

An opportunity to share your story

David Frost, Director of HertsCam

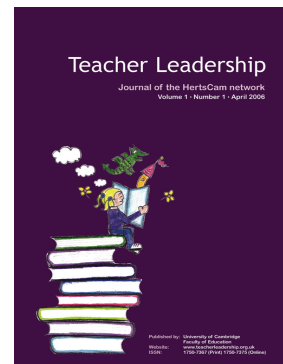
You may have heard talk of the metaverse. If Mark Zuckerberg realises his fantasies anytime soon, we will all be relating to each other through virtual reality, avatars and all that jazz. In the meantime, maybe we should just carry on connecting with each other as real people and building knowledge together by sharing stories of leading change.

Previous opportunities for sharing stories

Some years ago, when I was still working at the University of Cambridge Faculty of Education, I launched the Teacher Leadership journal which would carry articles and stories about teachers' development work from within HertsCam and our sister networks around the world. In an article for the School Leadership and Management journal, I wrote about our journal and the values it reflected.

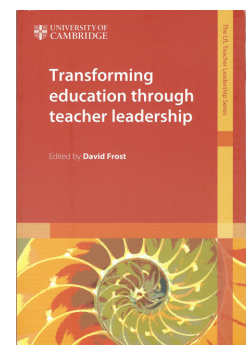
Teacher Leadership unapologetically promotes a set of values which have been made explicit in editorials and in other publicity material. These core values maybe represented as having four dimensions:

- shared leadership
- teachers' leadership of development work
- teachers' knowledge building
- teachers' voice



(Frost, 2008: 342)

We published just seven issues of the Teacher Leadership journal between 2006 and 2012. In all these included 78 pieces about teachers' endeavours. Another outlet for stories of teachers' development work was our newsletter *HertsCam Voice* which was issued in both hard copy and pdf formats between 2005 and 2012. Later on, I edited a series of books. The first one was *Transforming Education Through Teacher Leadership* (2014), the second was *Empowering teachers as agents of change: a non-positional approach to teacher leadership* (2017) and the third was *Teachers as Agents of Change: a masters programme taught by teachers* (2018). A fourth book is *Teacher Leadership in Kazakhstan*, but unfortunately this is only being published in Russian and Kazakh. A fifth book is currently in development.



A call for contributions

What the publications mentioned above have in common was summed up in the editorial in the first issue of the Teacher Leadership journal which said that the aim was 'to bring into the spotlight teachers' heroic efforts to improve the quality of teaching and learning' (Frost,

2006). The blog space in which you are reading this gives us another opportunity to maintain this well-established tradition of enabling teachers to have a voice and to celebrate their leadership. (Incidentally, I use the term 'teacher' here to refer to anyone in a professional role in education systems in England and in other countries). I am therefore calling on everyone within our extended network, no matter when you participated in a HertsCam / ITL programme, to contribute a piece for us to publish in this blog space. You may be a teacher: you may be a teaching assistant; you may have senior leadership responsibility as well; you may be a facilitator working to enable colleagues to exercise leadership. We want to hear from you, whatever your role and where ever you work.

Each month we would like to publish a new story; all of them will be saved and will continue to be accessible in the future. Here is a little guidance and clarification to help you prepare an article.

What your contribution might be about

There are at least six approaches:

- a. You could write an account of a completed development project, drawing on a TLDW / ELDP portfolio or an MEd project report.
- b. You might want to write about your experience of leading change in the period since you last participated in a HertsCam / ITL programme.
- c. You might want to write a piece about a particular issue or dilemma arising in your project. For example, in my opening piece in November, I wrote about 'the challenge of leading change'.
- d. You might want to write a discussion piece about a concept or recurring phenomenon, for example 'student disadvantage'.
- e. You might want to write about your experience as a facilitator.
- f. You might want to write, from the perspective of a school principal / senior leader, about the role of teacher leadership in your school.

You may have other ideas of course, so please feel free to discuss them with me. I can also offer editorial support. You can contact me on: davidfrost@hertscam.org.uk.

Approach to writing

We need brief articles that take just a few minutes to read. Something between 750 and 1,500 words would be acceptable.

We want these articles to be easy to read and intelligible to a wide audience, so please use plain language and prioritise clarity. We have an international audience, so please try to avoid terms that only colleagues in your school or your locality would recognise.

Try to catch the reader's attention with your style. Don't be afraid to be personal; make clear who you are and what your role is; say something about your values and priorities.

Whenever you cite literary sources, please list the references at the end.

How to contribute

If you would like some advice about the story you might write, please send an email to me at: davidfrost@hertscam.org.uk.

Once you have drafted a story, please send it as a Word file (not a pdf) to Kerry our administrator at this email address: admin@hertscam.org.uk.

The value of your contribution

I have said already that we want to shine a light on, and celebrate, teachers' leadership of change, but there are many more potential benefits for our readers. An obvious example: someone might pick out from your story a practical idea such as a teaching technique or a resource they could use in their own classroom. Beyond this, your story may contain insights about the exercise of leadership. We all learn how to lead change by hearing about how it was done by others, so make sure you tell us about what you did to get colleagues involved and how you managed the process of change. A third benefit is that your story could inspire and encourage others to take the initiative that will eventually lead to improved practice and thus better outcomes for young people in our schools.

Go on – you know you want to!

References

Frost, D. (2006) Editorial, *Teacher Leadership: the journal of the HertsCam Network* 1 (1), 1.

Frost, D. (2008) Teacher Leadership: values and voice, *School Leadership and Management* 28 (4), 337-352.