2 - Community

This next question was specific to the participants that day at Warwick, but it still has value. I asked them, *"If we really care about working with our communities, why are there only people from schools here?*" Why was I addressing a room full of teachers? Where were the other members of their communities?

Networking among schools was a bright, shiny new idea some years ago, and now is embedded in the life of many schools, and 'the self-improving system'. This is a very good thing. No matter how good my presentation may be at a heads' conference, I am absolutely certain that the delegates learn more from each other over lunch than they do from any speaker - and research backs me up in that belief.

But if we keep doing the same things, and keep talking to the same people, even the same sorts of people, we are not going to be able to affect the radical change we need to make. We share too many assumptions, we are too comfortable, we speak the same language.

And by “other members of the community” I do not mean – or do not just mean – community leaders. I have had the slightly surreal experience, for instance, of being told that no one on the school staff speaks the community languages, while being served lunch by someone who clearly does. Or consider – in many communities, there are often one or two people whose views carry great weight. This could be a highly respected leader, but it could also be the grandmother who, while rarely leaving the house, knows everything that is going on and influences most of it. She almost certainly has children who are parents at the school, grandchildren who are pupils, and a web of family connections that bisect most parameters of the school. You may even know her name. But, when was the last time

one of those grandchildren or great nieces invited her into the school for a cup of tea? When was the last time you had any contact with her?

A lot of this is about boundaries – school and teachers here, community (and grandmothers) over there. Those boundaries have not changed much since schools were founded by a benevolent state to educate the poor. Is that still the attitude we exude, whether we think that way or not? Parents often perceive teachers as "*looking down*" at them (Harris and Goodall 2007), yet I have rarely actually run across this attitude among teachers. Should we be addressing the problem of parents that are hard to reach or the problem of schools that are hard to reach (Crozier and Davies 2007)? Boundaries – perceptions – attitudes.

There is a striking phrase in Ralph Tabberer's piece later in this publication. He challenges us, *"And if you think this is all very "middle class" for some families, try to get over your hang-up. What do you think greater social mobility means?"* I was struck by that phrase because I had been thinking precisely that – that the values being displayed were very middle class. But he is right, and this takes us back to those questions – if we want things to get better, things have to change. Axiomatic, but sometimes we need to be reminded of axia. Social mobility was an express function of education under the last government and remains so with the present – Is it in your school? Should it be? Do you want it to be? Why? And better yet, How?

Again, I do not raise this to tell you what you should do, or should think – that would be to make two assumptions that I am not at all comfortable with. The first is that there is one, single, right answer, and if experience with schools has taught me nothing else, at least I have learned that one size most definitely does not fit all. The second assumption is even more tenuous, and it is that if there is one right answer, that I know what it is and should be imparting it to others. Whereas, in fact, I have a strong, research and experience informed opinion that the solution to these issues with be slightly different for every school – and will not remain the same for individual schools but will shift and transform with time.

At this point, I ask a side question –would you want, or would you see great value in, a governing body made up entirely of teachers? It is not a facetious question - the reason for your answer may well be telling, and pertinent. If your answer was "no" (and every time I have asked heads this question, the "no" has been quite forceful) – why not? One reason generally given is that teachers are too involved, too much a part of the system – and I would agree. But this brings me directly back to my point about the folly of schools only talking to other schools, or

school-focused bodies or even school-based researchers. We have come to value pupil voice and increasingly listen to the views of young people, as well we should. So why are we not doing the same with their brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, cousins, vicars and imams, bus drivers and the rest of the community?

Question 3 – Focus

This leads to my third question - what is the focus here? (And continuing the Latin theme – focus means hearth, or hearth fire – so really I am asking, what sets you on fire?). What is the focal point of the change you want to effect? To put it another way – what is the unit of change, of improvement? Is it the individual child? Or the overall school results?

Again, I ask a supplementary but fundamental question – why are we so interested in what an individual school can achieve? This sets the school out – again – as a separate entity, claiming the learning of children as its own, very special domain.

In the 2012 Manifesto, we read, "*schools are likely to be more effective in raising standards if they draw their communities into their work…"*. English is a delightfully ambiguous language, all owing us to play fast and loose with the meaning of this phrase – who owns the work designated by the second "their"? The sense of the phrase is that it is owned by the schools – but should this be the case?

That vision, that interpretation of the phrase still has schools as the focal point - the hearth fire of learning – this is our work and we invite the community to join us in it. But no school can contain its community – surely the reverse is true.

Schools do not hold, own, or manufacture education. I posit that we need to move away from a concept of learning that is focused on the school, to one in which the school is an element of the learning process – a vital one, perhaps, but still only one among many.

The Manifesto continues, *"if they draw their communities into their work, for example by engaging parents more in school life…"*. This again sets the school as the fulcrum of learning – as the owner, if you like, of education – the school invites parents into its life. Surely this is entirely the wrong way round? What is it about the school, I ask again, which needs to be so very set apart and separate? And surely it is parents who invite the school into a journey of learning which began long before the school got involved?

And getting parents involved in the life of the school is not what makes a difference to pupils' learning; the research is fairly clear that getting parents in is not the goal. The goal is getting parents more involved in the learning of their children (See Desforges and Abouchaar 2003; Harris and Goodall 2008; Harris, Andrew- Power et al. 2009; Fan and Williams 2010; Fan, Williams et al. 2011; Goodall 2012).

This can most certainly happen in school – but it can also happen in the home (where it will make the most difference; after all, that is where young people spend 75% of their time), in the car, in the supermarket. Once again, we need to shift the focus away from the school, and toward the wider sphere in which young people move and live.

Question 4 – Community, redux

All this, of course, begs the question of how we are defining "community". We no longer mean – we no longer can mean, or should be tempted to mean – just the physical location in which pupils live. Young people today are connected to each other – and to others across the globe - in ways that are unprecedented. We may have had pen pals, we may even have had email – but none of us grew up with Twitter, none of us had so much information at our fingertips, so many connections with others there for the taking. How, then, are we defining "community", when it comes to the young people in our schools? What are our "communities"?

Again, I do not have an answer for you, and I am not sure that anyone else does. I suspect that again, this answer will be different for every school, every group, dare I say it, for every community. And it is not an answer we will find in isolation – it's an answer that won't even be found. It will, instead, be built from what we find out from each other, from everyone involved. And it will be constantly rebuilt, torn down, remodelled, like some fantastic game of Jenga.

One suggestion

Having come this long way around, I would like to suggest a radical change, that goes to the bedrock of what family and community engagement is about.

The 2012 Manifesto states as its central idea that schools are at their best when they embrace a role at the heart of their communities. Should this instead read, '*schools are at their best when they are embraced by their communities*'?

This is, as I say, a suggestion, not a diktat. It is something that must be considered, carefully. But one thing is certain. We must change the habits of a century or two of education.

Firstly, because we are failing far too many of our children – and by "we" and "our", I mean society in general, not schools alone. I have failed those children in the communities in which I live, when they do not achieve as well as they might. I have failed schools when I have not helped them to achieve as well as they could do. If we continue to do as we have done, we will continue to have a gap between the rich and the poor, between the old and the young, that is growing, rather than reducing. And I suspect that goes against the reasons that many of us have devoted our lives to education.

Secondly, because the system of education we have at the moment was designed, as I have said, by a benevolent state, to educate the children of those who could not afford to educate them otherwise, our models have not really changed all that much. Yes, we have girls and boys in the same classrooms – but we still segregate those classrooms by age, when it is patently clear to almost every teacher that children learn at individual rates, often not at all tied to the calendar - hence, the emphasis on differentiation. We still have walls around our schools. We have a clear demarcation of "*the school day*" – even when we are well aware that our pupils (and, one hopes, our staff) are accessing learning tools 24/7, at their own convenience. We still assume that "schooling", "learning" and "education" are bounded by place (the school) and time (the school day) and happen at the hands of particular people (teachers, teaching staff), even when we are perfectly well aware that none of that is true.

So, I offer a clarion call to action – and that action is, in the first and most important instance, the action of thought, of reflection, of conversation – of a return to the roots of learning, and building a new, and very different plant on those roots. Or better yet, building thousands of different plants, which change and morph and grow to suit the individual soils out of which they grow.

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Perspectives on Family Engagement

3

In this chapter Ralph Tabberer and David Kelly reflect, in their individual contributions, on the changes in thinking and practice in terms of engaging with families that might now be needed.

Ralph Tabberer

Professor Ralph Tabberer was Director General of Schools in England between 2006 and 2009. Before that, he spent six years as Chief Executive of the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA), overseeing national strategy for teacher recruitment, teacher training and the modernisation of the school workforce. Ralph has been living in the Middle East since 2009 and is the founder and Chief Executive of BBD Education.

Introduction

Financial crisis, environmental disasters, poverty, terror, suppression, war, unemployment, a crisis in the media, austerity, a crisis of political leadership, an overdose of celebrity, and growing evidence that many big companies cheat.

This is not the Millennium that most of us expected.

Yet this is the backdrop for students in our schools today. It is the backdrop for the work of Schools of Tomorrow.

We will all have our own ambitions for SoTo's future. Mine is that it finds a way to shift attention from the standard debate about school performance and the well-trodden, political path of existing school reforms. I do not mind talking about these matters, by the way. It is just that I believe that, given the world around us, there are many other parts to a school which are as, if not more, important. It is important that we address them.

The central idea of Schools of Tomorrow – that schools are at their best, when they embrace a role at the heart of their communities – is a strong one. In fact, it is not far from being a benign truism, which is why it is so important that Schools of Tomorrow goes on to build an active and distinctive agenda. In time, the detailed activities will need to be explained, they will need to be exemplified and there will be 'calls to action'.

I want to offer a few pointers, in this paper. The aspect I have been asked to address is Family Engagement.

Not just another critique

I am not going to start with a diatribe about Government priorities for schools. I believe that in a civil society, you have to render under Caesar that which is Caesar's. The Government will always set its own priorities and its own pace. After all, they take responsibility for schools and they want them to be better too.

The mistake is to allow that agenda to constrain everything else.

I will only say that it is healthy to recognise a few characteristics of current reform measures. Call them 'unfortunate tendencies' if you like.

Currently we tend to:

- look to schools to solve problems that are bigger than the school can control
- look for institutional reform – school improvements – when we should be looking at the challenge of shifting social behaviours and improving relationships
- look at reforms first for the impact they will have on student achievement rather than on broader student understanding, capabilities, values and behaviours
- allow the (important) managerial debate about making more schools 'good' or 'great' overwhelm discussion about what – and how – we should teach
- give in to the demand to fix things now rather than the need to build new strengths with sustained effort, over time.

Schools of Tomorrow must try to avoid all these traps.

The case for improving family engagement

It is not difficult to set out the case for a school to strengthen Family Engagement.

Family engagement can be conceived as education's way of promoting 'co-production'. Banks promote co-production by enabling customers to manage their own finances online. Supermarkets promote co-production when they arm shoppers with the tools to manage their own checkout. School should promote co-production as the standard way to work together to enrich young people's lives.

After all:

1. **Family engagement increases capacity and 'agency'**

   The challenges that young people face are escalating. Each school can try to fit more in, to compensate, but there comes a point where the school needs to act more smartly, too. The school is not the most important educational resource to any student – the family is involved for much more time and family influence is worth far more. The real challenge for the school is to cause families to use their time better, so that benefits will multiply. This constitutes a fundamental effort to extend school capacity and local 'agency'.

2. **Family engagement improves student results**

   For me, one of the world's best educational researchers is John Hattie, who has tracked thousands of studies into factors that positively influence student test results. In his 2008 book, Visible Learning, he set out his findings and carefully focused attention on those initiatives that generated higher-than-average gains for students. Near the top of the list was what he termed, "parental involvement". The effect size was much greater than that recorded for factors

3. such as ability grouping, team teaching, the use of computers, increased testing, individualised instruction, teacher style or school funding. The main question he posed was, if we know that factors like parental involvement make such a difference, why don't we do something about them?

3. **Family engagement corrects the balance in a school, by emphasising parental (and student) responsibilities as crucial to what the school can achieve**

   The school is there to help the family raise the child; it is not somewhere to drop the kids off and expect results. I sometimes come across teachers who enjoy a more heroic role for the school, as a place where neglected children can be rescued and help to succeed "against the odds". I am not against heroism but simply believe that it is just as heroic to engage with all parents, share insights and effort, lift expectations for everyone and give the school all the help possible to allow it to put extra in where that is needed.

It is important to note, in all this discussion of Family Engagement, that I am not talking about ways to improve attendance at parents' evenings. The goal here is to engage with families, so that parents engage even better in their own child's learning.

This is a crucial distinction. Research indicates that there is only a weak correlation between student achievement and parental attendance at school events. The strong correlation comes when parents actively engage with their child's learning, day in and day out. And not just in primary schools.

Seven possible strategies

What should schools be doing? I can think of seven approaches that I have seen work. The first three are the big ones:

i. Get a better dialogue going with parents.

Give parents practical advice about child development and child psychology, about how to raise their children, and about what works in educating their children. This can come through parents' events, briefings and online advice and it is so much better than the tired model we currently have of parents' evenings. Let's see fewer occasions when parents wait in queues to see teachers they are anxious not to offend, talking a National Curriculum language that's hard to comprehend. Let's see events with a high quality input for twenty minutes, prompting parents to ask questions that relate to their child's experience. Once you start, it's hard to stop.

ii. Go after a behavioural change at home

Explain to parents that it is their relationship with their children that makes the single biggest difference to their child's success. Try education's version of the healthy-lifestyle advice. As well as promoting the idea that every child has five helpings of vegetables and fruit a day, promote the idea that every child needs their daily educational stimulus. It might be to share a conversation over dinner ('*what did you learn today, Daddy?*'), it might be to share some time reading together ('*show me something you've been working on*'). It might be to find something specific to encourage. Encourage parents to take their children out at weekends and show them how to make a simple trip more valuable. And if you think this is all very 'middle class' for some families, try to get over your hang-up. What do you think greater social mobility means?

iii. Broaden the offer.

Tell parents about the values and behaviours you really want to develop with young people: student character, respect, a sense of optimism and responsibility, and resilience. Make sure you

have programmes that address each characteristic; don't let this drift off into rhetoric. For example, get students active with outdoor education. Get families involved in global partnerships and global issues, interacting with schools abroad. Aggressively, build a large body of parent volunteers, so you can keep energy levels high and costs low.

The second set provides the reinforcement:

iv. **Use students to get to parents.**
I have found that if you want to bring about behaviour changes in the home, the students are your best allies. Explain what you are trying to achieve, and why, and then you can usually trust them to come up with their own strategies and ideas. Student engagement is the gateway to family engagement.

v. **Track the interaction you have with all families**
If we can build data systems to track student test performance, we can borrow data practices from business to track customer relations. It is valuable to know how many parents interact regularly with the school, how many actively support their child at home, how many volunteers you can call upon, and how many parents actually turn up and help.

vi. **Throw problems to parents to resolve**
Once the number of engaged families increases, you can start to share the school's problems and challenges with them. For example, ask parents what they want the curriculum to contain. Some schools are afraid of being railroaded by a few parents but if you empower the many, you have the best antidote. Certainly, there can come times when an individual or small group will abuse the opportunities they're given but if we shut down expectations based on the behaviour of the worst, we end up with an impoverished community. Adopt the attitude: explain what you are doing, and why. Educate your community so that they make good choices.

vii. **Value and use parents' expertise**
This advice goes along with the idea that you should build you own volunteer army to aid the school. Fathers and mothers can provide skills that the school needs, careers advice, mentoring, contacts, and role models. Get into the habit of asking yourself if, instead of attaching a member of staff to a role the school wants to carry out, you can attach a parent or two.

Conclusion

I began this paper with the bad news. The Millennium has arrived and there are very few aspects of civil and business life – the political system, the justice system, health services, education, media, finance and family affairs – that have been immune to global pressures, rapid change and a breakdown in trust.

It is equally true to say that even in chaos, there is opportunity.I am increasingly convinced that it is wrong today to conceive schools of tomorrow within any single country. It is like the aircraft industry. 25 years ago, with PanAm and TWA, when it was hard for anyone to conceive of an 'industry of tomorrow' that wasn't dominated by the large US players. 15 years ago, it was hard to conceive of an industry where each nation's players (British Airways, Qantas, Turkish Airlines, Aeroflot, etc) were not at the heart of the future. Today, it is the internationals that dominate and their location is less and less important.

So, I believe it is fast becoming in the world of schools. And the sad point is that the UK has (like PanAm and TWA) the dominant insights and technology that could readily shape and guide modern schooling, yet it is not framing the issues properly to take advantage and create a sustainable future. The fresh questions we should be leading the world in answering are:

- how do we create a curriculum that is strong in scholarship, character and skills?
- how do we make the curriculum offer balance the learning of one's identity (which is increasingly diverse and mixed, rather than uni-national) while honouring your cultural origins and teaching international understanding and tolerance?
- how do we break out of a little Englander approach to one that exemplifies how to be both grounded in your origins yet multicultural?
- how do we re-balance the outdoor and extra-curricular offer, to wrench it right away from the old Union-dominated mentality and solutions of the past (which were fine for their time but now, long passed)?
- how do we embrace parents as our partners?
- how do we honestly confront the truth that the schools of tomorrow will be an Agency (of value to those with ambition and will) rather than an Instrument of government policy and state direction (in which we are destined to fail)?

Nobody expects schools to be the same in ten years as they are today. Much attention falls on the possible impact of political and technological change but, I believe, this expectation of change can be liberating. Schools themselves have an excellent opportunity to set the course of 21st century education.

My simple thesis is this. If schools can engage families, they can make themselves bigger. If they are bigger, they can address more.

They can take on the challenge of becoming more successful, in every sense. They can embrace the challenge of defining, and then delivering, the broader and deeper education that befits students today.

I sincerely believe that this is what most people in the community want and expect of schools.

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David Kelly

David Kelly is currently Director of Leadership+Innovation, specialising in leadership development and coaching, and focusing on collaboration, partnership development, and leadership of innovation and change.

Previously he worked for eight years at the National College for School Leadership, designing and delivering leadership development programmes focused on building effective partnerships and collaboration in the education and children services system.

Prior to that, David led projects with the CBI,the Department for Education and DT1, having spent 17 years as a director of a specialist international manufacturing company.

Do we now need a new language for engagement that will re- galvanise schools to collaborate with communities and families in a more equitable and sustainable way?

The language we use to articulate what we do mostly describes and proscribes the actions we then take, as well as affirming these actions and behaviours as the appropriate ones to adopt.

This then becomes the norm, and limits us in our aspirations and thinking in order to break out of the box we have placed these actions in. Is this the current inertia that describes how many schools tackle 'parental engagement' today? Although mostly believed to be seen as a 'must have', has 'engaging with parents' become just an adage for a school's strategy ('must do'), rather than being at the centre of innovative approaches to providing inclusive high quality learning?

Evidence suggests that a symbiotic and successful education system is best co-produced by the state, parents and young people working together. The greater the equity and harmony there is between these three constituent parts at the micro level, the more likely there will be better outcomes for children, young people and their families. Engagement then is only the first step towards building a more coherent symbiotic learning system. Empowerment and co-production moves this agenda to new levels.

Charles Leadbeater and Annika Wong (2010) have offered a radical model for education innovation, which urges us to move education systems further towards 'disruptive formal and informal innovation' settings – reinventing schooling. This is a significant challenge for conventional schools here in England at this time. But we might try to adopt this approach for the way in which we work with parents, young people and their communities so that we can co-produce new opportunities and contexts to learn in (in and outside the school) that are wholly collaborative and co-constructed.

So, firstly we might need a new way of talking about how far families are involved in all aspects of education – a language that reflects an authentic role for families in schooling, and for schooling in families and communities. I suggest that we should be talking more about collaboration, empowerment, involvement and the co-design of learning, and move the conversation into an equitable space between two groups of experts – parents and teachers- considering a wider set of needs for whole cohorts of young people. This will inevitably mean that the partnership contract between schools and parents will need to be rewritten using a more equitable language. Just as a great deal of accepted beliefs and behaviours around the consumer model are being re-engineered and even abandoned, so should our overall approach to enabling parents to better access, understand and contribute to the curriculum and pedagogy that schools offer.

This raises some fundamental questions about how well equipped the teaching profession is to enable and lead a different but equitable dialogue with parents and communities that might lead to better co-production of learning. Just as the health service is now finding that their target driven customer service model (expert service supplied to non-expert clients) has been failing on basic levels of patient care, do schools need to re-consider how well equipped they are to engage with parents and communities in a way that is both equitable and enabling and raises standards?

This then raises some fundamental questions:

1. How well equipped are schools and teachers to have authentic adult to adult conversations and collaborations with all types of parents and families to ensure young people are best ready to learn? Is the system doing enough at teacher entry level through to middle leadership to develop this essential aspect of the professional educator? This requires our professionalism and continuing professional developments. to include adult learning and leadership behaviours as well as effective pedagogy. Are we building this in?

2. Do we need to seriously re- consider when is the right time and where is the right place to start this collaborative approach, and be real about how parents see schools in terms

of a modern day family life, rather than expect communities and parents to 'come around to our place' all the time? For example, should schools be filling empty high streets and local arcades with 'drop in' before and after school learning centres, open to all as informal neutral spaces to build trust and co-construct personalised education strategies?

3. How do we authentically build on the notion of 'co-production', and at the same time change to a shared language, learning, values and aspiration strategy – what domain should we place our interactions with parents in when the traditional customer /consumer model is moving past its sell-by date?

4. Should we apply then a more radical and innovative slant to Ralph Tabberer's seven strategies?

Conceivably this might mean that we:

- Build whole community conversations with parents and others that are unconditional and on neutral ground. Genuine dialogue is, after all, a two way conversation. Schools need to listen more to parents and what they say about their child and the context of his or her life, and see themselves less as advisers or experts on parenting and more as facilitators of collaborative ways to access new learning opportunities.

- Changing a young person's behaviour is a partnership between parents, children, schools and communities, and starts with shared approaches to understanding the aspirations, context and well-being of young people in the round.

- Co-develop the offer and involve parents in its delivery – entrust children, parents and their communities to take on more in areas where expert knowledge is not required.

- Go to parents in partnership with students and make this a three way conversation. After all, schools have adult to adult responsibilities too!

- Track the well-being data in order to broaden and widen the offer out into the community where parents can better join in the dialogue and contribute to a wide range of activities on their terms.

- Empower parents more to co-design the curriculum from their child's perspective, so that it reflects better the context in which learning really can take place, in as well as outside of the school's limited time and space.

- Use parental expertise in all its manifestations, but empower through enabling parents to value the school by sharing in its leadership and function and facilities.

Changing our language and our approach to parents and communities in the end requires us to change our own behaviours, and to re-consider not just how we lead in schools but how we need to lead and be led in communities. At this time our eye might be off this crucial part of the system, as schools focus more and more energy re-structuring and building new school to school alliances. But this process of re-alignment also offers new and creative opportunities for schools to build social enterprise models of partnership that place families and communities and their aspirations back nearer to the centre. Once this begins to happen everyone starts to talk the same language and whole communities become expert and enthusiastic educators.

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Perspectives on Community Engagement

4

In this chapter Richard Gerver opens up thinking about the wider elements of community engagement.

In a second paper, Andrew Hobbs reports on some early findings of SoTo research to suggest why the need for wider engagement increases as the effects of globalisation spread, and illustrates this with an example of curriculum development at Goole High School.

Richard Gerver

Richard Gerver is one of the world's foremost thinkers on education, leadership and change. In 2005, he was judged the best head teacher in the UK, after turning a failing school into a global innovation success story. Since then, he has become one of the world's most celebrated speakers and a best-selling author, helping governments around the world to shape education policy and major organisations to make the most of their talent.

In the hysteria that tends to follow any significant publication on education by the OECD, and in particular PISA, so much important information gets lost. Too much debate, and often dogma, is based on the frankly deeply flawed international comparator league tables. It is clearly impossible to compare China with the UK; we are in different places in our economic journeys, China is in the heart of the industrial revolution, we are post-industrial; China only allows one child per family, there are 50 to 60 children in class groups, the curriculum is taught not learnt, and the focus is on preparing students for fixed jobs that require consistency, technical excellence, stamina and discipline; it is a system of control not empowerment; tell Chinese students something, they'll process it immediately; ask them for an opinion and it may take longer!

It is no accident that China is now beginning to look to change its system in order to feed the more enterprising future it will need to develop itself as a sustainable economy. That process is well advanced in Shanghai. In Finland, there is a very narrow socio-economic gap, a tiny population, no private schools or complex funding and control structures and a de-politicised education policy structure - oh, and a commitment to the professionalism of teachers. Interestingly though, despite what the OECD headlines suggest, the UK uses education far more successfully to close the socio-economic gap than almost any other country in the world.

Talk to the lead researcher at OECD, Andreas Schleicher, and he will tell you that the real talking point, the clear areas of focus, should be that of the two common strands that the world's most dynamic education systems have in common. They are both about collaboration.

The OECD findings clearly demonstrate that systems driven by competition are simply not as successful as systems driven by partnerships and cooperation. Given the current political climate in England, this is a little surprising and perhaps more than a little worrying. The onus therefore falls on schools and school leaders to ensure that collaboration is not crushed under the weight of structural and systemic reform.

The second finding is that those most successful states have all moved away from content-driven curricula in favour of competencies-driven education, focused on the development of the whole child and those skills and attributes some are pleased to write off as liberal nonsense. Sadly this isn't exclusive to England - countries such as Sweden and Australia have bowed to pressure and are moving backwards following our lead, whilst countries such as Brazil are driving forwards.

In Brazil, in an effort to reach the children living in rainforest communities, they have launched 'barge schools', which are exactly as described; they travel up and down the river areas and work hard to provide a context and purpose for learning that make the process worthwhile in the eyes of these communities and most importantly, the children. They don't teach numeracy and literacy as disconnected entities, they work with communities in helping them understand how to create an economy from their crafts and skills. By doing so of course, they teach them the fundamental core skills of reading, writing and mathematics. What a wonderful example of flexible systems designed to meet the needs of the community, not about standardisation! Interestingly since starting this kind of work, Brazil has become one of the most dynamic countries in increasing the numbers of students entering tertiary education.

Talk to organisations such as Google and they will tell you that it is those 'soft skills' that are the hard currency of the 21st Century. In Schools of Tomorrow we need to commit to exploring methodologies not only in terms of the delivery of these skills but how we can create powerful tools of accountability for their development. In India, the country's largest media organisation, Zee, has opened hundreds of new schools to offer a more holistic approach to education based on enterprise and individual talent identification. This is because they are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit young people who have been through the traditional education system. That is a fantastic process leading to real accountability. Are we educating employable citizens?

I believe that, in addition to parents, there are three key groups within our community, with whom we need to develop better partnership and co-development opportunities in order to find powerful solutions for the challenges we are setting ourselves:

1. Collaboration across agencies

I will not discuss inter-school partnerships here except to say that we must nurture them, so that they can continue to be a powerful stimulus for professional learning, support and development. But there must also be a continued emphasis on inter-agency involvement, despite the hard and soft political difficulties. We need to explore the potential of partnerships with charities and social enterprises, sports groups and arts organisations, that have a genuine mutuality of benefit.

I have always been moved by the example of the elementary school in Oklahoma and the old people's home next door. They jointly funded the building of a communal annex between the buildings in order to create a new, open space. That initial partnership grew and soon the folks in the home were sitting in the space, reading with the children. Unsurprisingly, it had a positive impact on the children's reading skills. Perhaps surprisingly though, it had an unplanned impact on the ageing reading buddies; the level of prescribed medicines dropped... dramatically.

I also remember sitting at a meeting with the wonderfully provocative artistic director of The South Bank Centre, Jude Kelly, who has been a passionate advocate of community education since her involvement in the 1999 All Our Futures report. She challenged the assorted attendees, people from the arts sector, politics and industry, by asking how many of them had any meaningful involvement with children other than their own. The answer was predictably, not many. Jude was allowed to issue that challenge, as the work she has done at the South Bank, and the way she has driven the centre into supporting local schools and their pupils, has been an outstanding success. Students regularly work as interns during the school week, in jobs designed to support the school curriculum but particularly rich in context and experience. As well as providing powerful learning opportunities for the students, it provides the centre with increased staffing in a time of severe funding problems; genuine mutuality at work.

The benefits of working this way are numerous but I am fascinated by the social impact on the students; their growing awareness, values, aspirations and sense of community worth.

2. Business collaboration

This has surely got to be the most under-developed partnership opportunity of all. It is only in the last few years, since I have had the opportunity to work with diverse corporate sector organisations that I have realised just how generic are the issues that we think are unique to us, in particular the drive for the development of human capital. Everyone from Morgan Stanley to Google, Microsoft to Harrods, is juggling with the same challenges we are in education; systems that stifle innovation, punitive performance management systems, and new initiative burn out to mention a few. I have learnt so much though that has stimulated my thinking as an educator and as a former headteacher, from the way Google use what they call 20% time to encourage their employees to develop new ideas and practice, to the way that Pixar insist on every member of staff, working in every department, in order to help them appreciate the corporate nature of their process and the teamwork required.

This reminded me of Rinus Michels, coach of both Ajax and the Netherlands national team in the 1970s. He developed the philosophy of 'total football'. His belief was that in order for the team to function to the highest level and to mix both efficiency and creativity, every player – no matter what their designated position on the field, or their strengths and weaknesses – should learn to play in every other position. By doing this, he created a system that did not allow players to exist in their own comfort zones. It helped them empathise with their teammates, encouraged them to feel like active stakeholders in the overall tactical lens of the team and ultimately ensured that every player had the opportunity to contribute to the way the team evolved. In some ways, his coaching married perfectly the ideals of productivity and change.

I think that the Michels approach creates a great blueprint for the way we could work with the corporate sector in order to develop a more productive partnership. It's also a dynamic and cheap form of staff and pupil development. At Grange we worked in partnership with companies such as EGG and the BBC to help us design and deliver lessons for our children. They helped us create a television studio, radio station, museum, shops and cafes so that they possessed a level of authenticity that we could never have developed alone. We were then able to run a curriculum that was all about experience, context and the value of an individual in a global society.

Most importantly of course, it was a primary school; it is simply not good enough that we should wait until our students are teenagers before we provide a link for children between education

and 'real life', and then often through the clumsy process of work placement. We must do more at the primary and early secondary phase to create authentic education that links children and young people more closely to the world beyond the gates.

When you begin relationships of this kind, the possibilities for innovation become endless. I have always believed that every secondary school should have a business incubation unit, for example, in order to provide tangible models of learning in application, real experiential opportunities for contextual development for its young people. Imagine a school where students can develop a business idea, work in the safety of a school environment with experts from within the community to work up that idea and try and launch it, a little like Young Enterprise, but on steroids.

Whilst we are at it, how about job fairs and even a job centre, not just for our current students but for their families too? What is really important, is that we provide real validity to routes to citizenship beyond the current vision of University or bust. According to Sir Richard Branson the future economic success of the UK is almost totally dependent on entrepreneurship, so new models and pathways are vital. In a way our obligation now is not to train our children to find jobs but to invent jobs for themselves.

3. Children and Young People

Too many of our children leave education feeling unsure of how they fit into society, what their individual contribution can be and most importantly their own value as well as that of others. Only by building a network to provide broad opportunities for our children in this way can we really respond to that challenge, it cannot be left to teachers alone.

As we continue to discuss the vital role of Schools of Tomorrow, and its place in the development of learning communities, we must ensure that we start by exploring both how we break down the walls around our schools and the societal belief that school is the place we drop our children when they are 3 and collect them when they are 16/18, educated! We must challenge ourselves in order to understand what role we have played to help construct that view and most importantly what actions we must take to remodel it.

And we must all help and support children and young people to find an identity for themselves as active contributors to their learning and their schools as well as to the society in which they are growing up, with experience of voice and leadership, real responsibility, roles – and risk!

All the above means we must develop the role of our schools as hubs, not just as a learning centre for our children but, more explicitly, for the education of the whole community and therefore it's social and financial wellbeing; a centre for the promotion of the arts, culture, enterprise, entrepreneurship, and a wider collaboration. We must also work much harder to find a system that provides a cohesive continuity between phases; we have so much to learn from great early years practice; when was the last time secondary colleagues spent time in an early years unit to ask what lessons can be learnt about pupil engagement and contextual learning?

What is evident to me, the more I explore the structures beyond education, is the importance of looking beyond your own environment to stimulate new thinking and real innovation. Schools of Tomorrow must use its position to promote that process of cross- pollination and challenge. We must nurture new perceptions of an education community if we are to realise the idea of organic education systems, able to lead change and address salient issues. Price Waterhouse Cooper run an induction program for the 500 graduate level recruits they employ in the US each year, it costs them $500,000 per annum. They take them to the Disney Institute in Florida for a week immersed in the delivery of Disneyworld. These are financial graduates, and PWC do it because they know it is the best possible platform for broadening the minds of those high achievers, stimulating their capacity for change and innovation. Google run something similar called Squared. Of course we do not have the money they do, but we can find the contacts and resource to develop that culture of cross- pollination.

We should keep that wonderful African expression in mind as we move forward; "*it takes a village to raise a child"*. And we should focus on how we catalyse that village so that it appreciates and takes on that responsibility.

Learning for tomorrow in a globalised world

As part of the research for SoTo's next publication and event on Identity and Learning, to be launched at Warwick University on June 4 2014, students and staff from a number of schools in different parts of the country are being interviewed about their attitudes to learning.

Some of the indications from the responses from the young people interviewed have a direct relevance to how engagement in learning can be developed both in school and beyond. Many of the young people interviewed also provided examples of the learning activities they engage in which extend beyond school.

In schools where it was evident there is a culture of learning that engages young people, this was characterised by:

- A common language of learning shared by students and staff;
- An interest, excitement and value for learning that included, but was not limited to, school work;

- Students use this language to describe their identity as learners, referring to their preferred learning styles; their ability to work independently and collaboratively; how they reinforce, and in some cases personalise, learning from lessons themselves; and how they extend their learning beyond school;
- References to and examples of support and assistance from other family members (in many cases not parents);
- Creativity and innovation demonstrated in a variety of ways, often collaboratively with others;
- The extensive use of digital technology and social media to enhance their learning in a range of imaginative ways;
- A reflective and critical way of thinking, aware of the wider, globalised world and how it is changing.

Examples of independent learning activities described by students from years 8 to 10 include;

- Writing their own blogs, including creative writing, observational diaries and criticisms of films, plays and music;
- Watching films and lectures on a range of subjects, including post-graduate science topics;
- Reading articles in specialist academic journals and following up on references;
- Producing films for their own You Tube Channel;
- Improving their jazz saxophone playing watching, listening to and analysing the interpretation of particular pieces of music to inform their own playing;
- Commenting on ‘trending’ news event on Twitter and other social media forums;
- Posting and commenting on photographs on photo sharing sites to improve techniques and skills.

From the interviews, it also appeared that staff are often unaware of many of the ways that students engage with and extend their learning. Students, when engaged with learning in this way, were very appreciative and understood the different types of support they received from their families and how they engage in learning with them in various ways. The research also suggests that many of the differences found between schools relate to the approach taken by the school, given the similarities in social context.

One important point arising from this research is how engagement in learning will be taken out of school into all aspects of their life, including the home and community. The approach taken to learning and the curriculum is, therefore, a main part of the strategy for working together with parents and others to involve all in learning together.

A final indication from the research interviews is that young people who engage in learning with others as integral part of their everyday lives may also be more aware of what is happening across the world. In essence they become better informed about, and better prepared for, continual and rapid change. They become students of tomorrow, learning together in a globalised world.

The case study of Goole High School with which this chapter concludes provides one small example of how this can be achieved and the benefits it can bring. Engaging with parents and communities is not a separate and distinct programme from other aspects of the work of the school. If students are engaged in learning so that it becomes part of their identity and language, then they will also be able to play a part stimulating an increase in engagement. They will also probably contribute innovative and creative ideas.

There will be learning taking place in all communities. In some cases it will be more evident and easier to identify. In others it might be more difficult to uncover and more surprising. Knowing and understanding more about the learning that is taking place, and where and how it is organised, will enable schools to engage with it. Faith groups, clubs and societies may be good places to start.

Where schools establish strong cultures of learning, this becomes evident in the engagement of students and staff. Communities of learning, involving parents and extended families, begin to share the responsibilities and excitement of learning, today and tomorrow.

Community Engagement through the Curriculum

Introduction

The following case study provides an illustration of how parents/carers, families and the wider community can become involved and contribute to wider learning through the curriculum of the school and how it is organised. This example of project based learning at Goole High School is part of an Innovation Unit programme called 'Learning through REAL Projects' which is an individual-level randomised controlled trial in 12 secondary schools which will test whether project-based learning can have an impact in UK schools. A variety of US research studies, including a randomised controlled trial in Arizona and California High Schools, indicate that the approach has significant promise.

Durham University will independently evaluate the impact of the approach in an English context.

Project-based learning is an approach to instruction in which all lessons and activities revolve around a single complex enquiry or project. By integrating different subjects and tying learning to real-world problems, the approach aims to make school more engaging and meaningful for pupils. By orienting all activity around a clear enquiry, it aims to make children think about and use every fact they learn in school. Crucially, the approach does not jettison traditional classroom instruction. Pupils will still spend significant time in ordinary classroom lessons; the difference is that these lessons will be clearly linked to the broader enquiry. Enquiries will be related to real world issues; they will be authentic and at the end of each project the student's own work will be shared in a public exhibition. In this way the schools seed to integrate schools with their community.

Goole High School is one of the first eight schools piloting this programme.

Using Project-based Learning at Goole High School

Wartime memories were at the centre of a project at Goole High School, which has made not only the students more reflective learners but the teachers as well.

Combining English, History, Drama and Music, Year 7 children explored the issue of conflict for the project, which culminated in a public exhibition to tie in with Remembrance Day.

The idea for the ten-week assessed piece of work 'evolved' during the project and saw the children and staff going out into the community to involve local history groups, as well as the students' own families.

As part of the ground-laying process, the youngsters also got the chance to spread their investigative wings through a visit to the Imperial War Museum in Manchester and they worked with the Goole Civic Society to explore local stories around conflicts from WWI onwards.

A focal point of their work, however, was to investigate how members of their own family or beyond had been involved in wars and to create a very personal piece of work from that. Ewan Duffy, one of the students involved, explained what this meant to him, "I interviewed my Nana about my great grandfather who fought at sea. I did not know his story before and I found it really interesting."

As part of their English curriculum, the students interviewed people from the local community who have stories to tell about their connections with wars – not just the two World Wars but conflicts since then, including those in Iraq and Afghanistan.

English teacher Katie Mallinson said: "The students wrote a narrative based on their interviews. Each narrative was matched to an emotive image and then printed and mounted for the eventual exhibition."

In History, the students researched different aspects of World War One, to create a written piece of work, which was also displayed.

In Drama and Music, students created performances for the exhibition evening about WWI, as part of which they researched recruitment songs and the use of musical instruments on the battlefield.

The exhibition, which was held at school, attracted around 100 visitors and also involved stands by the Goole World War One Society and the local branch of the Royal British Legion.

It is now the intention to mount the exhibition in other public venues around Goole during 2014 to mark the Centenary of the outbreak of WWI.

Commenting on the first project based learning (PBL) scheme they have so far tackled, English teacher Katie Mallinson and History teacher Jayne Davison said it was a great experience for them as well as the children.

"PBL helped the students become independent learners. They don't actually teach themselves but they are now very aware of how they can investigate and research topics," said Katie. "In some ways, it is making teachers more reflective as well as the students."

Jayne Davison added: "They are now able to evaluate and critique their own and other students' work. They are not happy with first drafts anymore!"

Yasmin Marritt (Aged 12) confirmed this by saying, "I really liked PBL, although I found it a bit daunting at first as I was used to teachers telling us exactly what to do. I understood a lot more by the end of it and I found the evaluation process very useful. It helped us to take everything in and remember it and made us think about the topic more. "

Project Based Learning has the potential to be developed in many different ways that engage parents, wider families and the community. The work produced by students for this project, besides being displayed in the exhibition at the school, is available well on a website for the project, which has allowed for the students' progress to be visually captured in a variety of ways.

Harry Bird (aged 12) explained why this was important to him, "I enjoyed it. I learnt lots of new skills and it helped us all to build our confidence. I gave a speech and did some acting as part of the Remembrance Exhibition evening, which I really enjoyed."

The exhibition also provides a further example of how parents and the wider community can begin to be involved in the learning that takes place in school. The testimony of one parent, who came to the exhibition to see his daughter's work illustrates this, "I am really proud of what Charlie has done and it has been great to come and see hers and her classmates' work. A lot of work has gone into this and I am really pleased that the students' families and members of the public have had the chance to see it."

Student Ewan Duffy added, "I am very proud to have my work displayed and for members of my family and other people to come and see it."

As with all such projects and ways of working, it is important that the learning skills are continued and reinforced. Yasmin, in a further comment, demonstrated how immediate and transferable this can be, "Now we are on to our next project. I really liked the way we were encouraged to get involved in making the choice of subject for it, which in the end is on Fighting for Your Rights. That is such a change to being told what we are going to study and then being taught everything by the teacher."

http://www.innovationunit.org/real-projects

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yie4q8LscBs&noredirect=1

http://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects/innovation-unit

Grappling with change

Malcolm Groves

Malcolm Groves uses this case study of Orchard School, Bristol to show the complexity involved for a school in leading change in family and community engagement.

Orchard's experience highlights many challenges and warns there is no quick fix. But it also helps with an understanding of what might be possible, and how others might work towards their own ways forward.

Orchard School Bristol

Beginnings

When Helen Holman came to the newly re-built and re-branded Orchard School towards the end of 2006, she found "*a castle, with a very wide, deep moat, and a drawbridge, and that drawbridge didn't go up very often, and only for a select few*".

Two local schools had closed down, and the students from those schools came to Orchard's predecessor school, causing turbulence across 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 makes you vulnerable to not seeing what happens out there. There was absolutely no link with any primary school or any establishment, and this bunker mentality had actually been deliberately fostered*". Reputation and results were not strong.

The school lies on the outskirts of Bristol, serving an ill-defined geographical community. According to Helen, "*We don't have a village centre, or a 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".*

Two wards have very 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*".

The school has 650 pupils on roll. Most are of White British heritage, 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 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. That could sound fun, but it's by no means fun. 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. This has huge impact".

Intentions

In this rapidly changing school community, Helen set out to fill in the moat. "*We looked for support from as many people as we could. We started being less defensive and tried to be more engaging"*.

But it was not straightforward. Helen 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 because I've had to get things right here before we could engage with the community. I would have loved to be doing this work sooner, 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".*

In Helen's view engagement does not just mean talking to people but "*actual two-way dialogue with stakeholders, shared vision and values between our school and overlapping stakeholders".*

And her rationale for engagement is clear. 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".*

However, success for students importantly includes a range of elements connected with personal and social development, particularly communication and confidence, as well as academic achievement. "*I want our children to understand that adults aren't an unknown quantity. Too many of my children don't have conversation. I want children at this school to be able to communicate and articulate with the different groups within their local community. That's a big part of it. I also want my children to understand that they have a part to play, that they don't stand as isolated teenagers. Ever since I've been in education I've been struck by how people who aren't in education are very nervous about teenagers. 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 that they can be really powerful in shaping their own futures, well, shaping their now as well as shaping their futures".*

A key element in her strategy looked beyond the individual and the school, towards a joined-up view of education across all sectors and towards working differently with parents. "*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 believe in engaging parents more, and one of our chosen routes to that is working more closely with primary schools".*

Building capacity

Helen Howard became Helen Holman's key agent in bringing about this vision. She was previously the local extended services coordinator, but Orchard took on funding her post part-time. when resourcing for extended services ceased. Her prime task initially was to support the local cluster of schools. Under her guidance this started to develop towards a more purposeful partnership. "T*he 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, we have the same community, so we really need to work a lot more closely together".*

She has worked to help the schools, Orchard and three other primary schools 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 our community and to 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 for the child from Children's Centre all the way through*".

They called this partnership '**With One Voice**'.

There was a steering group, comprising the heads from all settings and governor representatives from all settings. The stated aim of their work was to see the communities they all shared having improved aspirations, both for 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 is at all important, or beautiful, or helpful".*

For Helen Holman, "*I think we do understand that engaging with our community is the way we can establish the ground we've made, make it good in terms of the outcomes for students we've already achieved, and improve on that. I want the school, the students, the parents, the stakeholders to feel confident in this school. I think a confident school builds a confident community, and a confident community builds a confident school. We have to start with the confident school because our community isn't a confident community at the moment*".

Helen Howard's role was gradually extended to include the development of student leadership, and the development of a Parent Council. Capacity was created through a combination of opportunism and risk-taking . She was joined by a Marketing Manager, an ex-governor who was also formerly deputy editor of the local paper, and began 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, including progression and continuity.

The significance of student leadership in this development was clear to Helen Holman. *"That's having an enormous effect. It's where, I believe, 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".*

Progress

With One Voice

For a period With One Voice became bogged down in concerns about structure and governance and the impact of academy status. These took a long time to resolve, before the group began to move forward in a more unified way. "*We're have a formal constitution and applied to become a charity. The heads have taken on roles and there are more formal arrangements"*

They also agreed to share the funding for Helen Howard's post, set about organising a succession of successful programmes and events, beginning with a Community Fun Day attended by about 400 people but then growing in confidence towards more complex and focused activity.

Its most recent initiative is a long-term strategy developed with health and community partners called 'Staying Alive', designed to tackle the high levels of mortality across the community, and addressing issues of life expectancy and obesity, both for children and parents. The intention - starting with the present Y7 curriculum in science, PHSE and IT, but then rolling down into all primary schools and back up again through KS3 and 4 - is to create a spiral curriculum with long-term impact for both children and parents. Partners in the programme include the local

council using their fitness facilities, community nurses, and a farmers' market held on the Orchard site to address nutrition. *"It's in our hands. We must be brave. People don't want the message. But if we can't do it, who can*?"

Parents

Increasing parent engagement has been a challenge at Orchard. Attempts to engage more than small numbers in a formal Parent Council have stuttered. "*We know what fourteen reachable parents who come to meetings want. More homework, better reporting, more communication. But they're not necessarily representative. My other parents don't feel it's relevant to them"*.

This has led Helen to ask some fundamental questions. "*What do we mean by parental engagement? What do we want from it? We know it has to focus on learning and support outcomes for students, but if we look at it just from a professional viewpoint, we only see the tip of the iceberg. We need to understand the complexity, not just interpret with professional eyes. We're always trying to put things into a neat box. We need to use completely different model. I need to understand my parents, my community, more".*

She realised parents are not one homogeneous group, but come from many different groups. There was a need to think about what was distinctive for each of them. It meant perhaps turning things on their head a bit, to stop telling parents what the school wanted. "*We try to work alongside and enable, but who are we to say what that work should like, that our parents need to know more about maths or literacy to help children? We're still stuck in a circle of thinking we know what parents want.".*

Helen's conclusion is indeed radical. "*Instead I want to throw everything out – start to grow something you don't know what it's going to be, a bit like free knitting, if there is such a thing. We can do that now. I'm feeling more comfortable about the messiness of growth, things are in place now that make that approach more viable".*

Reflections

Progress for Orchard has become possible through Helen Holman's leadership and dogged pursuit across changing political agenda, school pressures, disappointments and successes, and through Helen Howard's skills in leadership for community engagement

Helen Holman reflects:

"This journey has got a vision, but we're having to modify as we go along. You try something and it doesn't work. It's a bit like evolution, sometimes appearing haphazard. But we're not just changing as result of chance or external pressure but because of reflection on our journey and learning. This bit of work, to increase social capital in our community and help it to be confident, is imperative for school's success".

Pace has sometimes seemed slow:

"I'm not an expert. I've been battling with community engagement for long time. We've not achieved half of what we thought, but I've perhaps modified what I thought to achieve. It's been a slower journey, even though I'm impatient for change. But maybe this has been something that has been a movement".

The results have also been unexpected:

"*We measure impact in ways hadn't expected and I have to change the ruler I use to measure those impacts. When I started, I was about raising profile of the school as positive learning community , increasing numbers, being a better school. We've done those things. But it's actually about much more than this.".*

Change has not happened as a result of one thing, or a sequence of things. Growth is not linear. Rather it has been about getting the conditions right in a number of areas. *"I sometimes think we just change one thing, but then we're also waiting for other aspects to be at right stage for next development. There's not a direct one on one relationship between what we do and the result. It's not a matter of 'do this and it causes that to happen'"*

But there is evidence of change:

"We've made our boundaries more fluid. We were isolated from our community, with low self-esteem. Now we're proud. Our self-esteem has increased as a school, for children and increasingly parents. We were a hard-to-reach school, and to an extent we still are, but we're changing. We've prepared the ground to do that work now. The confidence of parents and the community has changed to allow us to do that".

Analysis

Orchard's journey is still work in progress. It emphasises the importance of understanding the conditions for growth and the nature of leadership which makes growth possible.

The key elements in Orchard's strategy have been:

- Building organisational self-esteem and confidence;
- Improving the nature and quality of communication;
- Linking with other education providers for common purpose;
- Utilising the potential of student leadership;
- Risk-taking and investment;
- Re-thinking roles and building capacity;
- Finding the right staff - with different skills and a different style of leadership.

Some possible key messages which arise from this experience are also in evidence:

- The focus for engagement is to improve learning;
- Parents and communities are not single homogenous groups – there is a need to know and understand closely each group;
- Engagement is not a one-way street, to get the parent or the community to support the school. It is a mutual relationship of shared interest;
- Real change takes long-term commitment.

But Orchard also offers an alternative paradigm through which to understand the process of change, a paradigm of growth which does not happen in straight linear lines, but grows outwards from a nucleus in multiple ways. In this paradigm, a key task of leadership is about cultivating over time the right conditions in which growth in engagement can arise.

Leadership for change

John West-Burnham

6

In this concluding chapter, John West-Burnham consider the implications for leadership involved in re-imagining relationships between schools and others, based on trust and collaboration, in ways which result in new levels of engagement.

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The school of tomorrow, which is able, amongst other things, to re-imagine and develop new sets of relationships and engagement with its learners, families and communities, will be the product of a process of growth rooted in collaboration and cooperation.

The challenge is too complex and the stakes are too high for acts of individual social heroism, bureaucratic control or dogmatic prescription to work. However it is important to stress that cooperation and collaboration are much more than token consultation or partial inclusion. The history of human success is essentially the story of genuine and inclusive collaboration and cooperation.

Equally the history of human failure can usually be attributed to the failure to collaborate. From the earliest hunter-gatherers to the triumphs of civilizations, progress has been most rapid through collaboration. We are essentially social animals and are at our best (and sometimes our worst) when we are working for mutual benefit.

This behaviour is instantly recognisable in chimpanzees grooming one another, children building a sandcastle, or men and women laying sandbags against an impending flood. Instantly recognizable, because mutual support is built into the genes of all social animals; they cooperate to accomplish what they can't do alone. (Sennett 2012:5)

It is a myth that collaboration and cooperation involve some sort of denial of individuality or can only function in a competition free environment.

In this respect swarms in nature have taught us two lessons. The first is that, by working together in smart groups, we too can lessen the impact of uncertainty, complexity and change .

The second lesson of smart swarms is that we don't have to surrender our individuality. In nature, good decision-making comes as much from competition as from compromise, from disagreement as much as from consensus. (Miller 2010:267-268)

Perversely the history of education and schooling tends to go against this idea of collaboration. Teachers have long worked as essentially autonomous professionals; schools have always been highly autonomous institutions and pupils, their parents and other stakeholders have been subject to partial or conditional involvement. Indeed the movement from parental involvement to parental engagement is a very powerful image to reflect the nature of the challenge. Parents are highly engaged with their children, the problems seem to start when school structures, procedures and norms become involved and, possibly, compromise one aspect of engagement.

The problem with a history and culture focused on autonomy is that it means that we may lose access to one of the most powerful qualities and strategies available to human beings – collaborative working in the true sense that involves:

> "*. . . we have to learn not to be too inward looking, petty minded, and competitive. When it comes to the structure of society, for example we have to step out of the narrow confinement of looking after our relatives or our own kind.*" (Nowak 2012:283)

Collaboration and cooperation (different sides of the same coin?) are deeply rooted in what it means to be human, but that does not mean that they are automatic or easy. Matthew Taylor, Chief Executive of the Royal Society for the Encouragement of the Arts, offers an analysis of successful collaboration derived from social anthropology theory:

- From an individualistic perspective, collaboration must be seen to be in the interests of those engaged.
- From a solidaristic perspective, collaboration needs to be underpinned by trust based on sufficiently shared norms and values.
- From a hierarchical perspective, system and organisation leaders – recognising how hard it is to establish and maintain – have to enable, incentivise and support collaboration. (Taylor 2012)

Taylor argues that in almost any human context collaboration will only work to the extent to which individuals are engaged and motivated, there is trust rooted in shared norms and values and leadership prioritises collaboration as a priority. He then goes on to explore the implications and potential benefits of this broad social analysis for education:

> *At six distinct levels effective collaboration could enable a step change in the functioning of the schools system:*
>
> - *Relationships between the centre, localities and schools; which are too often characterised by suspicion, misunderstanding and resentment.*
> - *Relationships between schools; which are rarely as robust and committed as they should be.*
> - *Relationships between teachers; which are too often absent or shallow but could be the foundation for continuously improving professional practice.*
> - *Relationships between schools and other local bodies; which tend to be weak or merely transactional.*
> - *Relationships between teachers, pupils and parents; learning is still too often seen as something that is done to pupils not with them, and parents seen as reinforcers of the school's requirements of pupils.*
> - *Relationships between pupils; even though team working is vital in the modern workplace, and children can powerfully support each other, we still see schooling primarily as a process of individual endeavour and ranking.* (Taylor 2012)

One way of understanding the importance of collaboration is to see it in terms of problem solving – people come together to collaborate and cooperate in order to solve problems. Whether it is the nomadic hunter-gatherer clan working in unison in order to hunt, the different disciplines of engineering coming together to solve problems encountered in building a bridge or a group of schools working collaboratively to close the gap in achievement across the community the issue is one of joint, consensual, problem solving. It could be argued that irrespective of context, culture or era people spend most of their lives working with others to solve problems of varying degrees of significance and complexity.

Strauss (2002) offers a model of problem solving that focuses on the process issues, in particular the dynamics of relationships and the centrality of cooperative and collaborative working. For Strauss (2001 31-33) collaborative problem solving needs to be based in the following principles:

1. Problem solving is heuristic – there is no one best way and it essentially a process of trial and error.

2. Problem solving goes through stages and there is a need to recognise the need to adopt an alternative strategy

3. Problem solving skills can be learned – individuals and groups can develop a repertoire of strategies to help in the problem solving process.

4. Those involved in a collaborative problem situation need a common language, a shared vocabulary in order to communicate and engage with each other effectively.

Hansen (2009:44) offers a business perspective on collaboration in particular the advantages and disadvantages. He offers the following perspectives:

• The goal of collaboration is not collaboration but greater results.

• Leaders can achieve higher returns on investment as a result of collaboration.

• Collaboration must focus on improvement in terms of innovation, sales and customer service.

• Collaborative projects must be cost-effective and designed to make an impact.

• The barriers to collaboration must be addressed.

Success in nature, in business, in community, in health promotion, and in scientific innovation, seems to be directly related to collaboration and the ability to cooperate. It does appear to be the case that the greater the focus on innovation and creativity in an organisation the more it works through collaboration and cooperation and the less it uses hierarchy and control systems. This in turn implies a very clear sense of purpose and high levels of trust that in turn enable rich and complex networks and an openness and willingness to share.

These broad principles have been encapsulated in a theoretical perspective that is generally known as Wikinomics in which the key principle is collaboration:

> *"… the collective knowledge, capability, and resources embodied within broad horizontal networks of participants can be mobilized to accomplish much more than one firm acting alone. Whether designing an airplane, assembling a motorcycle, or analysing the human genome, the ability to integrate the talents of dispersed individuals and organizations is become the defining competency for managers and firms.* (Tapscott & Williams (2006) p18)

Implications for leadership:

- *Collaboration and cooperation must have an ethical basis that leads to shared values and norms that underpin all engagement activities.*

- *Every aspect of the relationships involved in cooperation and engagement have to be open and transparent*

- *There has to be a focus on outcomes and a clear and shared sense of purpose that leads to improvement through project-based working.*

- *The working culture has to be rooted in trust, mutual respect and reciprocity, consistency and a regard for the dignity of every individual.*

- *Working processes need to be skill-based – e.g. shared problem solving, negotiation, consensus building*

- *There has to be a common language in which everybody can participate and contribute*

- *All working processes need to be underpinned by robust review and mutual accountability.*

- *Leadership needs to be an expression of democratic processes linked to community building and the development of social capital.*

- *Collaboration and engagement must make a difference.*

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Agenda for change
The next steps

Schools of Tomorrow is committed to doing all it can to take forward the aims of the 2012 Manifesto and the resulting four-quadrant framework. This final chapter sets out our plans for 2014/15, and also how you might contribute.

We want to work with, and to learn from, all who share our goals.

Our plans for 2014/15

Next publications

We will publish Beauchamp Papers 3 and 4 to continue to build understanding and evidence around the School of Tomorrow Framework

- June 4, 2014 *Identity and Learning*
- Autumn 2014 *Wellbeing*

Leadership Development

We have established a working group to plan and launch in Autumn 2014 a development programme for leaders aspiring to lead Schools of Tomorrow.

Quality and Recognition

We have established a working group to explore how to establish criteria and credibility for some form of School of Tomorrow Quality Mark linked to validated self-assessment by schools, with a view that students have a key role to play in validation.

Learner Hubs

We will continue to find ways to involve young people directly in contributing to our work through our learner hub schools. In the coming year this work will focus on contributing to the work on quality and recognition. We expect to appoint a student ambassador to lead development in 2014-15

Curriculum for Tomorrow Today

We are establishing a small group of schools looking to rethink their curriculum for September 2015 to form a developmental network and to provide case studies of the process of change. A publication and event will follow in February 2015.

Partnerships

We will continue to develop active partnerships with organisations who share our aspirations. In particular we have in place or are developing partnership agreements to pursue joint goals with:

2020 Education

RSA Education

SSAT

Schools Linking Network

Structure and Membership

Schools of Tomorrow CIC. is a community interest company, limited by guarantee and owned by our members, who elect a council each year. The council are responsible for appointing the directors of the company. and for advising the directors on the strategic development of the company.

Become involved

What can you do to help?

Your Personal Check List Of Actions

☑ Support the 2012 Manifesto

Visit our **website** to sign up to it.

☑ Join our mailing list

Free regular update mailing for all Manifesto supporters.

☑ Become a member

You can do this through the **website** or by emailing us at **info@schoolsoftomorrow.org**

☑ Make a donation

You can do this through our **website**. Every little helps us. We make no profit, and rely entirely on voluntary input for all our work.

☑ Work with us

Consider joining one of our working groups, but we'd also be pleased to discuss other ways you might be able to help out.

Contact us

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