Diocesan Peer Support Network

2020-21

Context

The Foundation began to establish Peer Support Networks (PSN) in 2016 and is now working in partnership to run networks for over 1200 school leaders.

These networks aim to meet the needs of specific school communities and include Rural Schools Networks, our National Secondary Leadership Network, MAT Peer Support Networks, a MAT Leadership Network and these Diocesan Peer Support Networks – now operating right across the country.

The Diocesan PSN seeks to add capacity to local priorities for development, through a partnership between CEFEL and the local diocesan team.

The Foundation's vision is to develop Called, Connected, and Committed leaders. Participating in Peer Support Networks enables leaders to feel called to their role, build their connections to others and develop a deeper commitment to school leadership, thus enhancing retention of quality staff and preparing them for future school leadership roles.

Who are the Foundation's Diocesan Peer Support Networks for?

Our Diocesan Peer Support Networks are for any diocese which is interested in exploring the Church of England's vision with its school leaders, considering how that might look in practice.

They can be for primary and nursery school leaders, secondary leaders or a combination.

The Foundation's materials are based upon the Church of England's Vision for Education which means that network sessions are particularly suitable for schools who wish to understand how this can be applied and embedded within their own context.

The Foundation's Diocesan Peer Support Networks can be used as a mechanism to empower leaders at a variety of levels, including Headteachers, Senior Leaders, Middle Leaders, Clergy and Governors.

What are the benefits of the Diocesan Peer Support Networks?

1. **Cost Effective Leadership Development:** a cost-effective way of facilitating high quality leadership development for a strong number of school leaders, complementing the other provision of the Foundation, including for example the CofEPQH.
2. **High quality resources:** making use of high-quality resources and a range of current thinking about leadership, pedagogy and theology, the networks provide highly stimulating and thought-provoking material for individual use and use back in school.
3. **Deep discussion:** the networks offer a forum for in-depth discussion about leadership matters, which is rarely available to school leaders, within a group of peers. The key to a successful network is the enabling of affirming, empathetic, stretching *conversations* which impact on our practice.
4. **Collaborative learning**: excellent opportunities for sharing good practice, providing peer to peer feedback, self-reflection and building lasting professional relationships.

How is the Diocesan Peer Support Network delivered?

The model for the Diocesan Peer Support Network for 20-21 takes into account the uncertainty around the possibilities for meeting physically. It therefore builds on models we have used within our Rural Schools' Networks and the CofEPQH in offering a mixed-mode way of networking. During the summer term 2020, we have developed our network approach with school and church leaders online and trained diocesan staff to do this at a local level. Many leaders have found their networks a safe space to explore highly challenging issues together and explore thinking about what the future holds.

In 2020-21, our Diocesan Peer Support Network will involve a virtual launch session, led by the Foundation, interim virtual or physical sessions locally throughout the academic year, led by the diocese, and one half-day physical session (where possible) per stream led by the Foundation. These networks would usually be for groups of around 15-20 school leaders. The sessions are based around the Vision Resources produced by the Foundation, but also extend to deeper development work in relation to a range of themes pertinent and relevant to school leadership.

The network approach means the delivery of the Peer Support Network is undertaken in partnership between a member of the Foundation's team and a Network Lead from the diocese.

An *example* of a Diocesan PSN Network for 2020-21 is outlined below, showing what can be expected from the Foundation.

Diocesan PSN Outline

Autumn 1	Autumn 1	Autumn 1/2	Autumn 2 – Spring 2		Summer 1/2	Summer 2
Induction CPD x2: CCC/Vision, Facilitator strengths	Stream-specific CPD for Network Lead	Network session 1: Foundation facilitates alongside Network Lead; resources all provided by the Foundation	Stream - specific CPD for Network Lead	Network sessions 2-4: Network Lead facilitates with resources from the Foundation	Network session 5: Foundation facilitates alongside Network Lead; resources all provided by the Foundation (NB this session could be session 3,4 or 5 depending on diocesan needs)	End of Year Review: CPD for Network Lead
1.5 hrs per session virtual	1.5 hrs virtual, in small hubs	1.5 hrs virtual	1.5 hrs virtual, in small hubs x 2	1.5 hrs virtual or 3 hrs physical x 3	3 hours physical (where possible)	3 hrs physical (where possible) + 1-1s with Head of Networks

The Foundation provides:

- facilitation for two of the sessions (one virtual, one physical – where possible)
- resources for the sessions (all resources for Foundation-led sessions; suggested resources for diocesan-led sessions
- CPD facilitation training for the diocesan Network Lead (as outlined in appendix 2)
- 1-1 support for Network Leads from the Head of Networks, including an end of year review conversation
- a dedicated online community for sharing materials and examples of good practice within the network

The diocese provides:

- logistics (setting dates with the Foundation's facilitator, organisation and provision of venues, invitations and communication with participants, ensuring sufficient AV equipment for the smooth running of the sessions, organising refreshments, uploading material to the online portal)
- an overall diocesan Network Lead for each stream (usually a member of the diocesan advisory team, or an experienced headteacher) who will attend all the sessions, facilitate interim sessions with support from the Foundation, engage fully in the CPD facilitation training from the Foundation and provide and share resources with leaders within the network.

Appendix 1: Network Themes 20-21

Network theme	What sort of topics? (examples, not exhaustive)	Suitable for…?
Curriculum Leadership	• What does visionary curriculum leadership entail? • How does your school's vision shape its curriculum, and what needs to be considered? • Working in partnership to enhance your curriculum – how can networking enable the sharing of high-level subject expertise? • Curriculum for the long-term – how can you build sustainability into your curriculum?	Ideal for middle leaders, who are exploring the expectations of the new Ofsted schedule Good for headteachers and deputy heads with oversight for the curriculum Could also be run for governors
Leading Teaching and Learning	• How does your approach to teaching and learning enable pupils and adults to flourish? • What impact is your school vision and culture having on what happens in classrooms? • How is the best practice in teaching and learning shared through collaborative practice? • What sort of leadership practices do you want to see your teachers and students demonstrating? How can you achieve that?	Leaders of teaching and learning, anyone involved in observing, appraising and developing teachers
Wellbeing and resilience	• Caring for your own wellbeing as a leader, to ensure a positive impact on both own life and on others • How do you support the wellbeing and mental health of: staff, pupils, parents, wider school community? • What are the factors which affect your ability to sustain leadership in the long-term? • How can you ensure the wellbeing of all is embedded in the heart of school life?	Headteachers and governors; inclusion managers, SMSC leads, senior leaders and governors
Character Education	• Why is character education important and what is its connection to the flourishing of all? • The Leadership of Character Education – why this matters and what it means for leaders • Exploring different leadership models and considering their impact on school life • Sharing case studies, examples and research around 'what works' in character education • How does courageous advocacy develop character as well as make a difference to the community?	Headteachers and governors; aspiring senior leaders
Inclusion	• What sort of outcomes are you seeking for your pupils? Is this broad enough to enable everyone in the school to flourish? • What is your approach to exclusions? Why does this matter? • What does it mean to be a hospitable school, and how can this be realistically achieved in the current climate? • How do we collaborate with others to deliver the best possible outcomes for *all* pupils? • What are the challenges of being an inclusive school and how does working in partnership help with these?	Headteachers, deputy heads and inclusion managers; governors

Faith at Home	• How can you connect communities (church, school, households) in order to enable faith development in your area – especially within households? • What do young people need in order to develop their spirituality? • What might hinder faith development in young people? • How might you start to think differently about young people's faith development? • What is already working well from which we can all learn?	Headteachers and clergy; SMSC leads, governors