

CALLED, CONNECTED, COMMITTED

Resources and Updates from the
Church of England Foundation for Educational Leadership

⊕ THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
**FOUNDATION FOR
EDUCATIONAL
LEADERSHIP**

Issue 7: 'Called, Connected, Committed: 24 Leadership Practices for Educational Leaders'

Welcome – Andy Wolfe (Deputy Chief Education Officer, Leadership Development)

Welcome to our next issue of 'Called, Connected, Committed', the Foundation's regular leadership development resource for educational leaders across our programmes and networks! We are thrilled to focus this time on the publication of our new leadership development document – 'Called, Connected, Committed' which we launched at the National Conference a few weeks ago. This document is a clear follow up to the Church of England Vision for Education (2016) – *Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good*, and we have written it to help leaders embed the vision through leadership practices in their teams.

The approach that Prof David Ford and I have taken in this work is to map the 4 areas of the Vision for Education against the 3 words we've used to describe the kind of leaders that we seeking to develop, resulting in a really accessible matrix of leadership practices. The document then unpacks those practices, both in terms of what they look like in the day-to-day life of the school, and also providing some rich theological reflection on what difference the Christian narrative makes to the way these practices work out in reality. Finally, we've provided a range of discussion questions to help you reflect together – for it is in the conversations that our thinking is really sharpened and refined.

We'd encourage you firstly to download the document at www.cefel.org.uk/cc and take a read – then explore ways in which you might use it in your own context. We're so excited to see such great feedback on this approach already, and we look forward to developing this further with a range of other resources. We have also designed a detailed 360 appraisal tool which is already being used by the 260 leaders on our CofEPQH programme. If you would like to explore how you could use this too in your Diocese, MAT or school, please contact us to talk more.

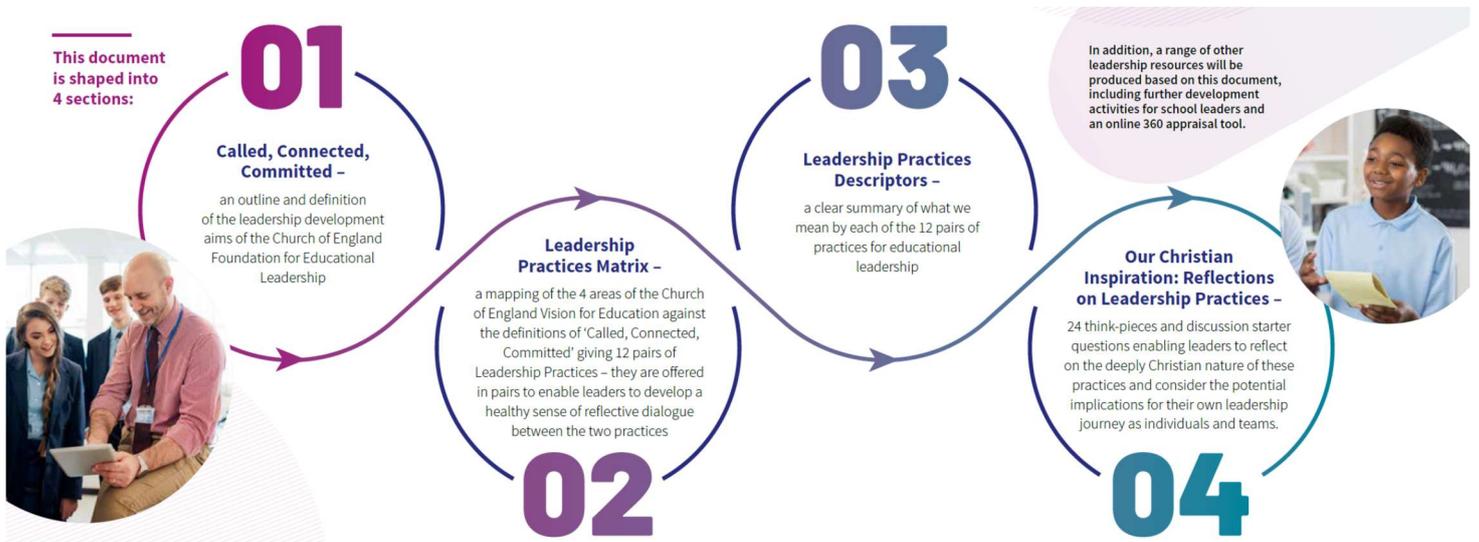
This mailout will continue to explore one of these leadership practices in future issues – so we look forward to continuing to build the movement of leaders who see themselves as 'Called, Connected and Committed'.

You can hear more about Andy's inspiration for the document in this great podcast:

<http://podcast.cranmerhall.com/231001/2794597-andy-wolfe-how-can-theology-serve-the-way-we-lead-in-the-world>

Finding your way around the Called, Connected, Committed document

The document is designed to provide multiple layers of depth, and can therefore be engaged with at several different levels, as set out in the introduction (p4-5):



Firstly, the document defines what we mean by 'Called, Connected and Committed' (p7):

Called

Leaders who are called can articulate a strong sense of personal vocation to their role, and demonstrate this through their words, actions and decision making, exemplifying a strong moral purpose, confident vision, and ambitious trajectory of improvement. For some, this sense of vocation will be driven by an established or developing faith commitment. All will show integrity, honesty and a deep sense of resilience, underpinned by their personal sense of vocation as a leader.

Delve into this with leaders to help them think about their 'why'... how often do we talk in education about our 'personal sense of vocation'? What sort of conversations might this lead to?

Connected

Leaders who are connected operate deliberately within communities of practice, positioning themselves within positive relationships that sustain and encourage all parties. They embrace interdependence, demonstrate compassion and embody humble service to others. They create shared identity within their teams and draw colleagues around a common purpose.

Who are you and your team connected with? How far do you reach out to others, both to give and to receive? To what extent do you 'embrace interdependence'?

Committed

Leaders who are committed show energy and passion in all they do, inspiring confidence and faithfulness in their teams. They are clear about their purpose and resilient in the face of challenge. They take long-term decisions and are not easily swayed by short-term changes of policy or procedure. They articulate a sense of mission in their approach to education, into which they draw others, and they are committed to the flourishing of their pupils and colleagues.

What sustains you, long term? Explore this paragraph individually or with others, asking whether you agree with what is written here. How far is this true in your own leadership?

How could you use these paragraphs... in a staff meeting, SLT meeting, governors' meeting, appraisal meeting, coaching session or for personal reflection?

The Matrix

The **Leadership Practices Matrix** charts the four strands of the Church of England's Vision against the concepts of being Called, Connected and Committed, resulting in 24 different leadership behaviours. These are intentionally grouped into pairs, encouraging the reader to wrestle with the relationship between the two. For example, to nurture ambition, one could argue that we need to develop the imagination to imagine future possibilities. Otherwise, what exactly are we ambitious for? Why don't you take a pair now and look for the link between them? Does the link create a tension, or enhance your understanding?

Leadership Practices Matrix

	Called	Connected	Committed
Educating for Wisdom, Knowledge and Skills	Leading Learning Refining Judgement	Creating Confidence Embracing Interdependence	Deepening Understanding Driving Improvement
Educating for Hope and Aspiration	Developing Imagination Nurturing Ambition	Healing Relationships Pursuing Renewal	Sustaining Vision Building Resilience
Educating for Community and Living Well Together	Removing Disadvantage Seeking Reconciliation	Accepting Vulnerability Demonstrating Generosity	Inspiring Faithfulness Embodying Integrity
Educating for Dignity and Respect	Celebrating Diversity Enabling Flourishing	Offering Encouragement Encouraging Service	Practising Humility Learning Love

There are a multitude of different activities you could do with this matrix! Here are a couple that have been particularly successful within our programmes and networks:

Card Sort

Cut up the individual practices and sort them into existing strengths, developing strengths and areas for development. What do you notice?



Self-evaluation

Use the matrix to highlight your own strengths and areas for development. When you compare these to those of your team, do you notice any patterns emerging? Do you share strengths in common? What about areas which you all find difficult? How might you set about addressing these together?



3. Leadership Practices Descriptors

3.1 Educating for Wisdom, Knowledge and Skills

Leading Learning | Refining Judgement

Leading in education starts with the call to learn and teach. A *head-teacher* demonstrates their vocational passion for learning by modelling effective practice in the skills and understanding of pedagogy. Leaders of learning need to be resourced by deep wisdom. Their professional development and personal growth are shaped and directed by well-informed, discerning judgement, and by ethical, accountable decision-making.

Explore the descriptors on p10-13 to find out more about each pair of practices!



4. Our Christian Inspiration: Reflections on 24 Leadership Practices

4.1 Leading Learning – Refining Judgement

Leading in education starts with the call to learn and teach. A *head-teacher* demonstrates their vocational passion for learning by modelling effective practice in the skills and understanding of pedagogy. Leaders of learning need to be resourced by deep wisdom. Their professional development and personal growth are shaped and directed by well-informed, discerning judgement, and by ethical, accountable decision-making.

Leading Learning

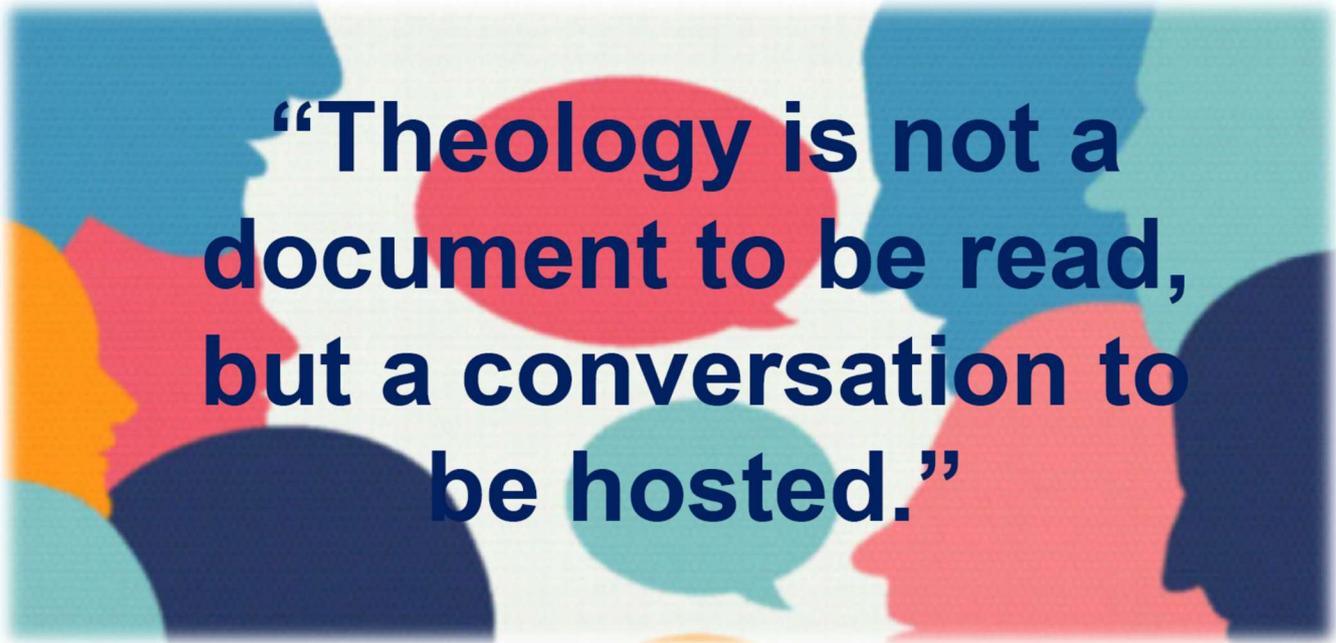
The leader needs to be gripped, energised, and delighted by learning. This is a fundamental response to the wonder of creation, and to the amazing richness of the ways of appreciating it, knowing it, and living in it. Wonder is the beginning of wisdom. Curiosity, intrigue and the joy of discovery are at the heart of the spirit of learning that inspires good teaching.

Teaching was at the heart of his ministry, done through questioning, riddles, conversation and debate, responses to difficult issues, stories, discourses, sermons, challenges, symbolic acts, and personal example. The disciples (literally 'learners') he gathered regularly misunderstood him, often learned through going wrong, and only entered deeply into his meaning during the

1. How important is it for leaders in school to be (known as/seen to be) excellent classroom teachers?
2. To what extent do 'wonder', 'curiosity', 'intrigue' and 'joy of discovery' play a part

Dive into the riches of the 24 leadership practice reflections

This is where the document comes alive at a whole new level! The reflections give thought-provoking content to stimulate, challenge and inspire. The discussion questions provide ways into engaging with the reflections. Try them in pairs, groups, or as an opener for a meeting. We'd love to hear how you get on with them, and what emanates from your discussions.



“Theology is not a document to be read, but a conversation to be hosted.”

Emily Norman, our Head of Networks, used Called, Connected, Committed to dialogue with two school leaders from the South West region last week. The leaders chose the topic of ‘Accepting Vulnerability’ and discussed this question from the document:

2. To what extent do you think your team is vulnerable with one another, and what difference does it make to your relationships when they are?

JB: I chose this topic because I have seen how changes in circumstances and personal circumstances can have a positive and negative effect on a group and on team dynamics. This question allows you to reflect on: why has this happened? How has this happened? Is there something I need to be more aware about to help and support my team? Do they need extra support?

CS: I was attracted to this question because of the context I am currently working in – two schools forced together, but now working together very successfully. We had to combine two senior leadership teams quickly, one of a very strong school, one of a weaker school and we had to be very mindful and sensitive to the relationships; some leaders had to lose responsibilities and autonomy. One leader who found it very difficult because of the history has now moved on, and we have seen the dynamics of the team improve. We now have a more relaxed team, who are able to have fun with each other and **we are starting to rebuild some of the trust** that was lost. [We are] letting people from different teams shine together, and [we are] really getting to know one another. Middle leaders in the team are feeling competitive with each other about roles coming up, so this question could be used for us all to think about opening ourselves up and being vulnerable, putting our ideas out there and not being worried about them being shot down. Newer members of the team are realising leadership is about **working together as a team and letting each other shine, not about being the one at the front taking all the credit**. I will definitely use this as a leadership task to do as a team.

JB: It helps that reflection about where our vulnerabilities are and **how we can grow stronger as a team**. What do I need to do or what needs to happen to strengthen [our team]?

CS: We have tended to think we needed to prove ourselves and have all the answers ourselves, but building that trust by showing vulnerability allows us to remember **we are better as a team**. Because other people will think of things I haven't thought of and bring a different perspective.

EN: It can be **very empowering for your team to see you demonstrating that vulnerability**, allowing them to see they have a place; that they have something to contribute and something to offer.

CS: It **links directly to humility**, doesn't it? It is one of the most important things a leader has to have.

JB: It actually uses the word ‘humble’ in the reflection, and the **service you give to other people to develop them**. To help strengthen *them* so they are less vulnerable.

CS: It makes you reflect on those who have done that for you in the past, that have got you to where you are. They have demonstrated the generosity, they’ve seen something in you, given you opportunities, **allowed you to fail and picked you up**. It gets to the point where it’s time to pass that on, to ‘build cathedrals’ for the future because you won’t be there forever. We get precious about the fact ‘I haven’t finished that yet’ but we will never have finished!

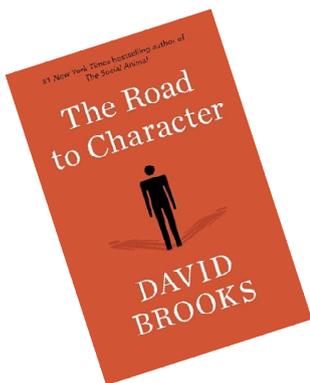
JB: It’s what I call the Alex Ferguson effect! You get such **a strong leader, with what appears to be no vulnerability**, and actually it’s working. But that person hasn’t planned for succession, considered what is the future, thought about where the vulnerabilities are and I have seen that go completely wrong.

CS: It’s a really good analogy because you could say he was really successful, but actually the real success is that you can walk away and it’s still standing. It can’t be built around the cult of one person.

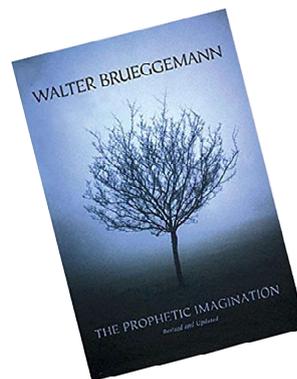
JB: We see it with situations like Blockbuster Video, where people haven’t thought ‘what does the future hold’ and actually **the future’s exciting, but it’s also a vulnerability if you don’t future-proof yourself**.

As you can see, just by asking one of the questions from the document, meaningful dialogue can develop. Because the document is grounded in robust theology, the conversations it stimulates are subsequently theological in nature. Yet they are also very practical, useful conversations that impact directly on the everyday lives of school leaders. Have a go yourself! Who might your conversation partners be?

Books quoted in ‘Called, Connected, Committed’

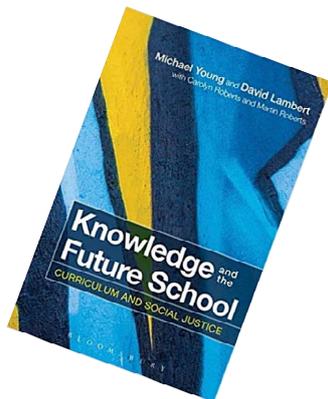


David Brooks explores selflessness and struggle as pathways to growing one's character. He uses a variety of different historical thinkers, from a range of disciplines, to draw lessons about what brings about true fulfillment in life. How can we face and transcend our weaknesses in life?

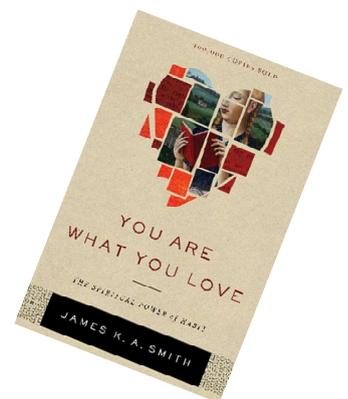


Brueggemann's book traces the narrative arc of the Old Testament, drawing lessons from some key figures. He encourages his readers to engage with pain and struggle, analysing one's situation critically and accurately, whilst also seeing the future as full of hope and purpose. The reader is exhorted to energise his/her future, imagining that it doesn't always have to be this way!

Young and Lambert 'aim to offer a way of thinking about the curriculum'. Their book considers the relationship between politics and education. They focus on the idea of 'powerful knowledge' as a necessary component of successful learning for all pupils, considering issues of social justice and equity.



James KA Smith hypothesises that it is who/what we worship that ultimately shapes us. We may wish to shape the culture around us, but how aware are we of how culture shapes us? And how mindful are we of the things which seek to absorb us? He aims to help the reader appreciate the formative power of culture and the transformative possibilities of Christian practices.



Updates from our Programmes: Emma Trenier

Church of England Professional Qualification for Headship

This month we have begun Cohort 3 of the CofEPQH with over 250 participants taking part in the programme at 9 regional training centres. At Learning Event 1 participants have the opportunity to understand more about what the Vision for Education means to them as leaders as well as exploring the themes of developing a culture of excellence, working with governors, and applying leadership and change theory to school challenges.

Bookings for Cohort 4 will open at the end of May.

Diocesan Educational Leaders Programme

Also this month, we were delighted to see Cohort 1 of the Diocesan Educational Leaders Programme present their research projects and be awarded their certificates of achievement by the Bishop of Lambeth, Rt Revd Tim Thornton. This was an exceptional event where participants presented the very full and impactful research they had worked on as well as shared their personal learning from taking part in the programme.

Please contact cefel@churchofengland.org if you would like to receive full copies of the research.



MAT Leaders Network

Finally, we are pleased to open bookings for the next two MAT Leaders Network events which will be taking place on 8th June and 7th October 2020. In June, MAT Leaders will meet to explore the topic of Wellbeing and Mental Health, In October, the focus will be Engaging Trustees. Please share with all MAT Colleagues who may have an interest in attending. The events are open to MAT CEOs, MAT senior leaders and DDEs.

Please book your places through the link on our website: <https://www.cefel.org.uk/MATLeadershipNetwork/>

Updates from our Networks: Emily Norman

We are delighted with how our networks are growing across the country, with 6 Rural Schools' Networks, 13 Diocesan Peer Support Networks in progress and more on the way, a third of our secondary schools in our National Secondary Leaders' Network and the MAT Peer Support Networks growing almost weekly. This is due to the commitment and support of dioceses, MATs and schools throughout England, and a willingness to engage with our networking approach. We have seen real benefits to this for schools: for example, in Canterbury Diocese, the network has devised very practical ways of sharing resources and expertise with one another. Other networks are visiting each other, sharing examples of good practice and uploading their resources onto their shared area of the CEFEL website. As I travel round the country, I see the real difference it makes to leaders to know 'it's not just me' – the impact of empathetic and encouraging responses from peers on leaders' well-being and confidence is huge. We are also enabling leaders at all levels to reflect on their own leadership and draw from high quality theological, pedagogical and leadership resources to do this.

Our current network themes are: Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, Character Development, Growing Faith, Well-being and Resilience, Middle Leadership, Executive Leadership (of more than one school) and, most recently, Inclusion. Within all our networks, though, the underlying theme is of vision into practice, to ensure the flourishing of our pupils, adults and communities.

To find out more about networks operating within your area, contact your diocese or MAT or email emily.norman@churchofengland.org