

Developing Middle Leaders in Primary Schools
Developing a Culture of Leadership in Primary Schools

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Term 2, 2013

Acknowledgements

My most grateful thanks go to the Ministry of Education for affording me the opportunity to take time to read, reflect and rejuvenate my thoughts and energy to continue in my role of principal.

Thank you to the St. Teresa's School Board of Trustees who supported my application for this sabbatical.

To my team at St. Teresa's who continued to lead the school competently and passionately while I was away, under the leadership of Daniel Jay, my Deputy Principal. I am fortunate to lead a team of educators and support staff who share my passion for the education of our children in our community. I appreciate all that you are, thank you.

To the teachers who took the time to respond to my survey and share their thoughts and ideas with me. In the busy world of education I appreciate the extra time this activity took. Thank you.

To the teachers, advisors and facilitators who were willing to spend time with me talking about their views of middle leadership in primary schools, thank you for your thoughts.

Purpose

- To provide the opportunity for personal research on the development of middle leaders in primary schools.
- To reflect on, analyse and evaluate this development, with a particular emphasis on Director of Religious Studies in Integrated schools, to determine best practice.
- To prepare a programme using identified best practice to assist colleagues to build strong leadership teams.
- To learn about the skills of leadership development to help promote middle school leaders so they want fulfill this role and feel confident to do so.

Methodology

- Read literature on the topic of middle leadership to gain deeper knowledge of the qualities required
 - Kiwi Leadership for Principals
 - Leading from the Middle
 - Ka Hikitia - Managing for Success
 - Tu Rangatira: Maori Medium Educational Leadership
 - BES - School Leadership and Student Outcomes: Identifying What Works and Why
 - BES - Teacher Professional Learning and Development
- Meet with advisors to discuss the development of middle leadership development in schools

- Survey teachers currently in leadership positions in schools including those in the position of Director of Religious Studies in Catholic Schools
- Interview teachers identified as future leaders
- To analyse information gained from reading, interviewing and surveys to determine best practice and use this to develop a programme that can be implemented in my school and shared with the wider community.

Definitions of leadership

Definitions of leadership are abundant. Webster's Dictionary defines leadership as

- 1a a position as a leader of a group, organisation, etc
- 1b the time when a person holds the position of leader
- 2 the power or ability to lead other people
- 3 the leaders of a group, organisation or country

Papers on the internet define leadership in a myriad of ways which include ideas of positional authority, symbolic power, activities that are tied to the core work of an organisation, designed by members of the organisation to motivate others within the organisation, as well as the need to be creative, innovative and passionate to inspire teams to work together.

Definitions of educational leadership are equally abundant. Within education we have different types of leadership.

Distributed leadership which is concerned with organising leadership across the school rather than relying on leadership from the top down. It is an active form of distributing the leadership practice. Another term for this is shared leadership. It includes all individuals within the school who have a role in decision making. Yet another term is team leadership.

Professional Leadership includes

- the understanding of current approaches to teaching and learning,
- provides professional direction to the staff,
- collects and effectively analyses data to improve student outcomes,
- the application of effective management practices,
- role models self reflection on personal performance with the intention of continued self improvement.

Instructional Leadership includes the involvement of principals and staff in curricular and instructional issues that directly affect student achievement (Cotton, 2003)

More pertinent to me was the definition on the New Zealand Educational Leaders webpage.

“Leadership is now about empowering, transforming, and working together. It not only refers to the official leader or principal, but to other staff within the school. Teachers as leaders and teachers as supporters of leaders play a central role in school development.”
<http://www.educationalleaders.govt.nz/Middle-and-senior-leaders>

Introduction

I believe that just as the teacher as the ‘sage on the stage’ is long gone in the modern school environment, so is the principal as the single leader of the school. The more I have read and discussed primary schooling in New Zealand with my peers, the more I believe

that each staff member in a primary school is required to be a leader. Leadership is about empowering our teachers to work together for the benefit of the school, it is about teachers as leaders and teachers as supporters of leaders. To this end, I have titled this report "Developing a Culture of Leadership in a Primary School".

The natural disaster in Christchurch has added other dimensions to this complex issue, through the need to deal with the physical and emotional trauma of the event itself, and the continued emotional trauma of the lack of physical security and fear, dealing with the myriad of reactions from students and their families, as well as dealing with decisions made by the Minister.

The immediate reactions of teachers in Canterbury to the earthquake on 22 February 2011 demonstrated the level to which each person is a leader within a primary school. Teachers put their own shock and fear aside to deal with the students under their care. The fact that not a single student was seriously injured in this disaster is an indication of the level of leadership shown in each classroom. A fact that has not been celebrated by the Minister or the media. I celebrate these leaders and acknowledge that the work they have done since 4 February 2011 is outstanding.

Findings

I have surveyed and interviewed current and potential leaders, as well as some advisers, about how they see leadership and how principals can encourage leaders within their schools. This investigation had a two prong focus with one being on general leadership and the other being on Director of Religious Studies positions in Catholic Schools. I have read and collated the answers to the following questions, they are listed in order of prevalence.

What qualities do you think are essential for a leader in a Primary School?

- Deep pedagogical knowledge of the NZC and how it affects student outcomes. This includes quality understanding of teaching as inquiry, key competencies and how the 'front of the document' links with the back. It also includes how this will be developed in a particular school context
- Awareness of the context in which they are working. They need to know as much as possible about the community, the philosophy of the school etc that informs a school based curriculum
- Ability to relate to others - to build relationships with all members of the school community.
- Able to articulate their vision and how it relates to the wider school goals.
- Ability to articulate the school vision, live the vision, get others on board so everyone is singing from the same song sheet - parents, children, staff and board
- Able to develop relationships that are based on trust, and prepared to recognise and acknowledge excellence
- Be prepared to have 'hard conversations' with those who aren't.
- Be transparent
- Well developed time management and organisational skills
- Passion
- Good communication skills
- Understanding of the place and value of self review
- Desire and willingness to grow own knowledge
- Ability to get the best out of people
- Proactivity

- The ability to go after personal goals to the end and not be distracted by negative waves of thinking and/or negative opinions of others
- Goal setting - the ability to have or create a clear idea of what the end looks like
- Putting the first things first - prioritising effectively
- Being able to compromise so that a win-win situation is developed
- Empathetic listening
- Reflective practitioner
- Synergy

What qualities to you think are essential for the role of Director of Religious Studies?

- An in-depth knowledge and understanding of matters relating to curriculum and special character
- Love of and faith in God
- Desire to evangelise
- Lead by example - be a good Catholic model, practicing Catholic in all aspects of Christian living and faith development
- Be organised
- Delegation skills
- Listen
- Show courage, humility, gentleness, encouragement, compassion, inclusivity, open mindedness, forward thinking
- Be prepared to work outside of regular hours
- Good knowledge of pedagogy
- Be approachable
- Involve others
- Commitment to the Sacramental life of the Church
- To genuinely live and practice their faith
- To want to share and promote their faith amongst the school community
- To have an authentic love and care of all members/families in the school community and to be willing to offer help wherever it may be needed
- To want to continually further their knowledge of the Catholic faith
- To be a strong leader and have a great working relationship with other staff members
- To be committed to the job and have excellent organisational skills
- Strong communication skills with teachers, principal, parish pries and members of the parish

What are the five most important aspects of your role as Director of Religious Studies?

- Live our faith
- Organising Masses and Liturgies
- Implementing and leading the Religious Education curriculum
- Professional Development continuing Christ's work on faith
- Resourcing the programme

The following are individual ideas included in the responses to this question

- Spiritual development
- Being seen as a leader in the school
- Ensure Religious Education is the most important area
- Ensure Special Character is foremost in everything
- Be supportive and encouraging
- Pastoral care
- Being 'called to' do it

- Service
- Outwardly show your spirituality and love of Jesus in all your interactions
- Support staff in the teaching of Religious Education and to be completely organised and responsible for school Masses
- Develop a strong relationship with the Parish Priest
- Be actively involved in the Parish

How can principals encourage teachers to take on a role of leadership within a school?

- Strong appraisal systems that recognise strengths and foster areas of weakness through PLD, which may be in-house or external.
- Providing opportunities for teachers to develop leadership and management skills over time, to further their knowledge of educational leadership
- Developing a shared understanding of goals and school vision so that teachers understand and know the direction that the school is taking.
- Building strong relationships and having trust in the aspiring leaders.
- Recognising and encouraging innovations and potential.
- Provide guaranteed release time.
- Principal support and back-up for decisions made by middle leaders, i.e. that they have their backs!
- Time
- Provide an effective role model of a leader
- Provide a safe environment for them to try out their leadership skills
- Access - both time and funding, to Professional Development programmes that will help grow the necessary skills for leadership
- Access to mentors within and from outside the school
- Being able to mentor and walk beside them, affirming their skills, then step back, but know when to step in and provide guidance.
- Foster zeal and have a sense of humour
- Acknowledge the role as special and different
- Provide guidance for the role
- The word “inspire” is to breath life into something - principals need to inspire teachers with vision and discipline, love and care.
- Share their passion.
- Teaming staff to lead curriculum areas or projects
- Portray it as a natural progression of the teacher as a professional
- Highlight the individual’s strengths and positive qualities and convince them that they have a duty to share their gift with their colleagues, then provide opportunities for him/her to develop by working on elimination/minimising weak areas
- Provide ongoing scaffolding into a position. For example in the case of a Director of Religious Studies, a principal might encourage ‘prospective Directors of Religious Studies to work alongside the current position holder so that they gain insight.

What support do you believe principals can offer to teachers who are considering applying for a role as a leader within a school?

- Demonstrating excellence in leadership themselves
- Talking with and listening to the prospective applicant
- Encouragement and support of personal development and organisation.
- Provide opportunities to take on small parts of a leadership role to begin with. Work within a group before taking a lead role.
- Appropriate, targeted and scaffolded Professional Learning Development.
- Being clear about visions and goals.

- Being honest with the prospective applicant. Pointing out strengths and weaknesses in regards to the role, providing support to 'plug any gaps'
- Know the aspirations of staff and how to develop these.
- Identify what teachers are good at and be honest about areas of development through robust appraisal systems, providing feedback that is open and honest.
- Show examples of what you need them to produce.
- Follow an advisor/mentor (a competent one!). This could be outside the school.
- Provide time and opportunities to speak to other leaders and explore the nature of the position
- Develop their ability to relate to others in times of crisis management, leading teams and curriculum development
- Share a clear vision and expectation of leadership within the school.
- Suggest avenues from which to begin searching for resources
- Provide supervision

What support do you believe principals can offer to teachers who are considering applying for a role as a Director of Religious Studies within a school?

- Provide opportunities to take on small parts of a leadership role to begin with - mini leadership projects
- Ensure they have some time with Cushla (R.E. Facilitator)
- Speak to other DRSs
- Ensure they have the relevant Religious Education qualifications and encourage them to achieve this
- Release time
- Show you believe in them
- Mentoring
- Provide appropriate Professional Development
- They have to be prepared to give up their time
- Passing on knowledge and advice from their own experiences of leadership roles.
- Sharing a model of the DRS Job Description
- Providing opportunities for observations of Religious Education teaching in other classrooms or schools

What support did you receive as a beginning Director of Religious Studies?

- Comprehensive plans and systems in place from the previous DRS
- Regular meetings with the principals
- Catholic Education Office offered help
- Parish Priest
- Limited induction. Had to get on with it
- Other DRSs offered help
- Affirmation that I could do it
- Release time
- Faith filled and faithful family and friends are important

Implications

There are some basic principles and skills that principals need to develop a culture of leadership in their schools. Principals need to:

- Identify their own leadership style in order to be able to lead others, and continually challenge their personal leadership ability.

- Understand that a culture of leadership is more than just what you do to lead, it is about each interaction between any person in any given situation.
- Build strong, cohesive teams and empower them to innovate. Relationships are vital in all organisations. Relational trust and managing difficult conversations help to build the team.
- Build the school capacity by advancing the intellectual and professional capabilities of the teachers and support staff
- Use tools to help them accelerate individual performance, tools to develop understanding of how to manage the extra work load that leadership demands, how to prioritise so that the most important things are not compromised, how to manage difficult conversations, how to respond with cultural understanding.
- Solve problems creatively
- Motivate their teachers to perform at their best through effective feedback, acknowledgment of skills and tasks completed.

Developing a culture of leadership involves the principal leading the leaders in a learning focussed environment where the learning of students and teachers is valued. The benefits of this culture of leadership include:

- staff having deep knowledge of the key purpose of the school - improving student achievement,
- staff taking responsibility of this main purpose
- the protection of the school against loss of personnel as each staff member is key.

There are a variety of strategies that school leaders have used to develop a culture of leadership within their schools. Knowing the people they are working with and the direction they want to follow determines the strategies that they have used. Reading, discussing and thinking about my own staff I have come up with the following process as a suggestion of how to build a culture of leadership within a school.

Developing the Vision - What we value at this school

It is vital that everyone shares a common vision aligned with our core task of student achievement. It needs to be clearly communicated and understood by all members of the community. It provides the basis for curriculum planning, teaching and learning practices and resourcing. It includes the expected outcomes for students and the conditions required to get there. Many schools have already developed their Shared Vision in line with the New Zealand Curriculum. It requires revisiting to ensure it is still appropriate, understood and lived and valued by each member of the community.

Activity to develop or re-develop a shared vision.

Working with a partner...

1. Each identify one of your strongly held **values or beliefs** about learning
2. If you believe this, how in principle do you respond? How, in principle, do you work towards this belief?
3. Give 3 examples of different practices which are congruent with this principle and its underlying belief

Core Values and Beliefs (Why?)	Principles (How?)	Practices (What?)

Repeat until all values and beliefs have been covered. As a group, share these beliefs, principles and practices.

4. Identify barriers (or potential barriers) to each belief being lived out in practice.
5. Identify a practice that is not congruent with your belief

List all beliefs in order of importance to the group. From these, the Shared Vision can be written. In order to ensure understanding and acceptance from all quarters of the community this needs to be a collaborative process whereby groups have the opportunity to comment and feedback before the final vision is decided on. Open, clear communication is required during all stages of this process.

Developing the principles for each belief is the next step in the process, this will ensure the vision is lived in the school. Ask the question "How will we ensure that we achieve our vision?" Brainstorming each one with the group, ensuring open, honest discussion in a non-judgmental environment is vital.

The practices come from the principles and provide the answer to the question teachers ask "What exactly am I expected to do?" Once developed these need to be clearly communicated and shared with everyone to ensure common understanding. They form part of everything that happens in the school from the curriculum to appraisal to sharing with parents.

A helpful activity to do each year or even twice per year is to ask teachers to read over the School Vision, Principles and Practices and highlight the indicators each is doing well and those that need work. This provides the opportunity for staff members to re-connect with that which is important at the school, and take personal responsibility for their development.

Taking this further, these then form part of the observation, feedback and appraisal system within the school. Individualising the appraisal process to the needs of each teacher.

Developing the Vision is credited to Julia Aitken and the work she has done in schools around the world.

Understanding Pedagogy - Our knowledge about teaching and learning.

As principals we need to foster the expectation that all students will achieve and experience success in their learning. Doing this authentically involves principals:

- actively promoting a culture of teacher learning
- actively participating in learning with staff
- ensuring teachers continue to develop professionally by providing regular, open and honest feedback on observations
- analysing the data received through student reviews on teachers' teaching
- being known as leading learners in their school
- being seen as professional leaders with deep knowledge about teaching and learning

- providing teachers with professional development on effective teaching and learning strategies
- having direct, hands-on involvement with curriculum design and implementation
- truly understanding what teachers do - be effective teachers themselves
- building a professional learning community that supports, challenges and inquires into its own professional practice
- enabling teachers to explore the links between their teaching practice and student learning through the use of Teaching as Inquiry
- encouraging and supporting innovative teacher practice
- being able to see the big picture of education as well as implement detailed processes
- clearly expecting teachers use assessment for improving student learning
- analysing achievement data to inform strategic planning
- ensuring that teaching and learning programmes are informed by ongoing self-review and are relevant to the needs of the students

Kiwi Leadership for Principals

This document is very valuable and provides clear pathways for principals to follow to ensure they develop their skills to the best level possible. The four principles are as follows:

Manaakitanga - Leading with moral purpose.

Principals who lead with manaakitanga show a commitment to the development of honest, trusting relationships that are built on mutual respect and open communication. They have student achievement at the heart of each decision and are able to set clear goals for all involved in ensuring this core task. Principals who lead with moral purpose ensure that each student is valued for the person he or she is and welcomed to the school with their family.

Pono - Having self-belief.

Principals who lead with Pono believe in their own ability to do the complex job that is leading a school. They are able to stand tall in the face of criticism, challenge, competition and change. They are able to bounce back from difficulties that are faced on a daily basis and they show courage, passion and enthusiasm in their work. Principals who lead with self belief are those who ensure they have a healthy work-life balance and keep an eye on their energy levels.

Ako - Being a learner.

When principals demonstrate their role of learner they take time to reflect on their core work and keep up to date with the trends in education. They are important role models for their school community when they take their own learning seriously and share this learning with the community. Principals need a strong mentor to assist them in this aspect of leading their schools - a mentor who is able to guide and direct, challenge and support, question and answer.

Awhinatanga - Guiding and supporting.

When principals lead with awhinatanga there is strong evidence of interpersonal care evident in staff relationships. Principals respond with empathy through their ability to understand the feelings and perspectives of others. Awhinatanga involves looking at each person as a whole person - physical, intellectual, spiritual and emotional; and responding appropriately. Principals who guide and support are able to identify strengths and weaknesses of each teacher within the school, they use individual strengths to grow the capability of the school. This not only builds positive relationships but assists in the growth and sustaining of leadership within the school.

Systems - how things work here

In order to build a culture of leadership each member of staff needs to understand how things work within the school. Simple, clearly stated expectations assist the development of this aspect. Consider developing a Staff Manual where all expectations are clearly stated. The manual can be in digital or paper form - depending on the needs of the staff.

The following list might be helpful in the development of this manual

Curriculum - Planning Requirements, Assessment, Reporting to Parents, Timetables, Classroom Displays, Environmental Displays, Special Education, Advisors

Accountability and Quality Assurance Systems - Appraisal - Performance Management Timetable, Professional Development, Marking of Students Work

Electronic Attendance Registers

Financial Information - Accounts to parents, Budget, Classroom Consumables, Collection of Monies, Insurance, Order Book Signing, Petty Cash, P.T.A., Reimbursement, Travel Reimbursements/Allowances

Health and Safety - Absence System, Accident Book, Allergies, Bleeding, Dental Clinic, Fire and Earthquake Drills, First Aid Kits, Hazards, Lockdown Procedure, Medication, Public Health Nurse, Repairs and Maintenance, Safety, Sick Bay, Security and Personal Safety, Smoke Free

General Classroom Administration - Absences, Assemblies, Blinds, Bicycles and Scooters, Bus Bookings, Cell Phones, Certificates, Class Lists, Classrooms and Cloakrooms, Classroom Release Time, Computer Access, Communication, Discipline, Dress Code, Duty, Early Release of Students from Class, Furniture, Grounds, ICT Equipment, Jewellery, Journal Readers, Keys, Laptop Transport and Protection, Leave, Library, Lost Property, Lunches, Money in Classrooms, New Pupil Introduction, Newsletters, NZEI, Ordering Resources, Out of Bounds, Parent Concerns, Parent Involvement, PAT Testing, Photocopier, Pigeon Holes, Punctuality of Staff, Reimbursements, Relief Teachers, Resource Management and Curriculum Responsibilities, Scholastic Book Orders, School Curriculum Plan, School Hours, School Uniform, Sending Students Home, Special Education, Staff Meetings, Staff Fund, Supervision of Pupils in Class Times, Support Services, Suspension / Stand Down of Students, Sweets, Swimming, Technology, Telephone, Term Dates, Toilets, Trips and Visits, DVD viewing, Visitors' Book, Willful Damage

Appendices - Indicators of Child Abuse, Behaviour Management Procedures, Emergency Plan

When everyone knows what is expected and how things work through clear communication, the school runs smoothly, positive relationships develop and the culture of the school develops.

Building the Team - Creating positive links to support learning

Building the team means having the right people in the right jobs! We've talked about that for a number of years. Within that, is the development of relationships. Honest, open relationships where we all understand why we do what we do, what we need to do to achieve our vision and how we are going to get there.

Effective principals are vital in the development of relationships. They build strong teams, strengthen partnerships and networks to enhance student learning through their ability to see the strengths in each member of staff. Principals show creative and resourceful ways in developing informal or formal relationships that promote learning opportunities for their students. They demonstrate interpersonal skills to build strong relationships with key stakeholders. They are able to calmly manage conflicts and dilemmas that arise in the

school community and are able to connect with their colleagues to build effective professional learning communities. They keep up to date about wider trends and opportunities in education, both nationally and internationally and share this knowledge with their team.

Resourcing

There is such a large range of schools in New Zealand with an equally large range of resources. Principals and Boards need to ensure that they get the best value for each dollar spent.

What is consistent is the need for each individual to hold a position of leadership and be responsible for the resourcing of the area.

Understanding self review

The purpose of self review is to monitor the effectiveness of the school programmes and policies with the goal of continued improved student achievement. All teachers need to understand the purpose and need for self review. Clearly stating the purpose, having a consistent process for carrying out and reporting reviews, referring to the findings and making changes accordingly are steps that need to be followed to keep the importance and value of review in mind.

Reviews need to:

- have student engagement and achievement as its centre,
- have an inquiry focus,
- be layered to ensure self review practices happen at all levels of the school - students, staff, board,
- be cyclic, open, honest, transparent, evidence based and future focused,
- come out of the school's strategic planning which come out of the Charter and have rigour and accountability
- be linked to principal and staff performance management systems and include the Teachers' Council's Registered Teacher Criteria 2010,
- be specific, cyclic and evidence based.

ERO have identified *6 Dimensions of Good Practice*. Each one is related to the others with Student Learning: Engagement, Progress and Achievement as the central one.

- Student learning: engagement, progress and achievement
- Effective teaching
- Leading and managing the school
- Governing the school
- Safe and inclusive school culture
- Engaging parents, whānau and communities.

Framework for School Reviews, page 14

Evidence tells us that students learn best when teachers:

- Create a supportive learning environment
- Encourage reflective thought and action
- Enhance the relevance of new learning
- Facilitate shared learning
- Make connections to prior learning and experience
- Provide sufficient opportunities to learn
- Inquire into the teaching-learning relationship

New Zealand Curriculum, page 34 and 35

A School Self Review Inquiry Plan could include the following:

Focus on what matters by:

- Stating which of the *six dimensions of good practice* the review is focussed on
- Consider: where we are, how we got there, what our findings show
- Using the MOE Self Review tools as reference points where appropriate to determine where we are now
- Using Inquiry Questions: refer to MOE Review tools and ERO *Evaluation Indicators for Schools Reviews draft 2010 pages 17 - 56*
- Identifying the audience of the review and how the information will be used towards school improvement.

‘Self review is the way we keep focused on continuous improvement. There are three main types of school self review:

Strategic:

In-depth longer term reviews that identify important issues that affect our school as a whole, including the community. These are part of an ongoing process to meet our vision and higher level goals. It incorporates school-wide analysis, planning, implementation and evaluation. These might ask questions such as, ‘how can we do this better?’, ‘are we ensuring success for all our students?’ and ‘how do we know if we are making a difference?’

Regular:

‘Business-as-usual’ reviews where our board and teachers (and students, where appropriate) regularly gather data, monitor progress towards goals, put programmes or interventions in place and evaluate the effectiveness of these. They can be of varying depth and length but should feed into school strategic and annual plans. They ask questions such as, ‘what is happening here?’, ‘how do we know?’ and ‘is this working?’

Emergent:

Spontaneous reviews that are put in place in response to an unplanned event, an issue or change that needs to be addressed promptly. This is done by understanding the causes, the extent of the concern, and determining ways to resolve or minimise the issue. They ask questions such as ‘how did this happen?’, ‘how can we fix it?’ and ‘what can we learn from this?’

They may also follow the format of a PMI after a school event such as ski day or a school fair - in order to determine what worked well, what can be changed to ensure continual improvement.

<http://www.ero.govt.nz/Review-Process/Frameworks-and-Evaluation-Indicators-for-ERO-Reviews/Evaluation-Indicators-for-School-Reviews/PART-TWO-The-Evaluative-Questions-Prompts-and-Indicators>

The curriculum review will be inquiry based and need to follow a prescribed format to ensure continuity. Below is a suggested format that has been used successfully.

Curriculum Area being reviewed:				
Specific Purpose of the Review:				
Leader of Review: Supported by:			Date of review:	
Dimension and NAG being covered	Where we want to be? What outcomes do we want to achieve?	Where we are at now? Information against indicators	Evidence / proof	Future direction

When looking for answers to the above questions we need to consider:

- What are our students' next steps?
- What are our teachers' learning needs?
- What are the leadership team's future actions?
- What actions do our teachers need to take in the immediate future?

Once changes have been implemented we need to consider:

- What the impact of the changes has been?
- The effectiveness of these changes on promoting our student learning and well being?

Tools we could use to collect evidence for Curriculum and other Reviews:

- Analysis of multi sourced, norm referenced or criterion referenced data in relation to National Standards, Curriculum levels
- Literature search
- Learning walks
- Student work samples
- Student presentations
- Interviews
- Observations
- Inquiry based research questions
- Evidence from other reviews
- Professional discussions

These tools lend themselves to be used in a variety of ways and in conjunction with each other.

Working as a team following the cycle of self review is more effective than individuals doing a review to 'tick a box'.

Conclusion

Having the opportunity to spend time reading, reflecting and talking to teachers and principals has been inspiring. The process of leading and managing a primary school is complex. The success of a school depends on shared, collaborative leadership where the skills of each individual are used for the benefit of the whole.

Teachers clearly stated how the leadership style of their principal affected the way they respond to the call to be leaders themselves. The core task of each school is teaching and learning and this can never be put on the back burner to allow for leadership to be developed. Principals need to empower their teachers to work together for the benefit of the school. They must openly value their staff by ensuring that everyone involved is able to influence future development and direction. Taking the principles of Kiwi Leadership for Principals into account is important for principals to be accepted as authentic, knowledgeable, true and purposeful leaders.

I believe that it all comes back to relationships. Healthy, open, honest relationships are vital in a cohesive team approach.

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