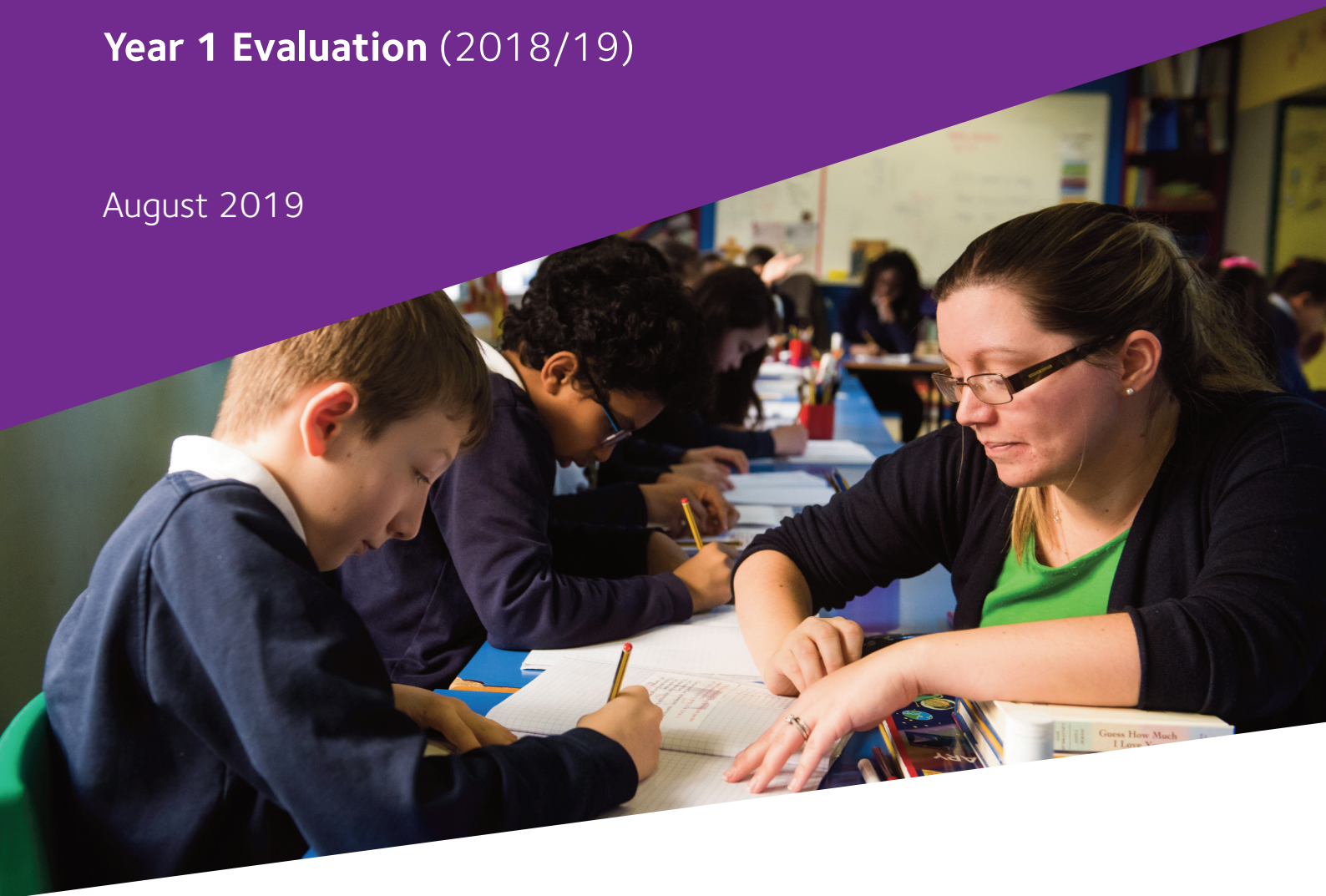


Church of England Professional Qualification for Headship (including NPQH)

Year 1 Evaluation (2018/19)

August 2019



NPQ accredited by



Department
for Education

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

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Introduction

The Year 1 (2018/19) CofEPQH cohort was made up of 89 participants with 11 participants deferring or withdrawing due to personal circumstances. Of those who continued on the programme, 98% went on to successfully complete the programme within 18 months of starting.

The Church of England Foundation for Educational Leadership is committed to the continued improvement of the programme to ensure the best possible experience and long-term flourishing of our participants. For this reason, we carry out ongoing evaluation throughout the programme, allowing us to immediately respond to all feedback. In addition, we ask our participants to take part in an end of programme evaluation once they have completed their assignments. This gives us a picture of the initial impact of the programme on our participants. The end of programme evaluation is also an important part of our continuous learning, helping to inform the design and delivery for future cohorts.

The end of programme survey was sent to the 78 participants from Year 1 who did not withdraw from or defer their place on the programme. 70 of those participants completed the survey – this is a response rate of 90%.

As well as evaluation through surveys, we also collect participant stories to provide us with additional qualitative data. This helps us create a holistic picture of how the programme is impacting participants. Quotes from our participant stories and from comments from the survey are included throughout this report to help further illustrate the data presented.

“I have found the CofEPQH very helpful and inspiring. We have heard from many different heads who have given us valuable insights into their practices that they have learnt from. It is very people-centred, putting the school community first while tackling the leadership and managerial skills needed to be a head. The tutors offer support every step of the way. I'm very glad that I chose this route.”

Polly Dobson
North region

Why participants chose the CofEPQH

It is important for us to know why people chose the CofEPQH above other programmes. The programme is designed so that the Church of England Vision for Education is woven in throughout the content and approach. The programme offers leaders the opportunity to learn about and apply the vision in their own context, as well as enabling theological reflection, the exploration of Christian leadership and the chance to reflect on their own personal and spiritual development. It is clear that the majority of participants chose the CofEPQH because they value these core elements.

“I wanted a more holistic approach to leadership. The vision for education by the Church of England appeals to me and I wanted to embrace that rather than look at a state run NPQH.”

Jane Burt
South west region

74% of survey respondents (52 participants) said the Church school or Christian focus was the reason they chose the programme. Participants also spoke about the ‘human element’ of the programme and the desire to participate in a programme focused on a ‘more holistic approach to leadership and education’. This feedback suggests the importance participants place on the distinctive approach of the CofEPQH.

“The only reason I participated in the NPQH, is because of the Church of England element. To me, this was the most important part of the programme.”

Amanda Cornwall
Midlands region



“Other programmes seem to push regimented ways of being – my school is a community and I felt that was how they needed to be led. This is why I chose the CofEPQH.”

Nicola Moran
North region

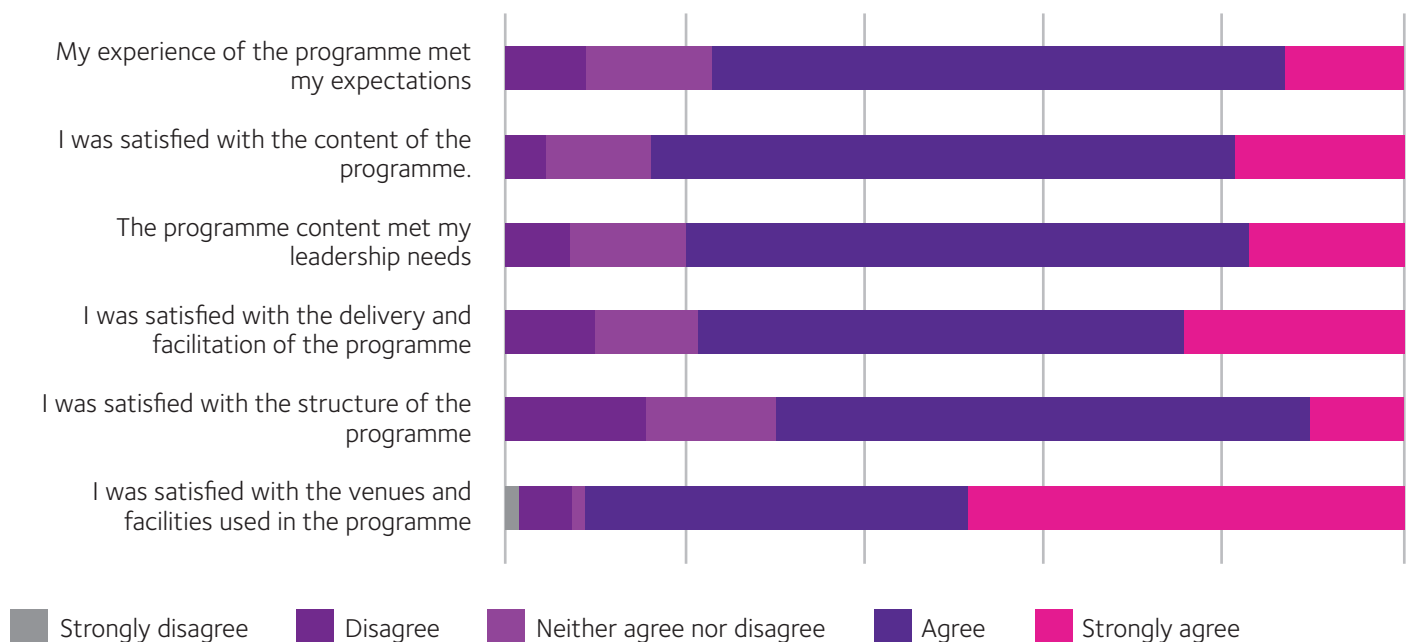
Participants' experience of the programme

The end of programme survey asked participants about their experience of the different parts of the programme.

Participant satisfaction

The graph below shows that at least **77%** of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the programme met their expectations and they were satisfied with the content, structure, delivery and venues.

To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your experience of the programme?



92% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the venues and facilities used, showing that we are selecting venues that are enabling participants to have a positive experience of the programme. This can seem a minor point, but ensuring the environment is conducive to learning and networking is extremely important. Throughout the programme any issues with the venue or facilities are logged and resolved before the next

learning event. This helps us to ensure that we are providing excellent hospitality and an effective space for learning.

Satisfaction with the content of the programme was also high with 85% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that they were satisfied with the content and 80%

agreeing or strongly agreeing that the programme content met their leadership needs. More variation in answers can be seen with regard to the delivery and facilitation and the structure of the programme, with more respondents disagreeing or remaining neutral. This cannot be accounted for from the survey results as there are no additional comments, but it is likely to reflect the different learning preferences of participants and perhaps also some slight variation in experience across the regions.

Areas for improvement

The biggest challenge in the programme, both for the participants and for the delivery team, was the change in assessment criteria and submission requirements, partly due to updates from the Department for Education. Respondents’ answers across the end of programme survey show that this had a considerable negative impact on some participants’ experience of the programme. Changes in information impacted participants’ ability to complete assignments by the given deadlines, caused additional

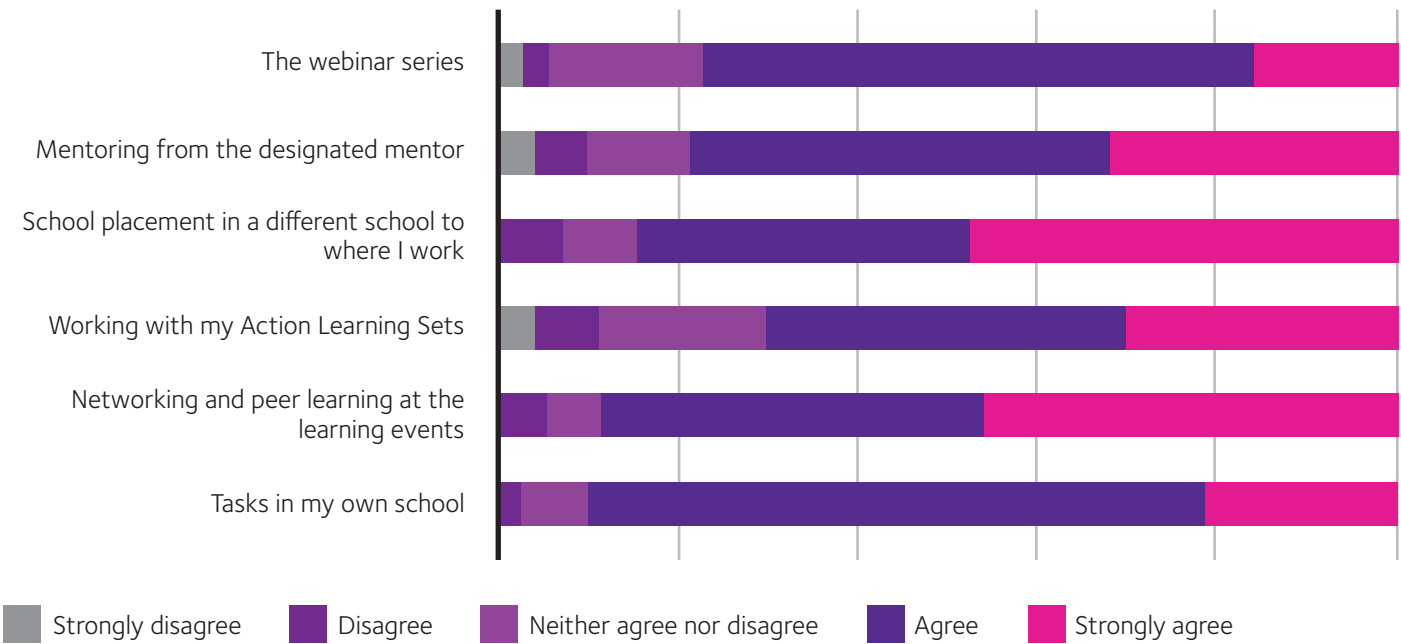
anxiety and created a more significant negative impact on work-life balance than would have been the case without these changes.

The delivery team sought to address these issues during the programme and provided additional support where needed. The lessons learnt during the programme and from the information gathered in the end of programme survey will be used to inform both delivery and communications in future cohorts.

Activities and approaches to learning

A range of different elements make up the programme: residential learning events; guest webinars (delivered by serving headteachers from around the country); mentoring; school placement in another school; an own school improvement assignment; and meeting with local Action Learning Sets. Participants were asked the extent to which they agreed each of these elements enabled them to develop their leadership skills.

To what extent do you agree that the following activities enabled you to develop your leadership skills?



The graph shows that participants felt the elements that best enabled them to develop their leadership skills were networking and peer learning at learning events (89% agreed or strongly agreed), own school task (90%) and the school placement (84%).

Throughout the evaluation carried out during the programme, participants consistently told us that the networking and group discussions at the learning events were a hugely valuable part of their experience. Participants find that the residential learning events enable them to meet new colleagues, share ideas, take part in collaborative learning and to support each other. Ultimately, the relationships that participants build help them to create local and regional professional networks and support systems that will continue to enable them to flourish in their roles as headteachers and leaders.

“The most powerful elements of the programme were the residentials and the opportunities these afforded to engage with exceptional facilitators and network with other aspirant school leaders.”

Will Wilson
North region

Whilst there were many challenges with the assessed assignments, the fact that many participants felt the own school and placement school tasks (both compulsory elements of the two assessment tasks) enabled them to develop their leadership skills shows that they were vital and valuable parts of the experience.

Working with the Action Learning Set (ALS) had the lowest score with only 70% agreeing or strongly agreeing that this activity enabled the development of leadership skills. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the Action Learning Sets had a significant impact on some participants due to the opportunity it gave for building important peer relationships. However, given the lower score here, the quality and impact of the ALSs seems to have varied across the cohort.

Whilst participants are offered advice and support in how to make the most of the Action Learning Sets, in future programmes we will encourage participants to make use of technology to facilitate alternative ways of meeting where face to face meetings are not straightforward.

“Meeting my Learning Set team has been a great benefit. We are so close, we bounce ideas off one another and have open discussions, share ideas and support – all this leads to better leadership within our own schools as we borrow one another's great ideas and methods.”

Alison Field
Midlands region

“If we had planned our action learning set better and made use of Skype or Zoom to meet virtually, these would have worked better for us.”

Amanda Wooldridge
Midlands region

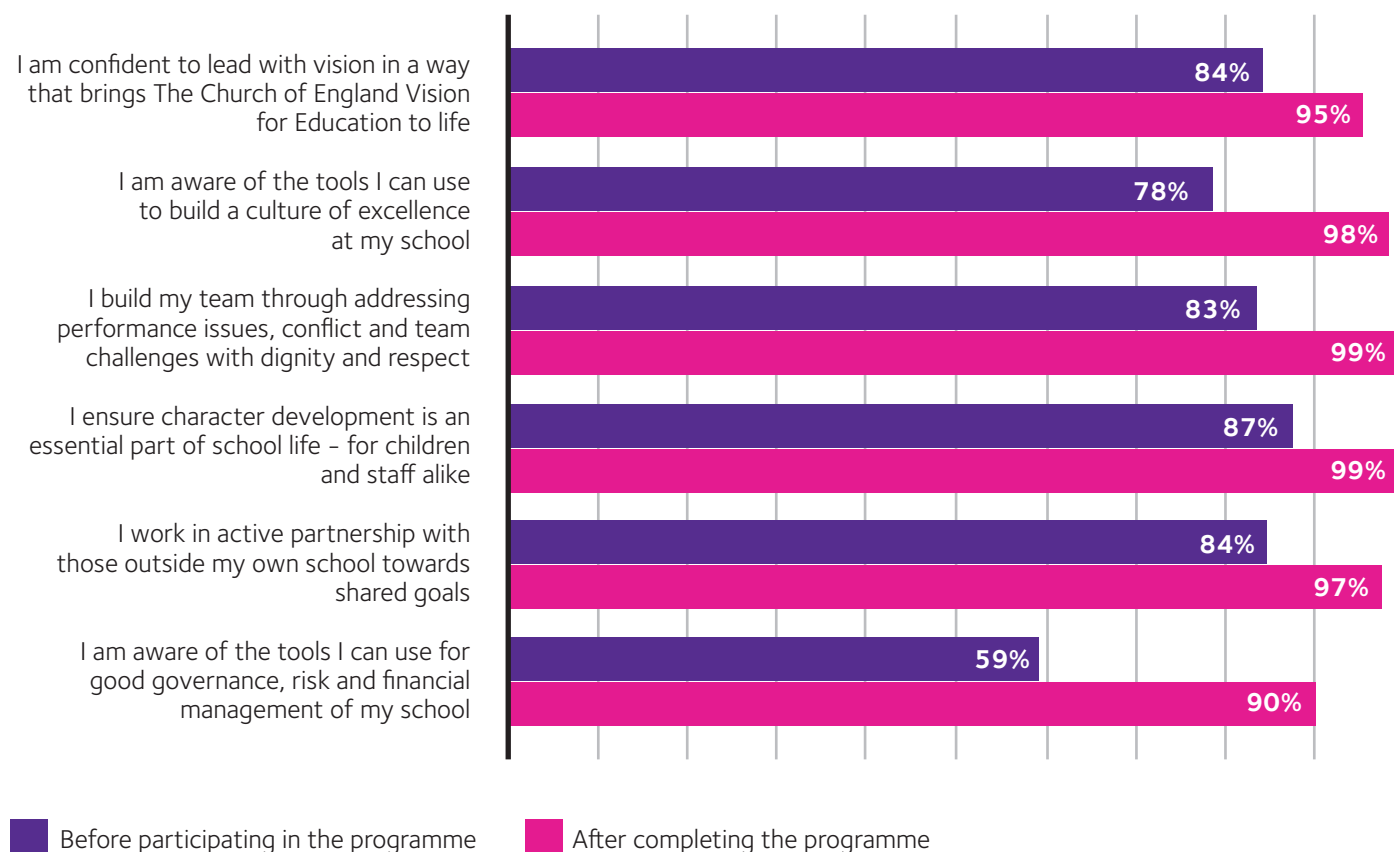
Impact of the programme

At the very start of the programme, participants were asked the extent to which they agreed with six statements that summarised the main learning objectives. Participants were then asked about the same statements in the end of programme survey.

Learning objectives: before and after

The graph below shows that participants felt **more confident** about all the statements after completing the programme.

Percentage of those who agree/strongly agree with the learning objectives



The biggest area of improvement is participants' awareness of tools for governance, risk and financial management, with a 30% increase from the baseline data to the end of programme evaluation. However, the 'after' score is still slightly lower (90%) than for the other learning objectives. Given the extent of participants' development needs in this area, we will enhance the breadth and depth of our training in this area in future programmes.

The other area with the biggest improvement was awareness of how to build a culture of excellence – a 20% increase in those agreeing or strongly agreeing with the learning objective. This increase reflects the fact that the objective is a core thread that runs throughout the programme, with multiple opportunities for participants to develop their knowledge and understanding of the tools they can utilise in this area.

The broader impact of the programme

We also asked participants about the broader impact of the programme. Firstly, about their flourishing and confidence as a leader.

The programme has enabled me to flourish professionally

80% agreed or strongly agreed

The programme has enabled me to flourish personally

76% agreed or strongly agreed

The programme has enabled me to grow in confidence as a leader

91% agreed or strongly agreed

The programme has enabled me to become an effective leader

84% agreed or strongly agreed

"It really made me think about my whole approach to education, school, colleagues, and what sort of leader, colleague, teacher and even parent, wife and friend I want to be!"

Jane Joshi

South east region

"I have learnt a great deal taking part in the CofEPQH. I am a better leader now than I was before I started the programme. I am far more able to share vision effectively with all stakeholders."

Tom Hardwick

South east region

We also asked them about the impact of the programme on their pupils.

My participation has positively impacted the flourishing and wellbeing of the pupils in my school

81% agreed or strongly agreed

My participation has positively impacted outcomes and attainment of the pupils in my school

68% agreed or strongly agreed

"The whole school change programme has had a significant impact on staff wellbeing and pupil progress."

Tiffany King

South east region

And finally, about the impact on their relationship with colleagues and the flourishing of fellow staff in their school.

My participation has positively impacted my relationship with colleagues

78% agreed or strongly agreed

My participation has positively impacted the flourishing and wellbeing of my colleagues

76% agreed or strongly agreed

My participation has positively impacted the performance of my colleagues

75% agreed or strongly agreed



“It has made me reflect upon and tweak some of the everyday teaching practices and curriculum to ensure a healthier work-life balance for ALL staff.”

Nikki Wilson
South east region

Wellbeing and work-life balance

As part of this broader look at the impact of the programme, we asked participants about how their participation effected their mental wellbeing and work-life balance. Respondents answered in a variety of ways – some saying how it positively or negatively impacted them and others reflecting on how they managed their wellbeing and offering practical ideas for how future participants could be better supported.

Positive factors

- Recognition of the long-term impact on wellbeing rather than short-term fixes.
- Time to step back, reflect and prioritise or change working patterns.
- Reflection on the 'cycle of grace' was explicitly mentioned as having a positive impact on many participants.
- Sense of achievement in completing the programme had a positive impact on wellbeing.
- Improved time management and better knowledge of strategies to improve work-life balance – both for participants themselves and in managing and advising colleagues.
- Increased understanding of emotional resilience.
- Programme helped participants to be more balanced in how they viewed themselves and the pressure they put themselves under.

Negative factors

- Short-term impact due to added workload.
- Time and focus needed for assignments added stress and anxiety for some.
- Disruption of work-life balance for some participants – for example, impinging on weekend, holidays and family time which was particularly problematic for those with childcare and other responsibilities or home complications.
- Juggling participation with new headship – this was a particular issue for a few participants in that situation.

The variety in responses reveal how participants react to and deal with the increase in workload in very different ways. Many participants commented on the added workload but also clearly said that it was worth it despite any added pressure during their participation. Many participants reflected on the longer-term benefits they are already experiencing having had the time to reflect on their practice and leadership.

Respondents' answers have also given us further insight into how we might better equip the next year's participants to more effectively manage their conflicting demands. Examples of practical ways in which we will support participants in this area include:

- Providing more detailed information about the time associated with both the placement school and own school assignments in the programme handbook and the participant learning contract.
- Offering more information to sponsors about the programme requirements to ensure they are mindful of time requirements for participants, particularly in relation to dedicated time needed in placement school and own school for the two assignments.
- Including webinars with past participants sharing assignment approaches and advice.
- Ensuring reading lists are sent to participants well in advance of the learning event to ensure they have sufficient reading time.
- Communicating clearly that Action Learning Sets can be held either face to face or via an online video conference call platform.

"This was tricky as a new headteacher fitting in meeting the deadlines and the training commitment with my new role. However I believe the programme will impact positively on wellbeing going forward, for example using and reflecting on the Cycle of Grace."

Teresa Nicholls
Midlands region

"I know now that it is ok for me to take time out, to look after myself so that I can look after others. I try not to feel guilty about leaving on time as it is setting an example to others."

Alison Field
Midlands region

New positions and next steps

21% of respondents have already gained a new position since starting the programme*

15 participants have already gained a new position since starting the CofEPQH and 87% of them agreed that their participation in the CofEPQH contributed to them gaining their new position.

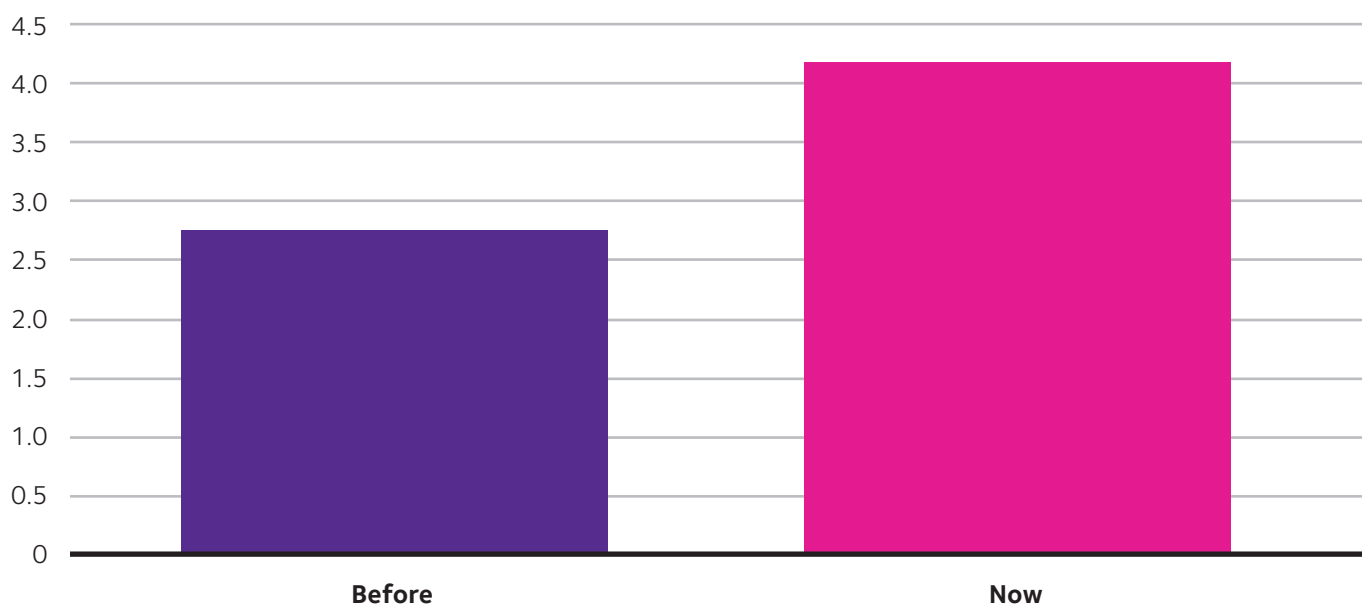
Participants said that the programme helped them to secure their new position because it demonstrated their commitment to professional development and gave them confidence to answer interview questions about vision and leadership.

An additional 19 participants said they were actively looking for headship roles and that they would be applying when the right positions arose.

The end of programme survey showed that participants feel more prepared for headship after the programme than they had done at the start.

How ready did you feel for headship before the programme and now?

1 = not at all ready and 5 = very ready - weighted average



* Programme started February 2018 and concluded in June 2019. This figure is accurate as of June 2019.



When asked about next steps, many respondents said they want to gain more experience in assistant or deputy roles before moving on to headship. Others said their priority is to improve and progress their current schools through the implementation of their learning and development on the programme.

It is encouraging that participants are clearly reflecting on what the right next step is for them rather than all immediately seeking headship positions that they may not yet be ready for. One respondent said their experience of the programme made them realise that headship wasn't for them because they didn't want their career to dominate their life – this, in itself, is a valid and valuable insight to have gained.

58% of respondents agreed that they had achieved their personal development goals through participation in the programme and 25% strongly agreed. Respondents' comments about their development showed that their goals and achievements were wide ranging:

- The programme enabled reflection on self and leadership style/skills.
- Deeper understanding of and honesty about strengths and weaknesses.
- Exposure to authors and researchers they wouldn't otherwise have engaged with.
- Increased confidence to think critically and question things.
- Developed knowledge of school finance.
- Clear understanding of the vision for education and application to own school.
- Increased positivity towards abilities as a leader.
- Increased strategic awareness and ability to implement strategy.
- Learnt a lot about understanding other people and oneself and how to work well with others.
- Developed confidence to do things in own way and be sure of reasons behind approach.
- Developed broader range of approaches to managing change.

Vision into reality

Respondents were asked how the Church of England Vision for Education is lived out in their school because of their participation in the programme. Some respondents simply said that they now knew about the vision or that their wider community now know about the vision. Comments suggest that programme participants go on to implement their learning from, and engagement with, the vision in a wide variety of ways: using it as a starting point to think about the school's own vision; rebuilding the curriculum in light of the vision; reviewing school policies and development plans; addressing disadvantage and opening up horizons of pupils; improving the character development of pupils.

What is clear, is that nearly all participants are impacted by this element of the programme and the vision is lived out in more schools because of the programme.

"Being introduced to Ethos Enhancing Outcomes booklet impacted on our most disadvantaged pupils. With our SLT and governors, I was able to lead change in improving outcomes by using the questions as an audit tool and a starting point for school improvement."

Sophie Sear
South east region

"It has impacted on the way we monitor, review and plan for change in the school. It has encouraged us to think carefully about our vision and how this is essential in determining who we are and how we manage communication, relationships, teaching and learning throughout the school."

Pippa Warner
South west region

"Participation in the CofEPQH has encouraged and equipped me to put Church of England values at the heart of our curriculum and consequently who the children are is as important as what they know, if not more so."

Simon Ball
North region

Participant stories

Jane Burt South west region



Jane joined the 2018/19 CofEPQH as a deputy headteacher in a community school, having worked for several years in the international independent sector. Jane heard about the programme from the CEO of the Church of England MAT that her school is a member of. At that

time Jane was fulfilling the role of acting headteacher whilst the school's headteacher was absent.

For Jane, the focus in the CofEPQH on ethos has been the most important element of the programme.

"You don't hear about ethos in any of the other courses you go to. It's always about data. I am really pleased that I have this different avenue ahead of me. The data is important but if you haven't got the ethos right in your school it will not achieve."

Jane was particularly interested in the difference ethos can make, having noticed the differences between her community junior school and the local feeder Church of England infant school. Jane says that parents at the junior school worry and don't feel part of the community, but at the infant school you can feel the sense of community, love and care because of the ethos of the school.

In order to develop her own school's ethos, Jane has used the Ethos Enhancing Outcomes resources* to think through the school's curriculum rebuild. Many of Jane's colleagues

have previously worked in Church schools and she says they miss the community and care that comes with being in a Church school, but the CofEPQH programme has allowed Jane to understand how these things are not restricted to Church schools. Jane believes thinking about how we can be good people, treating each other with care and thinking through how it all fits together to help us achieve our end goals are all things any school can do.

Networking and community building were also an important part of the programme: "the Action Learning Sets are a safe space to talk about emotionally charged topics...nobody is judgemental or trying to get one up on you." Jane believes this tone is set by course leaders who create an atmosphere in which they all have fun but which is also conducive to challenging learning.

Jane says that participating in the programme has given some of the enjoyment back as well as self-belief. When she has completed the qualification, Jane hopes to remain in touch with the network and friends she has established on the course and eventually to take on her own headship and flourish in that role.

"The most important thing is how you treat people in your establishment. That is what the programme has taught me more than anything else. It's about community and how we treat each other - if we don't do that we will not achieve together."

* Ethos Enhancing Outcomes is one of the resources designed to bring the vision for education alive. More information can be found here: www.cefel.org.uk/visionresources/

Amanda Wooldridge North west region



Amanda is the Assistant Headteacher at St John Vianney Catholic Primary School in Blackpool. Amanda has worked at St John Vianney for seven years, having initially been appointed as assistant head/SENco. She is also responsible for Safeguarding & Child Protection, Foundation Stage, Attendance and Behaviour.

Amanda knew she wanted to do an NPQH but she didn't know about the CofEPQH until she 'stumbled' upon it just a few weeks after receiving chemotherapy treatment. At this point the application window had closed, but on the advice of her headteacher Amanda sent an email to register her interest for the next cohort. She was then told that the application window had been extended so she was able to apply and to overcome funding difficulties as well.

"To cut a very long story short, the end result was full funding being available because I work in an opportunity area! So many things which had seemed impossible actually weren't as God was leading me down the path he wanted me to be on."

When asked what difference the Church school focus and vision for education make on the programme, Amanda suggests that it makes it bespoke rather than generic. In Church schools staff have to reflect a Christian ethos and model Jesus' teaching, and Amanda found that the programme was taught in line with this. She also found it beneficial to network and build relationships in an environment where faith was shared or respected, enabling commonality to be found.

"The subject areas (even the difficult ones) were taught to us in ways in which we could see how the Christian vision could be implemented."

Amanda made the most of the programme but also faced some challenges. She says her relationship with her mentor was 'great' and it was extremely valuable being able to talk to someone independent of school. The Action Learning Set was more of a challenge due to geographical limitations so Amanda says that in hindsight they would have been able to get more out of the Set if they had arranged to meet virtually instead.

Finding the time to dedicate to the assignments was also a challenge, Amanda admits, but it was systematic so you could complete sections as you went along if you were disciplined and it was all worthwhile in the end when you get the email to say you've passed. Amanda also made the most of the information gathered on the programme by keeping a dedicated notebook and file which she can now look back at and continue to add to.

"My top tip for the assessment would be to be kind to yourself and accept that they will take time which will impact on what you can do in other areas of life and school. Don't try and be a superhero! Work out how much time you're going to need and then delegate accordingly to make sure you get that time."

Amanda hasn't been appointed to a headship yet, but she has applied the confidence and skills she has developed to her personal life by taking on the role of Safeguarding Officer at her church. She says she is 'really passionate now about securing a headship' and now she just needs to find the school where God wants her to be.

Conclusion

Looking back

The data collected from the end of programme survey along with the comments and stories from participants show that the CofEPQH is having a positive impact on participants. There is clear evidence that the programme is enabling participants to be successfully appointed to headship positions and for them and their schools to flourish. Looking back at year 1 we can see that:

1. The Church of England focus is really important to our participants.

The distinctive approach of the CofEPQH, with its focus on Church school leadership, is a central aspect of why leaders choose our programme. Participants value the opportunity to engage with the vision for education, to explore Christian leadership and to be a part of a programme that takes a more holistic approach.

2. CofEPQH participants grow in confidence, knowledge and skills.

All our indicators suggest that the majority of participants are more confident, knowledgeable and skilful when they complete the programme. All survey respondents reported feeling more ready for headship after completing the programme.



3. Our residential learning delivery model provides exceptional added value.

The residential learning events not only allow participants to take time away from the demands of school life to focus on their learning, but they also provide a conducive environment for building enduring relationships that will equip leaders for their future careers.

Looking forward

We are very pleased with how the first year of the programme has gone, but as our programme continues to run (Year 2 has already started and we are currently recruiting for Year 3) we are aware of the need to ensure we are continuously learning and improving our offering.

Our next steps following this end of programme survey will be to consolidate, increase consistency and do more to ensure simplicity and transparency. We will:

1. Continue to improve the programme through ongoing evaluation

We will continue to carry out ongoing evaluation during the programme, both through participant surveys and by using the feedback log. This will continue to help us ensure that any arising issues are dealt with and our offer is adapted and improved to fulfil the needs of our participants.

2. Improve the assessment element of the programme

We will make improvements in three key ways:

- Change operational processes to ensure the assessment information is clearly communicated to participants – this includes information about submission windows, when assignments need to be completed and information about additional support and advice.
- Improve level and quality of information provided by facilitators and hosts – this includes information about the assignment tasks and the assessment criteria.
- Align assessment element to vision for education. For Year 2 there will be an additional assignment task to enable participants to demonstrate how they have applied the vision for education in their school.

3. Expand our offer

For Year 2 there has already been an additional northern region. For Year 3 we will enable more leaders to access the programme by offering it to participants from a

wider range of dioceses. We will work to ensure our offer is consistent across these dioceses and we will continue to provide an exceptional programme.

Fulfilling our mission – called, connected and committed

A key part of the programme is to engage with what it means to be called, connected and committed as a leader. The CofEPQH allows participants to understand and celebrate opportunities to be:

- **Called in our vocations** – participants feel called to develop their leadership through the lens of the church of England vision for education. Participants choose the programme because of the Church school and Christian focus and this focus enables participants to flourish in their vocation as school leaders.
- **Connected to others** – participants have found value in the networking and relationship building that the residential learning events and other elements of the programme has enabled. Many participants have gone on to join a Peer Support Network where they will be able to continue to work collaboratively and build supportive local relationships.
- **Committed to leading our communities to experience fullness of life** – the commitment to fullness of life applies both to the participants themselves and to their school communities. Participants have enabled the vision for education to be lived out in their school through their participation in the programme, helping their wider school communities to share in this flourishing.

“We look forward to continuing to provide a programme that fulfills our mission and continues to grow leaders who are called, connected and committed.”

Nigel Genders

Chief Education Officer for the Church of England

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