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Leading & Managing

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Editorial

According to Bush (2010), leadership is back in focus in the 21st century, in particular the impact of quality leadership on the enhancement of student learning outcomes. Student outcomes have always been the focus of school improvement initiatives, however the field of interest is changing from principal leadership to a broader based leadership capacity in the school. Many of the articles that currently cross our desk are evidence of this trend. Significant publications, for example, of Elmore (2000), Lambert (2002), Crowther et al. (2002), Leithwood et al. (2004, 2006) and Robinson (2007) attest to the shifting ground. Elmore, Lambert and Crowther (to name a few) have moved the dialogue from one leader to whole school leadership capacity. As Lambert (2002, p. 37) points out, '[w]e no longer believe that one administrator can serve as the instructional leader for an entire school without the substantial participation of other educators'. Leithwood et al. (2006) published significant research establishing that 'school leadership is second only to classroom teaching as an influence on pupil learning' (p. 4). It is the quality of teaching that has direct impact on enhancing student learning, especially in reducing the gap between highest and lowest achievers. Therefore, the focus has moved to leadership practice, not just of the principal but of others in the school who practice leadership. Not surprisingly, therefore, as we put together this edition of L&M, many of the articles that crossed our desk related to issues around effective leadership development, changing leadership roles and the impact of leadership on learning.

The first group of articles focuses on the professional development of school leaders. Russell and Cranston report on the effectiveness of the professional development offerings for principals and aspiring principals of one large education system in Australia. Findings indicated that the programs offered were not impacting on improvements in school or student learning outcomes and the authors propose a number of recommendations for improving the effectiveness of such programs.

Bezzina's article explores leadership development from another aspect, that is, the need to put in place leadership development programs that address the disincentives to applying for principalship. Making principalship more attractive is an imperative in the short to mid-term due to the need to recruit 'sufficient capable principals to meet the anticipated levels of demand due to the ageing of the current cohort of school leaders' (p. 19). Appositely, is the issue of principal retirements that Marks addresses in his article. The impending large number of retirements presents educational systems with the duel challenge of a shortage of principals and a loss of corporate knowledge. He raises the questions: are these 'late-career principals a valuable resource for extending the leadership capacity available for school systems?' Do they wish to retire 'moving from full-time work to full-time leisure' or do these principals represent a changing transition to retirement dynamic 'which is more interested in the concepts of staying-on and/or refocusing?' (p. 31).

The emergence of ICTs and the use of the Internet in schools bring new roles for middle level leaders and teacher leaders. In the next two articles, both Keane and Katyal explore the nature and potential impact of these roles in schools and on teaching and learning. These articles will provide

interest to those who are seeking information and dialogue related to the growing need for leadership in the area of ICTs in schools and the influence this leadership may have on classroom pedagogical practice.

According to Lambert (2007, p.4), sustainable schools are those that have high leadership capacity, that is, 'a broad based skilful participation in the work of leadership'. This is related in the school improvement literature as the need for a whole school approach. It is a theme reflected in two of the articles in this edition. Firstly, Albright, Clements and Holmes report on preliminary findings of a Sustainable Whole School Renewal and Innovation Pilot Project aimed at addressing the problem of short-term thinking and acting or presentism. Then, Golding, Gurr and Hinton report on the role of the principal in creating a Thinking School and the development of a framework for leading a thinking school. The framework has wide applicability to either enhance curriculum and pedagogy in schools that are doing well as well as those that are underperforming and 'want a rigorous, high expectation and contemporary way to improve student learning' (p. 91).

An understanding of the term Leadership for Learning has been described by MacBeath and Dempster (2009). They posit five principles that underpin the term, namely, distributed leadership; a focus on learning; creation of conditions favourable for learning; creation of a dialogue about leadership and learning; and the establishment of a shared sense of accountability. Marsh's article picks up this term and he explores the conceptions of Leadership for Learning (LfL), an approach he claims as a 'liberating process where whole school communities actively engage in purposeful interactions that nurture relationships focused on improving learning' (p. 107).

The 'space' has now opened up for a new look at leadership and as we move into the conceptual age (Pink, 2008) one thing we can be certain of is that there will be new challenges for leadership and leadership in schools. It is on this theme that the 2012 ACEL National Conference will focus and begin to explore the implications for schools.

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Leadership for Creating a Thinking School at Buranda State School

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ABSTRACT: This article explores the role of principal leadership in creating a thinking school. It contributes to the school leadership literature by exploring the intersection of two important areas of study in education – school leadership and education for thinking – which is a particularly apt area of study, because effective school leadership is crucial if students are to learn to be critical and creative thinkers, yet this connection has not be widely investigated. We describe how one principal, Hinton, turned around an underperforming school by using critical and creative philosophical thinking as the focus for students, staff and parents. Then, drawing on the school leadership literature, the article describes seven attributes of school leadership beginning with four articulated by Leithwood and colleagues (2006) (building vision and setting direction; redesigning the organisation; understanding and developing people; managing the teaching and learning program), and adding three others (influence; self-development; and responding to context). This framework is then used in a case study format in a collaboration between practitioner and researchers to first explore evidence from empirical studies and personal reflection about Hinton's leadership of Buranda State School, and second to illuminate how these general features of school leadership apply to creating a thinking school. Based on the case study and using the general characteristics of school leadership, a framework for leading a thinking school is described. Because the framework is based on a turnaround school, this framework has wide applicability: to schools that are doing well as an indication of how to implement a contemporary approach to curriculum and pedagogy; and to schools that are underperforming and want a rigorous, high expectation and contemporary way to improve student learning.

Introduction

This article explores a case study of leadership for creating a thinking school. It contributes to two important areas of study in education, school leadership and education for thinking, by exploring

the essential intersections between these areas. This is a particularly apt area of study, because, as we argue in this article, effective school leadership is crucial if students are to learn to be critical and creative thinkers. Yet this connection has not been investigated in the literature. We begin by describing a school leadership framework, and then use this to analyse and explore Hinton's work in leading a thinking primary school. This case study brings together diverse evidence sources in a novel and illuminating manner, including analysis and exploration of formal and informal longitudinal observation of Lynne Hinton's leadership at Buranda State School, interviews with staff and students, practitioner reflection, previously published studies of the school by the authors (Hinton, 2003, 2005; Golding, 2007), as well as other studies of the school (Lindgard, Hayes et al., 2003; Lindgard, Ladwig et al., 2001). We finish by outlining a framework that describes the specific way leadership can support the development of a thinking school.

What We Know about School Leadership

Contemporary literature on school leadership points to three conclusions. Firstly, leadership is important. In a review of research on how leadership influences student learning, Leithwood et al. (2004, p. 70) concluded that:

Of all the factors that contribute to what students learn at school, present evidence led us to the conclusion that leadership is second in strength only to classroom instruction. Furthermore, effective leadership has the greatest impact in those circumstances (e.g. schools 'in trouble') in which it is most needed. This evidence supports the present widespread interest in improving leadership as a key to the successful implementation of large-scale reforms.

This is an important statement – 'leadership is second in strength only to classroom instruction' in terms of factors that influence student learning. Building on this, there is also strong evidence that school leadership has a significant impact on classroom instruction and for developing teacher capacity (Gurr, Drysdale & Mulford, 2007; Gurr, Drysdale, Ylimaki & Moos, 2011; Hallinger, 2003; Murphy, 1990; Murphy & Hallinger, 1992; Robinson, 2006).

Furthermore, because the review from Leithwood et al. (2004) was primarily focused on research evidence about principals, the conclusion that school leadership is important is essentially a statement about the importance of principal leadership: 'Educational leadership, our review also makes clear, comes from many sources, not just the "usual suspects" - superintendents and principals. But the usual suspects are likely still the most influential' (p. 70). Which leads to the second conclusion: principals are the key leaders in schools.

The third conclusion is that there is now strong agreement about the key characteristics of school leadership. Leithwood et al. (2006) provide a concise and useful account of leadership in schools. Leadership involves:

- **Building vision and setting direction.** Leaders establish a common purpose through building a shared vision, fostering acceptance of group goals, and demonstrating highperformance expectations.
- **Redesigning the organisation.** Leaders establish supportive work conditions, which includes building collaborative cultures, restructuring the school, building productive

relations with parents and the community, and connecting the school to its wider community.

- Understanding and developing people. Leaders develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions in staff that are needed to achieve school goals. Included here are practices associated with providing individualised support and consideration, fostering intellectual stimulation, and modelling appropriate values and behaviours.
- Managing teaching and learning. Leaders enhance and protect the teaching and learning program. They manage the staffing of the teaching program, provide teaching support, monitor school activity, and buffer staff against distractions from their work.

Although these broad categories and associated practices do not cover everything, they are accepted as core practices of school leadership. To complement this account, we add three further aspects. Leadership also involves:

- A process of influence. Educational leadership is largely an indirect influence process because to accomplish student learning outcomes educational leaders have to work through, or influence the work of, others (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003, 2005). For example, in a model of successful school leadership based on 14 Australian multiple-perspective case studies, Gurr, Drysdale and Mulford (2006) found that school leaders tend to exert most of their influence at the level of developing school direction and teacher capacity, rather than directly working with students. Yet there are also examples of 'instructional leaders' acting with direct influence on student learning (Gurr, Drysdale & Mulford, 2007).
- Self-development. Leaders are concerned to continuously enhance their skills and knowledge (Gurr, Drysdale, Ylimaki & Jacobson, 2011). They have a love of learning and participate in whatever formal or informal programs are available, as well as reflect on their own practice.
- Responding to context. School leaders improve student learning through productive responses 'to the unique demands of the contexts in which they find themselves' (Leithwood et al. 2004, p. 10), such as government and organisational policies; school characteristics such as size, facilities and resources; demographic and socio-economic factors; community resources; and, stakeholder interest and priorities (Gurr, Drysdale & Mulford, 2006). For example, Leithwood and Steinbach (2003) argued that successful leadership of schools involves working productively with the family context through enhancing family social capital and educational culture.

These seven characteristics of school leadership provide a framework through which we explore the leadership of a successful school principal as she developed a thinking school, and which will lead to the development of a specific framework for leading a thinking school. We will set the context of the case study, and then discuss each characteristic in the following order: 1) setting direction, 2) influence, 3) developing self, 4) developing people, 5) managing teaching and learning, 6) developing the school, and 7) responding to the wider context.

Lynne Hinton: A case study of leadership for a thinking school

Lynne Hinton was the principal of Buranda State School, a primary school in Brisbane Australia, from 1996 to the end of 2009. This article refers to Lynne's contribution to the school from 1996 to 2007.

When Lynne arrived in 1996 the school was part of the federally funded 'Disadvantaged Schools Program' and the later 'Special Programs School Scheme', and had been since the inception of the program in the eighties. It was designated such because of the low socio-economic area in which it was set (as identified by census data). From 1996 the children's results had moved from below the state means as identified in the Year 6 tests to well above, where they remained. Over time, the composition of families attending the school has changed (due to gentrification of the surrounding neighbourhood, close proximity to the city of Brisbane, and the attraction of the school to families who live outside of the immediate area, especially since the construction of a nearby busway) and in 2011 it could now be described as a more advantaged community, although still with many families experiencing social and economic disadvantage. Lynne's achievements are well summarised in the citation she received in 2007 when she won the Queensland University of Technology Outstanding Alumni Award for Education:

Lynne's gift for education and her dynamic leadership have turned Buranda into an exemplary primary school. This success has been underpinned by the teaching of Philosophy to all students, with particular emphasis on critical, creative and caring thinking. Lynne's innovative approach to primary education has generated much interest among educators. She has influenced educational practice in schools in Europe, North America, Asia and the Middle East as well as in Buranda through presentations, training, and an on-line course on teaching philosophy (with rights also sold to a US university). Lynne's work has been recognised with a National Excellence in Teaching Award, a National Award for Outstanding Contribution to Quality Schooling in the Area of Leadership, and in 2006, a Premier's Smart State School Leadership Award. Lynne holds Bachelor and Master degrees in Education from QUT.

(www.alumni.qut.edu.au/awards/alumniawards/2007summary.jsp)

In summary, in her time as principal, the school moved from being a small, declining, inner city primary school where students were generally disengaged and achieving poor academic results, to a thriving school with outstanding academic results, well above state and national means in all aspects of literacy and numeracy (Hinton, 2003). This was achieved by transforming Buranda State School into what can be described as a successful 'thinking school' where educating for thinking is a primary value, and where students think clearly, reason well and make sound judgements, and become reflective, thoughtful, well-rounded and responsible young people.

Leadership for a Thinking School: Enculturating and reculturing

In this section we argue that school leadership is essential for creating a thinking school. We then illustrate this essential link through the case study of Buranda State School.

A thinking school is one in which students are good thinkers, for example, they ask questions, give reasons, and invent alternatives. It is a school 'in which several forces - language, values, expectations, and habits – work together to express and reinforce the enterprise of good thinking'

(Tishman, Perkins & Jay, 1995, p. 2). Everything about the school encourages, promotes, facilitates, expects, demands and empowers good thinking from staff, students and parents.

We like to imagine a school in which every classroom is a vibrant culture of thinking, a place where critical and creative thinking are valued and encouraged from all quarters. And we like to imagine how the qualities of these thinking classrooms might be woven into the culture of the school itself, so that the entire school reflects a culture of thinking, from the conversations in the cafeteria to the bulletin boards on classroom walls. (Tishman, Perkins & Jay, 1995, p. 185)

Creating a thinking school is not as simple as teaching a few thinking skills. This approach merely leads to students knowing how to think but does not make them good thinkers (Golding, 2006b; Harpaz, 2007). Students learn to be thinkers through enculturation and immersion in a thoughtful culture of practice (Perkins, Jay & Tishman, 1993; Tishman & Jay, 1993; Tishman, Perkins & Jay, 1995), so creating a thinking school requires enculturation of the value and behaviours of thinking. If a school demonstrates it values thinking, and encourages students to think then the students tend to become thinkers. If a school demonstrates it does not value thinking - perhaps by discouraging questions and alternative suggestions and by requiring only answers, not reasons and explanations - then teachers and students will concentrate on whatever the school does value (grades, uniform, good behaviour ...), to the detriment of thinking. Paraphrasing this: thinking is caught more than taught, and not just caught from the teachers, but from every aspect of the school environment. If students are to learn to be good thinkers, the whole school needs to support and encourage quality thinking so that the school becomes what Costa (1992) describes as 'a home for the mind'.

Because enculturation is so important for educating for thinking, a thinking school must be concerned with the total 'message systems' (Bernstein, 1973, p. 228) and all the 'cultural forces' that give it 'its unique flavour and force' (Ritchhart, 2002, p. 146). Time and opportunities must be given to developing thinking (Ritchhart, 2002). The curriculum, pedagogy, evaluation and assessment in a school (Bernstein, 1973, p. 228) as well as the routines and structures, interactions, relationships and the physical environment, must encourage and enculturate thinking (Ritchhart, 2002). The whole ethos or culture of the school must promote thinking.

As Fullan argues, and we agree, school leaders play the key role in enabling educational change by setting up the conditions for education change, both directly and indirectly (Fullan, 2001; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991). We believe this holds even more strongly in the case of creating a thinking school because this requires a change to the whole school ethos, essentially a reculturing of the school (Schein, 2004), and it cannot occur without the direct and indirect influence of the school leaders. According to Hoban (2002, pp. 35-36), school restructuring or educational change 'is a complex process involving many interconnected elements that have a dynamic effect on each other'. These elements include school leadership, teachers' lives, learning and their work, and school culture, structure, politics and context (Hoban, 2002). We argue that particularly in the context of creating a thinking school, school leaders have the essential role to play in orchestrating the interconnected elements and causing this educational change. Put another way, there needs to be alignment between all of the aspects of a school - institutional, instructional, and physical - and it is the principal that plays the key role in achieving this alignment.

The reculturing necessary for creating a thinking school is caused by the principal (in the Aristotelian sense of cause) where they directly cause change, support change and sustain others to make the changes. Without the principal acting as cause in these ways, a school cannot develop as a thinking school. However, school leaders cannot cause the needed change only by telling their staff what to do, or making them do particular things, as this would be antithetical to a thoughtful culture. Furthermore, this reculturing takes time, years in fact, and so a persistent and flexible principal, willing to stay the course, is essential for creating a thinking school (Fullan, 2002, 2006; Kotter, 2007).

In the rest of this article, we examine how Lynne Hinton developed Buranda State School as a thinking school, organising the case study according to the seven areas of leadership described earlier.

1) Setting direction

In order to improve student outcomes, Lynne led the teachers of the school to co-create a new, shared vision (Hinton, 2003, p. 49). Together, they decided to explicitly teach their students to think clearly and well, and to build the education of thinking into the structures of the school so it was central to all teaching and learning.

Not all conceptions of education and learning, not all visions for a school, will allow a school to become a thinking school. To achieve the culture necessary to create a thinking school, the principal and teachers need to adhere to an educational philosophy where thinking is the means towards learning, and growth in thinking is an essential educational objective. Lynne achieves this by placing thinking at the heart of learning, with a school-wide constructivist approach to learning. This is summed up in the following quote, one of Lynne's favourites: 'The school's central focus must be on the intellect, on helping each young student learn to use his or her mind resourcefully and well' (Sizer, 1992, p. 142). In other words, at Buranda State School, learning is seen as the result of thinking.

The substantial form of this vision was philosophical inquiry, and in particular, the adoption of the Philosophy for Children program across the school (see for example, Cam, 1997a, 1997b; Lipman, 1981, 2004). The program used at the school is a modification of Lipman and colleagues' Philosophy for Children program, with modifications for the Australian context by Cam and others. Philosophy for Children was chosen because of the strong impact of philosophical inquiry and problem-solving on the education of thinking (Lipman, 1988, 2003; Lipman, Sharp & Oscanyan, 1980; Paul, 1994). The aim of Philosophy for Children is for students to make sense of self, the world, and the connections between them. This is a different epistemic aim from getting the 'right answer', and cannot be met by simply getting answers to factual questions. Achieving this aim requires students to invest and engage all their cognitive abilities. In order to make sense of something, for example, students must question, explore possibilities and alternatives and think through connections and distinctions. Every child at Buranda State School participates in philosophy classes, where they learn reasoning and good thinking. Buranda teachers also take a philosophical approach in all areas of teaching and learning, and problem-based inquiry underlies the learning and teaching in all curriculum areas.

2) Influence

The primary means Lynne had for implementing this vision is through indirect influence. She implements the vision by demonstrating and modelling her practical, every-day commitment to the value of philosophy and thinking. As Levin and Riffel (2000) discuss, the senior personnel in a school must value and hence model what they want their students to do because much of the culture of a school emanates from the behaviour of leaders. The school leadership helps to create the overall ethos of a school through what they personally model and what they promote (Gurr, Drysdale & Mulford, 2007; Leithwood et al., 2004; Schein, 2004). If a principal's actions show that they are not really interested in good thinking, then regardless of what is said to be the school's goal it will be difficult to create a thinking school. If school leaders have, for example, an authoritarian leadership style stressing teacher compliance, then it will be very difficult to promote independent thinking.

Lynne influences the thinking culture of the school by daily demonstrating her passion for thinking and her expectation that everyone else will do the same, thus providing a model of good thinking that staff and students emulate. Comments from staff show she models a range of thoughtful behaviours, skills and dispositions that influence the culture of the whole school such as: sharing her thoughts, passions and questions with other staff and students; viewing mistakes as learning experiences; listening and considering alternatives before acting in problem situations, and then always giving reasons for decisions made to adults and children.

She also employs a leadership style consistent with the fostering of independent thinking. As part of her decision-making she encourages dialogue and collective thinking among staff and students and between these groups. She is interested in the thinking of others and asks teachers and students what they think rather than telling them what to think. This is not 'chatting' but rigorous inquiry where she both builds on and challenges the views of others.

3) Developing self

Although developing self is a general feature of successful school leaders, it is especially important in the case of developing a thinking school, as the principal must model learning to be a thinker and learner in order to indirectly influence the ethos of the school.

Lynne sees educational leadership as a form of inquiry. In particular, her principalship at Buranda State School can be seen as an inquiry into the central question: How could she facilitate the learning of a whole school, not just one class? She avoided the 'leader as expert' model and encouraged sharing and co-construction of ideas, where the staff, herself included, became a community of inquiry (discussed further below). She had the courage to take risks and to learn from what resulted - not least of which was to take a subject traditionally reserved for only the most abstract thinkers in universities and implement this across a primary school, but also to say 'no' to all the other demands placed on a school leader that could have distracted her and her school. Although she realises that she has learned a great deal compared to what she knew before, she still sees herself as a learner along with her teachers and students, with all the humility that this involves (Golding, 2007). As she sees it, Buranda State School is a learning school, although 'some learners are responsible for improving the learning of others' (Golding, 2007, p. 10).

4) Developing people

Lynne had a clear understanding, from the outset, that success would be achieved only if a serious, consistent, ongoing, long-term commitment was made to teacher development. Teachers improved their own practice through trial and error. They undertook extensive professional development activities, on-going reflection, presented papers at conferences, and willingly shared their expertise with one another, and with other schools. The process of training and development also emphasises the need for teachers themselves to learn to become good thinkers before they can teach good thinking, and that a safe, supportive environment is needed for this to happen. Lynne has consciously enabled her teachers to operate as a community of independent learners and thinkers.

The result is a group of teachers with expert knowledge of, and passion for, the praxis of educating for thinking. They know about philosophical teaching and they know how to teach children to inquire and to think. They engage in a continuous conversation about learning, thinking, students, programs and ways of improving their own practice.

Consistent with the vision for the school, Lynne has encouraged the staff at Buranda State School to see their most important role to be the educators and developers of thinkers. The outcome they seek is students who not only know how to think, but who *are* thinkers, so the teachers cannot do the thinking for the students, and instead must become thinking coaches, facilitators and guides (Golding, 2005; Ritchhart, 2002). Their job is to encourage thinking, to draw it out of students, to praise it and reward it when it occurs, and to set up routines, structures and scaffolds to enable students to be good thinkers. They help the students to learn how to think for themselves.

As thinking coaches and facilitators, teachers use language that promotes good thinking (see Costa, 1992; Ritchhart, 2002). As discussed under 'Influence', Lynne models this in her own day-to-day activities, so that now it is common for teachers and students to say such things as: 'I wonder...', 'Let's think about this for a moment...', 'What are your reasons for thinking that?', 'Can you clarify what you mean?', and 'If that is true, what else follows?'

Lynne has enabled her staff to develop further than is the norm in schools. They have not just learned to be expert thinking coaches, they have learned to be national and international experts and consultants in creating a thinking school. Following the view that you learn something best by teaching it to others, many Buranda teachers train other schools and teachers in philosophy and creating a thinking school, including visiting schools and holding workshops nationally and internationally. For example, teachers at Buranda State School have developed an online course about the teaching of philosophy and have co-written a book for teaching philosophy in the early years (Cam et al., 2006). This creates a valuable professional development 'loop': all the money earned by providing in-service to other schools went straight into professional development for teachers at Buranda State School. As a result, Buranda State School teachers continue to strive to improve their own practice and become even better at what they already do well.

Lynne also enables the development of the students at Buranda State School, consistent with the vision of a thinking school. In a thinking school students see themselves as thinkers. Without taking on this identity, students will resist attempts to have them think as they will see this as irrelevant or perhaps even counter to their real objectives – 'Just tell us the answers' would then be

a common complaint. Students at Buranda State School have no doubt that they are at school to become good thinkers. They understand that their role is to think together with others so as to resolve the issues the class has chosen to explore. They focus on the thinking process as well as the content.

5) Managing teaching and learning

Lynne manages the teaching and learning at Buranda State School, in line with the vision of the school, by implementing changes in what is taught and how it is taught. In particular she set curriculum time for philosophy and thinking lessons, organised learning as a community of inquiry, and emphasised modelling as an educative approach.

Curriculum time for philosophy and thinking lessons

Lynne organised the teaching and learning program so that the teaching of philosophy and thinking is timetabled into all classes. When other activities such as sports carnivals encroach on classroom time, teachers are instructed to ensure this does not impact on the time devoted to developing thinking. As one of the core values of the school, the development of thinking is simply too important to be left to chance, and so it is an important act to ensure that this time is both timetabled and protected.

The importance of this is further emphasised in the way Lynne has helped to develop a Philosophy for Children as a rigorous and challenging area of curriculum. The content of Philosophy for Children is rich concepts and philosophical questions. Students engage with concepts that are of concern to them such as fairness, family, the mind, thinking or responsibility. They explore them by asking and addressing philosophical questions which can be answered only by rigorous inquiry and thinking and which cannot be answered by gathering facts, asking an expert or reading a book. For example, 'What is the mind?', 'Should we always be fair to people?' and 'Can any group of people be a family?' Philosophical questions and rich concepts provide thinking treasure that inspires wonder and motivates students to use and develop their thinking skills and tools. 'Does every creature have the right to a home?' is much more interesting for children and leads to deeper understanding than 'What sort of bird lays a blue speckled egg?' Instead of the question being seen as a source of work (go the library, find a book about birds, look it up, write the answer in my own words...), a philosophical question sparks the imagination and excites the intellect. Children will burst into the classroom in the morning and say, 'I've thought of a great question for philosophy! What is it that makes me, me? Can we put that on the board and talk about it later?'

Learning as a community of inquiry

Consistent with these changes in curriculum, Lynne has also made a change to how teaching and learning occurs. The fundamental mode of learning and teaching in Buranda State School is through a Community of Inquiry (Lipman 1988, 2003) in which students engage with ideas through a process of rigorously thinking for yourself with others. They are not being led to what the teacher has decided is the best answer, nor are they just swapping opinions or chatting. In a Community of Inquiry, good thinking is modelled, expected and practised, thus immersing students in a culture of thinking, and enculturating the habits or dispositions of good thinking.

Students listen to one another, then consider and build on one another's ideas. They give and expect reasons, offer examples and counter-examples to support their arguments, seek alternatives, draw conclusions and recognise faulty reasoning, decide whether they agree or disagree and why, and are prepared to modify their own ideas in response.

A Community of Inquiry creates an environment where students feel safe to explore their ideas together, free from the threat of ridicule. When someone disagrees with an idea, this is seen as an attempt to improve the idea, rather than a personal attack on the person who suggested it. Agreeing and disagreeing are expected, as are giving and evaluating reasons, so this is not an environment of superficial relativism where any ill-founded opinion is acceptable. Yet the disagreement and challenging of ideas is perceived to be collaborative rather than combative.

The teacher in a Community of Inquiry emphasises the thinking that is needed rather than merely focusing on the answer. For example, sometimes the students are given the problem and the answer and are asked to find as many different ways as possible of getting from the question to the answer. Participating in such a community requires students to engage in good thinking, scaffolds their increasing ability to think well and helps them to internalise thinking dispositions. For example, because they must test their ideas by sharing them with others they become more careful and self-correcting thinkers. They are exposed to many different views and so they learn to become more discerning listeners. This environment then becomes normal for the class, permeating every part of the school, and allowing for inquiry learning to occur in all curriculum areas.

Modelling as an educative approach

Lynne also emphasises modelling as an educative approach. This occurs formally during philosophy lessons, where the teacher models the language used in good thinking, and gives names to the thinking moves available for students, such as: give reasons, evaluate, give examples, clarify, draw conclusions and consider alternatives. The teacher also identifies the thinking moves that students make, for example, 'Ah... a counter-example' or 'thank you for that reason'. Students then learn to signal their own moves, as with the child who said, 'I'm going to do one of them counter-example things', and then did so.

This modelling also occurs in the more informal, everyday interaction of the classroom. The same phrases: 'I wonder...', 'Let's think about this for a moment...', 'What are your reasons for thinking that?', 'Can you clarify what you mean?' and 'What is an example of that?', once modelled by the teacher and familiar in the philosophy lesson context, soon become used easily and comfortably by teachers and students in the general talk of the classroom. Even outside the classroom, thinking language is modelled. It is common to hear phrases such as: 'I wonder if that was the best/easiest/fairest way of going about it?' or 'What reason did you have for ...?' and 'Did you think about what might result if...?'

6) Developing the school

To embed a major change initiative it needs to be institutionalised in the culture and normal practice of a school (Fullan, 2001; Kotter, 2007). To have a thinking school, the routines and structures that give the life of the school, and its physical environment and artefacts, need to encourage rather than discourage good thinking (Ritchhart, 2002). These provide tacit means of teaching, which are as important as the explicit philosophy lessons (see Burbules (2008) for a discussion of tacit teaching).

Lynne has made sure that every aspect of the school environment at Buranda State School tacitly promotes the development of thinking, from the way people interact with one another and the day-to-day procedures, to the physical environment of the place. The ways in which Lynne has developed the school so that it encourages the growth of thinking includes, but are not limited to, the following:

Thinking is physically displayed

Students are encouraged to bring 'questions that make me wonder' to school for display. Openended logic problems and philosophical questions are regularly placed on the wall outside the office. Students respond to these open-ended problems by putting their answers into a box and then in weekly assembly, Lynne reports back to the students on different methods for answering these. Classroom walls are adorned with philosophical questions, reflections, results from thoughtful discussion, attempts to solve the problems, and the like. It is common to see small groups of students standing discussing them. Signs promoting good thinking are placed around the school and classroom (e.g. 'Don't let your brain shrink, THINK!').

Celebration of thinking

Examples of good thinking are acknowledged, praised and celebrated, both within the classroom and in the whole school context such as assembly. This may be, for example, celebrating an example of solving (or attempting to solve) a problem by an unusual method.

Behaviour management and disputes procedures

Behaviour management does not follow the crime-and-punishment model. Students are expected to explain and justify their actions, understand the impact of their behaviour on others, and work with others to decide how to prevent a reoccurrence. Adults are expected to listen fairly and openly to students, and to help the student develop a plan of action in the event of similar circumstances arising again. This is done in the spirit of trying to help students to think through the consequences of their actions and to learn to live with others in peace and harmony. As a result, Buranda State School has little or no bullying. The students will not allow it.

At all times, but especially in times of dispute, students know they will always receive a fair and thoughtful hearing. Teachers will always make time and provide opportunities to listen to and discuss the views of all participants. Efforts are made to encourage children to see how the situation may appear to the other party, with the resolution often being that a 'misunderstanding' has occurred. This is extremely valuable for enabling children to understand that outcomes or perceptions are not always as intended.

Assessing and reporting thinking

Teachers talk informally and frequently with their students about the goal of being good thinkers. They also gather assessment data and evidence of student work related to thinking, which is formally reported to parents. Examples include 'Jamie asks relevant questions', 'Sam is consistent when developing points of view', and 'Lee is able to express ideas coherently'. This sort of assessing and reporting requires the teacher to look carefully at how a student thinks.

Classroom environment

Classrooms are organised so that students are able to work together in small groups. This enables thoughtful discussion among students, and thus gives children insight into how others think. It is not uncommon to walk into a classroom at Buranda State School and be unable to immediately find the teacher. During philosophy classes or class meetings, students sit in a circle in such a way that they can see every other person's face and thus share their thinking effectively, rather than being focused on the teacher as the only thinker worth paying attention to. So there is a space in the room for this to occur, desks are deliberately and permanently set around the edges of the room. At these times the teacher is part of the thinking circle.

School operations

Students are encouraged to have thoughtful input to the running of the school and are involved in solving problems that affect them in the day-to-day operations. This allows them to understand the thinking behind those decisions, even if the outcome may not be what they were hoping for. Regular class meetings provide a forum for students to raise general issues of concern, and again require them to see and accept the perspectives of persons other than themselves.

Students are encouraged to bring written proposals to the principal for tabling and consideration at staff meetings. They are expected to join with teachers to discuss the pros and cons of such suggestions, and to help organise solutions to problems. For example, a group of older students wanted the opportunity to play football against a neighbouring school. This led eventually to the inaugural 'Buranda Cup', which is now a tradition at the school. Another example is the Year 7 boy who single-handedly organised the school's contribution to the fundraiser 'Shave for a Cure'. He liaised with the leukaemia foundation, wrote in the school newsletter, organised the local media, collected permission slips, distributed hair dye (for those who wanted to colour not shave) and ultimately was responsible for the raising of several thousand dollars by the school towards leukaemia research.

7) Responding to the wider context

Lynne also responded to the wider community in a variety of ways to develop Buranda State School as a thinking school.

First, she influenced the family educational culture (Leithwood & Steinbach, 2003) by making sure the parents were aligned with the vision of learning and teaching for the school. This is important so that there is a consistent message from the school and parents, and so parents and community encourage and do not unintentionally undermine the development of thinking that the school promotes. The decision to develop Buranda State School as a thinking school was made jointly by all teachers, with the unanimous support of the school community, especially parents. Opinions of the parents and wider school community were sought at the outset, with one comment that the parents were 'thrilled with this innovative, teacher-driven response to increasing the academic and personal skills of the children'. When uncertainty arose among parents, as it occasionally did ('Will you be teaching my child to question the law?'), a parent meeting would be arranged so that the parents can understand what it means to educate for thinking.

This parental engagement is ongoing. At first, when an external 'critical friend' came to work with teachers and children, opportunities were offered for parents to observe lessons. Now it is commonplace for parents to be invited to watch lessons taught by the classroom teachers. For example, on World Philosophy Day 2009, sixty visitors (parents and those from other schools) came to observe lessons in all classes. Parent evenings are also held to inform parents of the teaching of philosophy and thinking. Additionally, parents have the opportunity to participate in Communities of Inquiry similar to those their students participate in, some of which are held at the local council library. A state Member of Parliament, himself a one-time philosophy lecturer, has contributed to this activity. As a result, parents also develop something like the culture of thinking that is present in their children's classrooms.

Second, Lynne was able to use the wider context to develop Buranda State School as a thinking school by giving students many opportunities to understand how the thinking habits they learn at school can be used in the world beyond the classroom. They liaise with the local Municipal Council to discuss and make informed decisions about problems related to the health of the local waterway, they contact officers from the Environmental Protection Agency with relevant concerns, they write letters to the editor of the city newspaper, and they approach local members of parliament when necessary. One group presented a petition to the local MP, which was tabled in parliament and recorded in Hansard. In another example, Buranda State School students devised a scheme to revegetate the banks of the creek adjacent to the school grounds, working with the City Council in order to solve local environmental issues. Whilst activities such as this are taking place, the students in their philosophy classes are discussing related questions such as 'Is progress always a good thing?' and 'Does every creature have the right to a home?' Also, in the course of their curriculum work, students have many opportunities to 'ask an expert'. Members of the wider community are invited to share their thoughts and expertise with the children. For example, students undertaking a task that required them to design, make and market a product, invited several experts to help them understand the thinking needed for making good decisions.

Leadership for a thinking school

We started this article with a discussion of school leadership, and identified seven key characteristics. We also argued that all the message systems or cultural forces of a school have to be aligned to create a thinking school, and that the school leaders have a crucial role in creating this alignment and thus in creating a thinking school. We then used a case study to illustrate how the seven characteristics of school leadership were involved in creating a thinking school at Buranda State School, a primary school in Brisbane, Australia.

We finish this article by indicating how, based on the case study, the general characteristics of school leadership can ground a more refined and specific framework for leading a thinking school. This framework elaborates and clarifies that first presented in Golding (2006a).

1. The direction of a thinking school is towards the education and development of thinking. Education for thinking must be more than a vision, it must become an underlying philosophy of education where thinking is both the aim and means of education. For

- example, inquiry-based learning might be the framework for understanding and guiding the learning and teaching in a school.
- 2. School leaders influence the implementation of this vision by modelling and personally promoting the development of thinking. For example, they must show that they ask questions, consider alternatives and weigh up reasons.
- This means the school leaders must develop themselves to be thinkers and learners, perhaps through action research, reflective practice or other forms of professional learning.
- They also develop the staff in the school so they consider themselves to be thinking coaches, guides and facilitators. They might do this, for example, through implementing ongoing, regular staff action research into inquiry based learning, and basing hiring, promotion and performance judgements on the demonstration of inquiring classrooms.
- They manage teaching and learning so that the pedagogy, curriculum and assessment in the school is based on educating for thinking, and so students consider themselves as thinkers and thoughtful learners. This may require managing workloads so that staff have time to develop, trial and reflect on inquiry-based units of work. This will also require school leaders to explicitly build 'thinking' into day-to-day curriculum and assessment so that staff and students see it as important.
- School leaders must also develop the school by ensuring school resources (time and money) are committed to developing thinking, and by creating a school environment (physical and cultural) that promotes the development of thinking. This will require adequate resources are devoted to auditing to what extent the physical, institutional and cultural environment of the school promotes thinking, and also to develop a consistent plan for development.
- 7. Finally, in a thinking school, the school leaders involve the wider school community, such as by having students apply their thinking to community issues, and by having members of the community share their thinking with students, and learn about and participate in education for thinking.

This framework both describes Lynne's role in helping to develop Buranda State School, and also provides specific guidance for those school leaders who are willing to embark on a similar journey. Each of the seven points in the framework describes a 'leverage point' that school leaders can use for restructuring a school as a thinking school.

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