

# **New Capabilities for a New World:** leadership development for school and system improvement

**Shaun McInerney (University of Worcester)  
and Rhea Kewalramani (Ashoka)**



THE CAREERS &  
ENTERPRISE  
COMPANY



GMCA GREATER  
MANCHESTER  
COMBINED  
AUTHORITY

---

# New Capabilities Leadership Development Framework

*“I thought the Program would help me shape our careers strategy; but it is much more than that; it’s a much deeper leadership journey”.*

– Programme participant

**How to cite this report:** McInerney, S., and Kewalramani, R., (2023), New Capabilities for a New World: leadership development for school and system improvement. London: The Edge Foundation.

---

# Contents:

<b>Executive Summary</b>	4
Who this report is for	4
The problem	5
What we did	5
How we did it	6
What we discovered	6
What now...?	8
<b>Going Deeper</b>	9
Our Theory of Change	9
New Capabilities for a New World: Impact Model	10
New Capabilities for a New World: Methodology	10
New Capabilities for a New World: An Emergent Framework	11
<b>Emerging Impact: New Capabilities Practice in Schools</b>	12
1) Sharing Power through Student Co-leadership	12
2) Expanding Possibilities through Real World Learning	13
3) Harnessing Social Capital to Support Learning and Outcomes	14
<b>Impact Case Studies:</b>	15
Modelling A Culture of Developmental Relationships at Matthew Moss High School, Rochdale	15
Expanding Possibilities Through Real World Learning at Derby High School, Bury	16
Sharing Power with Young People at St Joseph's, Bolton	17
Thinking at a System Level: Little Lever Ecoliteracy Project, Impact Trust UK and Connell Co-op College	18
Endnotes and References	19

---

# Executive Summary

## Who this report is for

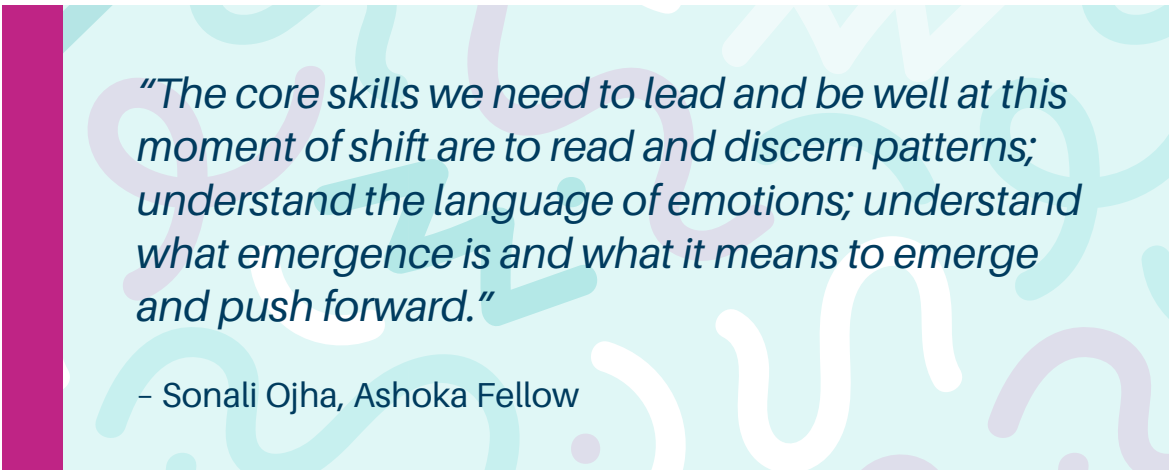
The current pace of change in education places immense pressure on school leaders and can result in burnout<sup>1</sup> and inertia. Despite the best efforts of school leaders, limited resources and short-termism stymie the innovation needed to prepare learners to succeed and contribute fully in a rapidly changing world. In other areas of the public and private sector, organisations increasingly recognise the complexities of the world in which we operate and are developing their leaders using adaptive, human-centred approaches. In education, also, there are schools, MATs and organisations who are rethinking their approach to leadership individually and collectively across the system.

New Capabilities for a New World is a leadership development journey for school leaders to explore the capacities and conditions that enable them lead change in their specific context. The Programme invited school leaders to step back and pause with awareness; to make meaning from a new level of understanding and lead change in

new ways. The programme connected leadership development to whole school strategy for careers and wider personal development. The new thinking and practice that emerged also contributes to our understanding of wider challenges such as learner engagement, equity and social justice.

The learning in this report may be of interest to **MAT CEOs** and **school leaders** seeking to develop themselves and their teams to lead change in meaningful ways. For us all, **parents, teachers and young people**, this report will, hopefully, also reveal glimpses of what starts to emerge when we listen carefully to the articulated needs of young people and put that at the centre of our thinking.

The New Capabilities Framework that has emerged from this programme may inform the conversation in those organisations seeking to rethink their approach to leadership development as they build capacity and conditions for sustainable, school and system improvement.



*“The core skills we need to lead and be well at this moment of shift are to read and discern patterns; understand the language of emotions; understand what emergence is and what it means to emerge and push forward.”*

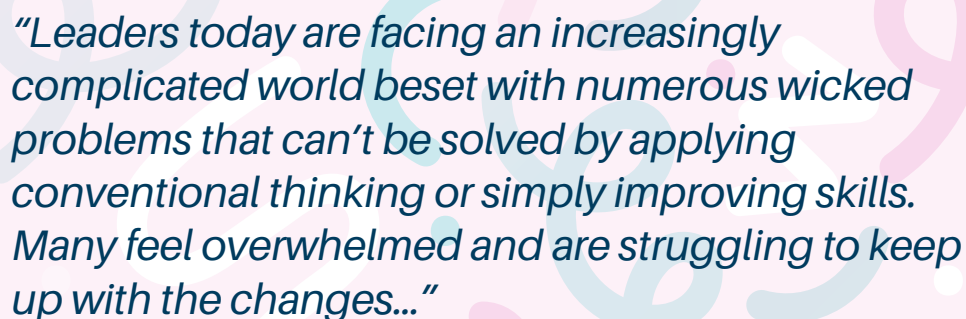
– Sonali Ojha, Ashoka Fellow

---

<sup>1</sup> [www.educationsupport.org.uk](https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/news-and-events/news/significant-signs-of-burnout-amongst-teachers/). (n.d.). *Significant signs of burnout amongst teachers*. [online] Available at: <https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/news-and-events/news/significant-signs-of-burnout-amongst-teachers/>

---

## The problem we are trying to solve



*“Leaders today are facing an increasingly complicated world beset with numerous wicked problems that can’t be solved by applying conventional thinking or simply improving skills. Many feel overwhelmed and are struggling to keep up with the changes...”*

(Keegan 1994)

Leaders need new capabilities to lead change in a world of increasing complexity. For school leaders, this is a largely unmet need. Current, ‘horizontal’, approaches to leadership development build skills and competencies and allow us to improve what we do. This does not necessarily prepare leaders to lead change in a complex adaptive system such as education. As a result, we tend to approach existing problems, as Einstein famously said, ‘from the same level of thinking that created them’. ‘Vertical’ approaches to leadership development recognise complexity and encourage leaders to consider themselves and the contribution they are making as they lead change and develop others (Jones 2020). Potentially, this allows for the development of more agile and sophisticated mindsets, more self-awareness, more sustainable school cultures and better strategic thinking. Embedding collaborative approaches to complex problem-solving in leadership development journeys for headteachers may better equip the system to meet the imperative for all learners to be prepared to contribute, fully, once they leave school.

## What we did

New Capabilities for a New World was a partnership between Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Ashoka, The Edge Foundation and the Careers and Enterprise Company. Over 12 sessions, 8 online and 4 in person, school leaders from Greater Manchester, South Yorkshire and Merseyside, explored their own leadership through a methodology informed by the Ashoka Changemaker Instrument. They were introduced to leading-edge practice around Real World Learning, Project Based Learning and Community Connected Learning and engaged with a range of changemakers and social innovators working with young people. One-to-one coaching sessions kick-started the programme and continued throughout as needs arose. Leaders had 5 Action Learning Set sessions, designed around the principles of Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider 2013). Students from 8 schools followed a parallel, custom designed, leadership learning journey exploring ‘New Models of Youth Co-Leadership’ that we integrated into programme delivery.

---

## How we did it

The project was testing whether (1) the New Capabilities for a New World programme results in increased **changemaker capabilities** (mindset, understanding, functioning) among secondary headteachers and college leaders and whether (2) for students, this leads to early evidence of increasing social capital e.g. through **expanding possibilities** (Real World Learning) and **sharing power** (the way in which relationships/ activities evolve). The project also set out to learn what approaches help or hinder successful implementation.

The work of global NGO, Ashoka, provided a clear rationale for the programme development. Ashoka's experience working with social innovators over 40 years has revealed four capabilities or skills that underpin Changemaking: conscious empathy, new/shared leadership, working in non-siloed 'teams of teams' and creative problem solving by practising changemaking<sup>2</sup>.

The Changemaker Instrument was developed concurrently with the programme. This is a framework based on two questions: What individual capacities do I need to develop to lead change? What cultural conditions help us unlock potential? Ashoka's research surfaced four capacities that changemakers need to develop: **awareness, meaning-making, self-permission and responsibility**. These capacities are unlocked by four cultural conditions that enable these capacities to grow and develop. These are cultures of **receptivity, reflection, belonging and emergence**.

These changemaker insights drove the design of a vertical leadership development approach to school leadership. Vertical approaches encourage more complex, systemic and strategic thinking in leaders at the level of **self, school** and **system** and help them develop new capabilities.

## What we discovered

The Programme sought to help leaders 'see' and 'think' differently, so they could 'do' differently.

### At the level of self, leaders:

- improved their leadership skills (9/11)
- felt equipped to lead change (9/11)

*'The programme is giving myself permission to think beyond the curriculum and do things in a different way, looking at individual needs. Now I'm encouraging our team to understand 'why'; to sit students down and talk to them. This needs a real mindset change.'*

*'Spending time with people who share similar values helps you to feel less isolated and vulnerable. This sense of certainty and confidence is significant.'*

---

<sup>2</sup> Ashoka (2021), Your Guide to 4 Changemaker Abilities, <https://medium.com/change-maker/your-guide-to-4-changemaker-abilities-d83d0aaaae85#:~:text=Working%20with%20thousands%20of%20changemakers,%2C%20and%20creative%20problem%2Dsolving.>

---

### At the level of system, leaders:

- shifted their leadership style to be more outward facing and system focused (8/11)

*'It's helped me see big picture strategic thinking.'*

*'You start to see the wider strategic view from the Greater Manchester perspective about what the Combined Authority is trying to do, and to play a part in that. So real, deeper understanding.'*

### At a school level, as a result of the Programme, leaders reported:

- giving learners more agency (11/11)
- planning more learning experiences that enabled learners to see possibilities for their future (from 5/11 to 9/11)
- exposing learners to new ideas, experiences and places (from 6/11 to 8/11)
- giving students opportunities to promote social justice (from 3/11 to 9/11) and become changemakers (9/11)
- improvements in students' social capital (8/11)

### Expanding possibilities:

The New Capabilities for a New World Programme encouraged all leaders to broaden the scope of their careers programme to meet the needs of learners in new ways.

*'It has made me think more about the importance of strategy being at the heart of the young people we engage in and how we can develop our programmes in school to support personal development of every child.'*

*'We are encouraging staff to invest time to ensure that, wherever possible, we provide 'experiences for all'. This has resulted in bringing not only our students, but also our teachers, into contexts which are unfamiliar to them and where they are in face-to-face contact with professionals they would not otherwise meet or they are out in the real-world.'*

### Sharing power:

The New Capabilities for a New World Programme resulted in school leaders sharing power and co-leading with young people.

*'The programme has challenged my thinking... I have realised that I need to surrender a bit of my power to young people; and every other member of staff needs to do the same. Before this, I would never have described leadership in terms of power. We can't create more of it, we can only share it out. And it makes sense because with great power comes great responsibility which is what we want our young people to have.'*



---

## What now...?

Rethinking how we support leaders to be more adaptive and responsive is imperative if schools are to respond to the emerging needs of young people. Having the strategic capacity to innovate is essential too (Senge 1990, 2006).

The New Capabilities framework for leadership development that has emerged through this work can complement existing Department for Education (NPO) approaches. It adds a transformational dimension at the levels of self, school and system, helping school leaders develop: a deeper awareness at the level of self; deeper understanding of the needs of students and staff at a whole school level; and an appetite to shape sustainable solutions to complex problems from a system level. It invites educators to lead authentically with their whole selves and the whole system in mind.

Further research around this and other vertical leadership approaches is needed so we can better understand the mechanisms that positively impact the self-efficacy and identities of school leaders that in turn support their resilience. This is important at a time of high burnout and low recruitment and retention in the profession.

At a student level, as we seek to address social justice and support all young people to gain access to opportunities when they leave school, we need to better understand how the strategies that are emerging operate on the ground. The programme led to schools extending opportunities for young people and we need, now, to see how this translates into (a wider set of) outcomes for young people. The role of social capital in tackling disadvantage seems significant though it remains under-theorised and under-researched in our context.

And at a system level, we need to explore how new modes of collaboration may help us solve 'wicked' problems for the good of all. This points to an important research agenda for changemaking. What is the role of conscious empathy in

educational leadership, and how might we intentionally develop and embed this into strategy and systems design? What are the enablers and barriers to co-leadership with young people and how do we create conditions for this?

Deeper thinking, deeper learning and deeper leadership are essential if the education system is to play a role in responding to the complex problems of our time, rather than react to their symptoms. We intentionally framed this programme around the 'capabilities' leaders need to expand the freedom and choices young people have when they leave school. Drawing on the human development approach of Amartya Sen (1999) may offer a good starting point to think afresh about how we tackle equity and disadvantage in and through education. Attending to the 'capabilities', and the conditions that enable young people to function well in the world, as it is emerging, is of primary importance.

This group of pioneering leaders recognises these times require us to collaborate in new ways, think afresh and ask new questions as we imagine new possibilities that address common challenges.

*'This is the important stuff - the things that underlie what we are doing and improve things in the long term. This is helping me ask "who will be the changemakers in these schools?".'*

We are deeply appreciative of this changemaking community of school leaders, their wider teams and students on this pilot whose commitment to make their fullest contribution has got us this far. Collaboration remains at the heart of this; so, if you would like to comment, discuss, learn more or develop new capabilities in your own setting, please do get in touch.

Shaun McInerney  
[s.mcinerney@worc.ac.uk](mailto:s.mcinerney@worc.ac.uk)



# Going Deeper

NEW CAPABILITIES FOR A NEW WORLD



THE CAREERS & ENTERPRISE COMPANY

EDGE FOUNDATION

GMCA GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

## New Capabilities: Unlocking better outcomes for young people

**Thinking Differently:**  
Unlocking potential in self, colleagues and young people

**Changemaking**

**Doing Differently:**  
Innovation in CEIAG and personal development

**Real World Learning, Developmental relationships**

**Contributing to Systems Improvement:** Better support and outcomes for young people

**Knowledge exchange and sustainable impact within the careers hub**

## Our Theory of Change

The Programme was answering the needs of young people, articulated through the Greater Manchester Youth Task Force, to be life ready so that all young people can develop the capabilities<sup>3</sup> they need to contribute fully and gain fair access to economic opportunities in their region.

We wanted to see the strategies and practices that emerged when leaders had an opportunity to pause, reflect and connect with colleagues and with emerging best practice. Through the lens of changemaking, informed by global NGO, Ashoka, leaders reflected on their own leadership and how to unlock potential in others. Taking careers and personal development as a focus, leaders were introduced to emerging best practices from Edge and other partners that offered new strategic possibilities for CEIAG and personal development.

We recognised that while the learning journey was likely to engender new thinking, and inform new strategy, we were only likely to see emerging

evidence of new practice at a school and system level during the phase of the Programme.

Research over two decades has found that ‘nothing has more influence on the life of a child than positive relationships’.<sup>4</sup> **Developmental relationships** are close connections through which young people discover who they are, gain abilities to shape their own lives and learn how to interact with, and contribute to, the world around them.

When adults connect with young people in a developmental way, they often share power with them and take action to expand their possibilities and this helps them thrive (Search Institute 2020). **Sharing power** means treating young people with respect and giving them a say, collaborating with them and letting them lead. **Expanding opportunities** is connecting learners with people who inspire and broaden their horizons.<sup>5</sup> Unsurprisingly, developmental relationships are positively correlated with

<sup>3</sup> The ‘capabilities’ approach is drawn from Amartya Sen’s work and encompasses both the resources/skills/qualifications we have and our ability to use these to expand our freedom. See Nausbaum (2013) and Walker (2007).

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.search-institute.org/developmental-relationships/developmental-relationships-framework/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.search-institute.org/our-research/current-projects/relationships-outcomes-initiative/>

caring, responsibility, social emotional skills, decision making skills and academic motivation and achievement.<sup>6,7</sup>

**Social capital** increases when latent resources within a network of reciprocity and exchange are unlocked (Lin 2001). This often happens in schools through partnership work that can lead to new learning opportunities and new relationships for young people and leaders. The evidence shows that social advancement lies in the power of ‘weak ties’ (Freeland Fisher 2018). Social capital is crucial for social mobility (Scales et al 2020) because a parents’ limited networks often act as a barrier to young peoples’ future success (Freeland Fisher 2018).

We integrated **The Ashoka Changemaker’s Instrument**: A Togetherness Practice for Activating the Potential of Ourselves & Each Other.

This framework was developed from interviews with systems leaders to discern the capacities needed to lead change and to consider the cultural conditions that unlock these capacities in others. Using an Action Research Methodology, more than 100 social innovators were interviewed about what allowed them to thrive in a world of complexity. The research was informed by adult developmental theory (Keegan 1994) and a living systems approach to organisational development (Laloux 2014).

### **New Capabilities for a New World: Methodology**

A rich concept base emerged from this research that shaped the course planning and delivery, and a summary of this methodology is outlined in the table below.

### **New Capabilities for a New World: methodology**

<b>New Capabilities for a New World...</b>				
Fostering cultural conditions that	Receptivity	Reflection	Belonging	Emergence
ripen changemaker capacities and	Awareness	Meaning-making	Self-permission	Responsibility
encourage leaders to develop new capabilities that	Conscious empathy	Developmental cultures	Collaboration (eg Co-leadership)	Systems leadership
unlock potential in new ways.	Curriculum pedagogy assessment	Personal development and transitions	Changemaking and social action	Ecoliteracy and sustainability leadership
<b>...preparing young people to contribute fully and make the most of emerging opportunities.</b>				

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.search-institute.org/our-research/current-projects/boosting-student-motivation-school/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://ies.ed.gov/ncer/projects/grant.asp?ProgID=818&year=2017&grantid=1983>

## New Capabilities for a New World: An Emergent Framework

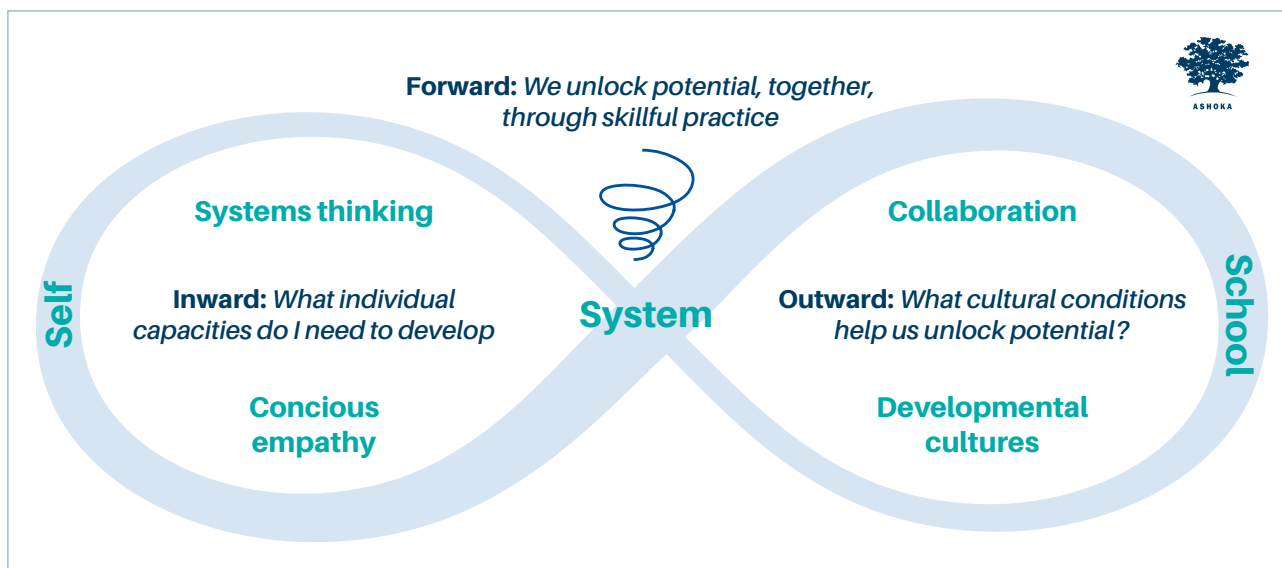
A framework for ‘vertical’ school leadership development emerged from the delivery and evaluation of the Programme. Vertical leadership development engages leaders at the levels of self, school and system. It activates the inner world of leaders, deepens their understanding of the conditions in their context and encourages action at a systems level. The integration of these three levels is significant. As we grow **inward capacities** such as conscious empathy and systems thinking, we foster **outward conditions** of growth and contribution, developmental cultures, and collaboration. As we unlock our own potential and develop others to contribute in this way, we build **forward momentum** towards whole school and system improvement.

*“It’s helped me flip flop my thinking more effectively between **inward facing actions** and **outwards facing action**. I can see small actions and interactions driving much bigger cogs forwards.”*

*‘Students have had a stronger voice and directed change, it’s made me think about where their voices should and could be heard better and lead to actions.’*

*‘Being part of a bigger network really enables you to make that deep change that you want to make as a school leader to have impact on people’s lives.’*

## New Capabilities for a New World: Leadership development framework



---

# Emerging Impact: New Capabilities Practice in Schools

## 1) Sharing Power through Student Co-leadership

How it works in theory: Leaders reframe the potential of young people to co-lead in the design of their education and carefully consider appropriate opportunities and conditions for them to make decisions alongside adults. Agreeing on a specific area for collaboration and reasonable parameters, learners and adults deploy principles of youth co-leadership such as sharing power, mutuality, shared accountability and an ethos of co-design, and invite young people to co-create solutions to shared problems or improvements to learning and ethos.

### Where new practice is emerging:

- St Joseph's, Bolton have established a student Aspirations Team to work with the pastoral/careers team and the wider whole school community.
- Bright Futures MAT are integrating co-leadership into their cross-trust student leadership approach.
- Waterhead Academy are working with GMCA to integrate co-leadership into a whole school student-led inquiry around school ethos.

### Where existing practice is deepening:

- Ladybridge High School students now have regular meeting with SLT to input into school improvement.
- Middleton Technology College students now feel they have more access to school leaders than previously.
- Derby High Year 9 'Changemaker' students co-created units of work for Science and taught this to peers.
- Matthew Moss High School has Transactional Analysis embedded in school culture and practice to instil foundations for developmental relationships.

---

## 2) Expanding Possibilities through Real World Learning.

How it works in theory: Better matching of learners' aspirations to the curriculum can help them discern future pathways beyond the classroom. Real World Learning and employer engagement can be a lever for student autonomy, engagement and motivation. Social action allows learners to feel their agency and be valued for making a difference to their communities in and beyond school. Real World Learning can start with locating a unit of work in a current problem, dilemma or community event e.g. creating bird boxes in a local park. This can be extended to giving learners 'live briefs' from industry partners, and setting up Project Based Learning units that are driven by powerful, interdisciplinary, questions. Supporting teachers with externships and collaborative planning time can foster innovation and good practice (see Edge website for guidance on this).

### Where new practice is emerging:

- The Studio Liverpool have developed a Student Professional Development Programme that prepares learners, through bespoke sector led learning and experiences, for their chosen sector.
- Derby High have a 'Changemaker' theme to their Year 9 personal development programme and this group have created an award winning 'Changemaker Bus'.
- Connell Co-op College's sixth form students now have 'pathway choices' rather than subject choices and career opportunities are integrated into subject areas by pathway leads.
- Little Lever High School developed a Unit of Study for Year 9 Geography that integrated 'ecoliteracy' and enabled learners to engage with employers and deliver key ecoliteracy concepts to inform industry professionals about global warming and climate change.
- The Studio, Liverpool have introduced 'vendor qualifications' so that students can learn Microsoft accredited professional qualifications as part of their Programme of Study.

### Where existing practice is deepening:

- Ladybridge High School feel more confident in the introduction of their 'Trivium' integrated curriculum in Key Stage 3 following programme sessions from The Edge Foundation on Real Word Learning, Employer Engagement and Community Connected Learning.
- Matthew Moss High School integrated careers into its CHANGE/personal development curriculum across the whole school. CHANGE stands for Composure; High Standards; Agency; Numeracy & literacy; Empathy.



---

### 3) Harnessing social capital to support learning and outcomes.

**How it works in theory:** Research suggests that schools can help learners become aware of the important role social capital will play in their future success and encourage them to start to build their networks as young people (Scales 2020, Friedland Fisher 2020). There is a useful Playbook published by the Christensen Institute on how to do this. Schools can take a more individualised approach to matching the aspirations of young people with career learning opportunities. They can pool work experience opportunities rather than outsourcing this to parents. They can develop strategic relationships with local companies who can offer mentorship and apprenticeship application support. Turning outwards to harness support from universities and the third sector can also offer aspirational learning opportunities for learners, parents and teachers.

#### **Where new practice is emerging:**

- Matthew Moss High School & Ladybridge are working with Dr Chris McLean from University of Manchester as pilot schools for School Citizens Assemblies
- Little Level School, Bolton, developed an ecoliteracy approach to Geography at KS3. This is now being spread to other schools e.g. Connell College through Sustainability Leadership organisation, The Impact Trust UK.
- St Bernard's, Rotherham, are integrating externships and social capital mapping into their careers learning across the school.
- Watergrove Academy are being supported by GMCA to develop a student-led, whole school, enquiry into ethos and engagement.
- All leaders are committed to supporting GMCA Careers Hub to share emerging learning to improve careers strategies at other schools across the region as part of the Careers Hub strategy.

#### **Where new practice is extending and deepening:**

- Ladybridge High School, Bolton and Matthew Moss High School have been accepted onto Big Education's The Next Big 10 to build on and share their innovations at a system level.
- Derby High Year 9 Changemakers harnessed the resources of its local community to raise £30,000 to refurbish their award winning Changemaker Bus project.
- The Studio, Liverpool, use industry mentors to support the career development of students and products/projects they create.



---

# Impact Case Studies

## 'Self' Case Study: Modelling A Culture of Developmental Relationships

### Matthew Moss High School, Rochdale

---

Type of school: Academy within Watergrove Trust

---

Age range: 11-16 NOR: 1220

---

FSM: 36%

---

New Capabilities Leader: Paul Clough (Deputy Head) and Chris Jennings, (Headteacher)

---

Matthew Moss is a mixed, culturally diverse non-selective secondary school serving the community of Rochdale. Its mission is: empower young people for a life of learning both satisfying to themselves and of significant value to others. It joined the Watergrove Multi Academy Trust which was formed in 2013. It was elected as an Ashoka Changemaker School in 2015 in recognition of its innovative, student-centred approach and a CHANGE curriculum that has driven its curriculum and culture. CHANGE is: composure, high standards, agency, numeracy and literacy, growth, mindset, and empathy. Matthew Moss has pioneered the application of transactional analysis in education in England and has this approach at the heart of its school development plan. Its 'relationships' policy drives high levels of learner engagement to the degree that there is no gap between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and all pupils nationally.

Their motivation for joining the New Capabilities Programme was based on a need to re-emphasise and build their culture post COVID and after a period of rapid expansion from a PAN of 900 to a PAN of 1200. Hosting the other schools to showcase this area of work led to more rigour and a 'radical shift in the way these core pillars of their culture are viewed' according to Deputy Head, Paul Clough.

This culture building enabled a review of their PSCHE curriculum with learners. Throughout the year, they have rewritten and co-constructed the curriculum with staff to integrate the CHANGE elements into the PSCHE curriculum across the whole school. This is deepening the MMHS approach to building developmental relationships with learners in ways that are led by learners. For example, it has reinforced their commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and underpinned a strategic piece of work with The Rainbow Award as an outcome.

Both Paul and Headteacher, Chris Jennings, reported increases in confidence in their purpose driven approach and an appetite to contribute to innovation at a system level. Chris Jennings has joined 'The Big 10' leadership development programme to deepen his learning about innovation and system change. When they received their first #BeeWell whole school survey they were struck by the strength of teacher - student relationships. They cite empathy, transactional analysis and their CHANGE curriculum as key drivers for progress of learners which is among the top schools in the region.

---

# 'School' Case study: Expanding Possibilities Through Real World Learning

## Derby High School, Bury

---

Type of school: Community School

---

Age range: 11-16 NOR: 926

---

FSM: 28%

---

<https://thederbyhighschool.co.uk/enrichment/extra-curricular-activities/>

---

New Capabilities Leader: Lynn Provost (Assistant Headteacher)

---

The Derby High School started their changemaking journey in September 2021 when it changed its motto from: EXCELLENCE, TRADITION, IMAGINATION; to 'Inspired to Make a Difference'. They designated Year 9 as their Changemaker year group and set about intentionally developing a Changemaker culture with the clear purpose of 'being able to offer students experiences which help them to develop an understanding of their own talents and show them how, in the future, their skills and know-how may be applicable in this rapidly changing world.

The New Capabilities Programme gave momentum to key projects such as their Changemaker Bus. This community funded project was led by young people who renovated a bus that had been donated by the local council. This bus is now a workshop venue, content creation studio and centre point for students to develop projects that impact the school and community. It won the BBC Regenerators Award in September 2022. Through the year, students developed co-leadership skills through workshops with Ashoka's Jaiden Corfield. Several projects emerged such as co-creation of a series of science lessons that Year 9 students delivered to their peers.

The New Capabilities Programme supported Lynn to reflect on the purpose of her role and to develop others and lead whole school change. Lynn sees this as important in a community where children grow up with a limited range of experiences which

limit their choices for the future to a narrow set of options. Lynn's answer to this has been creative pedagogies that engage and inspire.

The impact of the programme has been to elevate creative teaching approaches as a whole-school priority:

*'Our work with New Capabilities has allowed us to nurture creative teaching approaches and put student experience at the heart of our curriculum. It has made us more courageous even with very limited resource, to invest in establishing real-world experiences as a keystone. We know that some students have their talents overlooked because, at present, these talents are not measurable in results tables. Introducing Community Ambassadors and consciously exploring students' aspirations, talents and interests has allowed staff to create bespoke learning experiences which have empowered our young people, encouraged and motivated them and this, in turn, has given students confidence and belief that they can succeed.'*

*'This year we are embedding 'real world' learning within all areas of the curriculum to ensure that students understand how their skills are applicable in the wider world. Within subject curricula, knowledge and experiences are being designed to raise the cultural capital of all students and there is a significant focus on communication skills and potential career pathways.'*



---

# 'School' Case Study: Emerging Impact: Sharing Power with Young People

## St Joseph's, Bolton

---

Type of School: Voluntary aided

---

NOR: 1005

---

FSM: 17%

---

Headteacher: Tony McCabe

---

Tony McCabe wanted to develop a new capabilities approach to the St Joseph's wider curriculum offer (Bucket List) that supports learners to develop their own record of how they are setting themselves up for success in a changing world: the skills they are developing, the networks they are creating and the real world impact they are having and want to have; and doing this by co-leading with young people to secure their ownership and inclusion.

The Programme supported Tony to deepen his understanding of his own context.  
*'The Programme helped me understand the need to help people understand the reason for change and the value of the intended outcome.'*

It also widened his perspective. In terms of strategy, he has widened the school mission from 'being found', to 'being found for a purpose'.

*'We're asking: What are we here in school for? How are we setting up an environment where our young people are being set up for the future? We are asking, "if you are not engaged now; why not? What is your purpose, your life purpose?" This is allowing us to ensure that every students' aspirations are known.'*

St Joseph's have increased their participation in extracurricular activities to 37% and aim to increase this further to 50% next year; then 90% the following year. They are doing this by working with students to shape the programme and lead activities.

*'We have changed our thinking so students have more ownership and agency so that they have a voice and they are ready to contribute. The session at Matthew Moss helped me think about how we really integrate our young people into what we're doing. We used to have a Head Boy and Girl and a fairly traditional approach to this. This year we have an Ambition Team - a group of young people from year 11 who have taken it on themselves to develop the ambition of students. Some young people spoke at a staff briefing to ask staff for help in their project. Practice is shifting as the Careers Lead has created an aspirations map for all 1050 young people allowing us to map and create opportunities by design.'*

---

## 'System' Case Study: Thinking at a System Level

### Little Lever Ecoliteracy Project, Impact Trust UK and Connell Co-op College

---

New Capabilities Leaders: Emma Soper & Martin Foulkes

---

Connell Co-op College is a sixth form college in East Manchester. A 'Good' Ofsted report in 2018 highlighted a strategic priority around linking courses and career aspirations. Principal, Emma Soper, noted that, as a result of The New Capabilities Programme, their approach to CEIAG in the curriculum has changed significantly: 'How we think about engagement with employers, whose responsibility it is and how it enables us to connect with partner schools and our community has been turned on its head. Careers not courses are now at the heart of the way we think about our offer and what we do. CEIAG's profile within the college is much higher and in turn it's changed the dialogue we have with our feeder schools.'

Ecoliteracy was explored in Little Lever High School. The project team supported Ashoka Fellow, Tamzin Ractcliffe, and the Impact Trust, to work with Martin Foulkes to integrate ecoliteracy into their KS3 Geography curriculum. This was co-created with students and delivered over an 8-week unit of work. It carefully mapped knowledge progression and ecoliteracy outcomes. It integrated Real World Learning and employer engagement and supported learners to teach new essential ecoliteracy concepts such as planetary ecological boundaries to business leaders. This was a successful piece of learning for students. It also gave voice to a deeper sense of purpose and systems leadership for the school leader.

The New Capabilities Programme enabled a new relationship between Connell College and Impact Trust and inspired Martin to engage more deeply in system leadership work. He is now an Executive Director of Routes to Resilience, supported by Impact Trust, leading a project to integrate real world and ecoliteracy learning into the Connell College curricula.

*'On a personal level I intend to leave my current post and develop a wider role in helping schools to build a curriculum including social action and ecoliteracy. My new role will be to develop a wide range of sustainability education programmes, initially focussing on deprived areas of Greater Manchester and then further afield. These are designed to educate and empower young people to recognise sustainability challenges and have unique experiences/interactions which will allow them to affect change as well as gaining new skills to enter the green skills workforce arena.'*

Martin Foulkes, formerly Little Lever High School and current Executive Director at the Impact Trust UK.

---

## Endnotes:

### Participating Schools

- Bright Futures Educational Trust, Manchester
- Connell Co-op College, Manchester
- Cedar Mount Academy, Manchester
- Ladybridge High School, Bolton
- Little Lever High School, Bolton
- Matthew Moss High School, Rochdale
- Middleton Technology School, Manchester
- Philips High School, Bury
- South Shore Academy, Blackpool
- St Bernard Catholic High School, Rotherham
- St. Joseph's RC High School, Bolton
- The Derby High School, Bury
- The Studio and Liverpool Life Sciences, Liverpool
- Waterhead Academy, Oldham

### Partners

- Ashoka UK and Ireland
- The Edge Foundation
- Greater Manchester Combined Authority
- Careers and Enterprise Company

### And with thanks to...

- New Capabilities Delivery Team: Shaun McInerney (University of Worcester), Rhea Kewalramani (Ashoka), Liz Bacon (GMCA).
- GMCA Skills Team led by Nicola McLoed and Liz Bacon.
- Ashoka Instrument Team: Vipin Thekk, Lauren Yarmuth, Shaun McInerney.
- Jaiden Corfield for leading New Models of Youth Co-Leadership.
- Chris McLean from University of Manchester, Alliance School of Business
- Impact Trust for developing the Little Lever Ecoliteracy project.
- Julia Freeland Fisher and The Christensen Institute.
- Liz Robinson (Big Education), Erica Neve and the many contributors who brought changemaking to life through their input.
- University of Worcester Institute of Education for supporting evaluation, report writing and the further development of this work.



---

## References

- Ashoka (2022). *Your guide to 4 changemaker abilities*. [online] Changemakers. Available at: <https://medium.com/change-maker/your-guide-to-4-changemaker-abilities-d83d0aaaae85#:~:text=Working%20with%20thousands%20of%20changemakers> [Accessed 29 Mar. 2023].
- Brassey, J., De Smet, A., and Kruyt M., (2022), *Deliberate Calm: How to Learn and Lead in a Volatile World*, London: Harper Collins
- Cooperrider, D.L., Whitney, D. and Stavros, J.M. (2008). *Appreciative inquiry handbook for leaders of change*. Brunswick San Francisco Crown Custom Publ. Berrett-Koehler Publ.
- Corfield, Jaiden, (2022), *An Organisations Guide to Youth Co-Leadership*, (online) Ashoka UK Available at: <https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/0370/9111/5143/files/YouthColeadershipGuidebookV1.pdf?v=1657787316>
- Eastwood, O., (2021) *Belonging: The Ancient Code of Togetherness*, Quercus, London
- Edmondson, A.C. (2018). *The Fearless Organization*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Edmonstone, J, Lawless, A and Pedler, M (2019) *Leadership Development, Wicked Problems and Action Learning: Provocations to a Debate*. *Action Learning: research and practice*, 16. pp. 37-51. ISSN 1476-7341
- Education Support (2023), *Significant signs of burnout amongst teachers*. [online] Available at: <https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/news-and-events/news/significant-signs-of-burnout-amongst-teachers/>
- Fisher, J. and Charania, M. (n.d.). *5 Steps for Building & Strengthening Students' Networks Ensuring that every student graduates with the networks needed to thrive*. [online] Available at: <https://whoyouknow.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/playbook2.pdf> [Accessed 29 Mar. 2023].
- Freeland Fisher, J (2018), *Who You Know, Unlocking Innovations That Expand Students' Networks*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco
- Jeevan, Sharath (2021), *Intrinsic: A manifesto to Reignite our Inner Drive*, Endeavour
- Jones, H. E., Chesley, J. A., & Egan, T. (2020). *Helping Leaders Grow Up: Vertical Leadership Development in Practice*. *The Journal of Values-Based Leadership*, 13(1), 8
- Kegan R., Lahey, L.L., (2009) *Immunity to Change: How to Overcome It and Unlock the Potential in Yourself and Your Organization (Leadership for the Common Good)*, HBR Press
- Kegan, R. and Lisa Laskow Lahey (2016). *An Everyone Culture*. Harvard Business Review Press.
- Kegan, Robert (1994) *In Over Our Heads, The Mental Demands of Modern Life*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA
- Kraiger, K., Ford, J.K. and Salas, E. (1993). Application of cognitive, skill-based, and affective theories of learning outcomes to new methods of training evaluation. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 78(2), pp.311-328. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.78.2.311>.
- Laloux, F. (2014). *Reinventing organizations: a Guide to Creating Organizations Inspired by the next Stage of Human Consciousness*. Brussels Nelson Parker.

- 
- Lent, J.R. (2017). *The patterning instinct : a cultural history of humanity's search for meaning*. Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books.
- Lin, N. (2002). *Social capital : a theory of social structure and action*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mckinsey (2021). *Psychological safety and leadership development | McKinsey*. [online] www.mckinsey.com. Available at: <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/psychological-safety-and-the-critical-role-of-leadership-development>.
- Nagaoka, J., Farrington, C., Ehrlich, S., Heath, R., Johnson, D., Dickson, S., Turner, A., Mayo, A. and Hayes, K. (n.d.). *Foundations for Young Adult Success A Developmental Framework Young Adult Success*. [online] Available at: <https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Foundations-for-Young-Adult-Success.pdf>.
- McInerney S., Finlay, I., Bacon, L. (2023). *Evaluation of Greater Manchester Combined Authority Hub Innovation Project: New Capabilities for a New World*. London: The Careers & Enterprise Company.
- Nussbaum, M.C. (2013). *Creating capabilities: the human development approach*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press Of Harvard University Press.
- Scales, P., Boat, A. and Pekel, K. (2020). *Defining and Measuring Social Capital for Young People A PRACTICAL REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON RESOURCE-FULL RELATIONSHIPS Defining and Measuring Social Capital for Young People*. [online] Available at: <https://www.search-institute.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/SOCAP-Lit-Review.pdf>.
- Scales, P.C., Van Boekel, M., Pekel, K., Syvertsen, A.K. and Roehlkepartain, E.C. (2020). Effects of developmental relationships with teachers on middle-school students' motivation and performance. *Psychology in the Schools*, 57(4), pp.646–677. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.22350>.
- Sen A., (1999). *Development as Freedom*. New York: Alfred Knopf.
- Senge, P.M. (2006). *The fifth discipline: the art and practice of the learning organization*. New York: Currency Doubleday.
- Senge, P.M., Cambron-McCabe, N., Lucas, T., Kleiner, A., Smith, B. and Dutton, J. (2012). *Schools that learn. : a fifth discipline fieldbook for educators, parents and everyone who cares about education*. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.
- Snowden, D., Greenberg, R. and Boudewijn Bertsch (2021). *Cynefin® weaving sense-making into the fabric of our world*. Singapore: Cognitive Edge - The Cynefin Co.
- Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund (TLIF): *Fund-level evaluation Final Report*. (2022). Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1104047/Teaching\\_and\\_Leadership\\_Innovation\\_Fund\\_TLIF\\_Fund-level\\_evaluation.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1104047/Teaching_and_Leadership_Innovation_Fund_TLIF_Fund-level_evaluation.pdf).
- Walker, M. and Unterhalter, E. (2007). *Amartya Sen's capability approach and social justice in education*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- www.educationsupport.org.uk. (n.d.). *Significant signs of burnout amongst teachers*. [online] Available at: <https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/news-and-events/news/significant-signs-of-burnout-amongst-teachers/>.



THE CAREERS &  
ENTERPRISE  
COMPANY



GMCA GREATER  
MANCHESTER  
COMBINED  
AUTHORITY