

Roots and Wings

International Programme for School Leadership - Learning Log

1. Key points from the Conference at Gwbert:

Personal Reflections on Day 1 – What is important to me?

Classroom –

- Pupils: their learning development and happiness;
- Staff: their teaching, learning, development and happiness;
- Success;
- *Dialogue.*

School –

- Sense of family, ownership and belonging;
- Engagement, with all, including the community;
- Commitment of all
- *Dialogue.*

Home –

- Faith, which is also important in the other aspects of my life.
- Wife and family.
- Time – my most precious commodity.
- *Dialogue.*

Personal Reflections after Day 1: What have been my key learnings?

- The similarities and differences between the Italian, Danish and Welsh educational systems. There is more that 'unites' us than divides us.
- In order to examine school leadership, there is a need for honesty and openness.

Personal Reflections on Day 2 – What have been my key learnings?

- The importance of questioning.
- The importance of being true to one's stated beliefs/values.
- The need to be adaptable.
- Self-reflection does not produce an accurate image – others helping one to reflect is more helpful.
- My own leadership style is very people-oriented.

- It is possible to describe different motivations and leadership styles. These descriptions assist questioning and analysis which may in turn assist improvement.
- In order to create sustainable change, there is a need to tackle leadership development. When adults change, they most often want to change themselves.

What my Herrmann Profile taught me

My own motivation is instinctive, being informed by a triple dominant profile, encompassing very strong scores on the interpersonal, emotional, musical, spiritual and communicative preferences, strong scores in quadrants B and D, and intermediate scores in quadrant A:

Quadrant A (blue) – Rational/realistic: logical, quantitative, analytical, technical, and factual;

Quadrant B (green) – Practical/sensible: sequential, conservative, controlled, detailed, and organised;

Quadrant C (red) – Visceral/feeling-based: emotional, musical, humanistic, expressive, sensory;

Quadrant D (yellow) – Cognitive/idealistic: metaphoric, integrative, visual, synthesising, conceptual.

In this respect, in order to improve my own leadership approach, I considered that I needed to be more task-aware, organised and controlled.

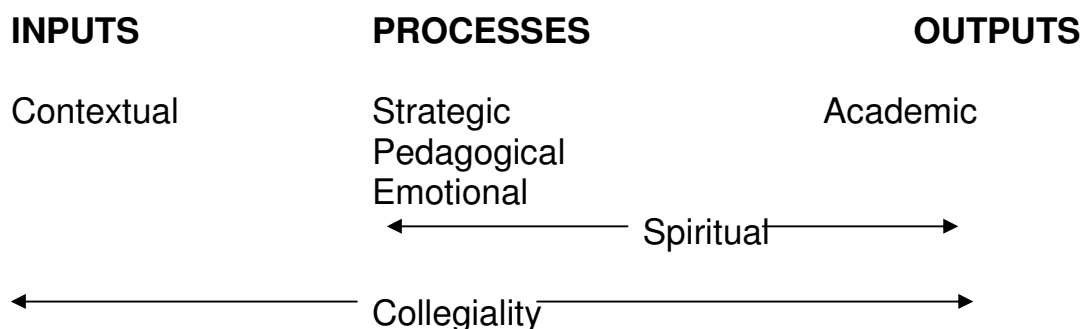
Applying the Intelligent School Model – MacGilchrist, Myers, Reed.

As a trio, we recognised that placing school improvement, school effectiveness, teaching and learning together can increase a school's capacity for improvement. *This requires an intelligent analysis:*

1. Contextual intelligence relies on openness in truly describing the relationship between the school and the community.
2. Strategic intelligence relies on receptiveness to change, using contextual intelligence to establish clear goals.
3. Academic intelligence emphasises achievement and scholarship, but should be considered relative to the potential of each individual.
4. Reflective intelligence involves self- and team- monitoring and evaluation at all levels.

5. Pedagogical intelligence emphasises learning about learning, an exercise in empowerment.
6. Collegial intelligence views all individuals as learners, seeking to provide opportunities for all to learn.
7. Emotional intelligence values the expression of feelings.
8. Spiritual intelligence creates space to reflect on ultimate issues.
9. Ethical intelligence shows clarity of values and beliefs.

As a consequence, we agreed on a model of a school's intelligences as such:



At this stage as a trio, we conducted ourselves in a collaborative, questioning, intense manner, seeking a common idiom. We were beginning to adopt a 'rational' approach to an 'emotional' issue. We 'went under the water' as we began to talk through how to improve a school's climate/ethos by concentrating on the quality of interaction. This was examined in relation to the four sectors of the Hermann model.

We felt that a dysfunctional organisation is one that has poor interaction.

Applying the Hay McBer research into the relationship between Professional Characteristics, Leadership Styles and the Climate for School Improvement:

The dimensions of school climate are described as:

- Flexibility – behaviour which enables openness, showing a willingness to listen and to change
- Responsibility
- Standards – emphasis of any learning organisation
- Rewards
- Clarity of purpose
- Team commitment

Leadership styles are described as:

- Coercive;
- Authoritative;
- Affiliative;
- Democratic;
- Pacesetting;
- Coaching.

Applying the ‘Rezolv’ File

The File endeavours to embed challenging issues into a directed leadership enquiry. For my enquiry, the section on ‘Dialogue’ was particularly pertinent. This defines dialogue as the capacity to suspend assumptions and enter into a genuine thinking together. It means a free flow of meaning through a group to discover insights not attainable individually. In order to move forward with any improvement strategy, teaching and learning opportunity or forging of a true professional relationship, there is a need to uncover and share each other’s own individual lines of reasoning. Mature exploration of these will help to develop leadership in relation to:

- Reacting to what is being said;
- Encouragement to challenge the degree of clarity;
- Testing of assumptions and beliefs.

The inherent danger of this line of enquiry is an absorption with thinking and a failure to act. However, the essence of genuine dialogue is not thinking about what we are doing; it is when we do something about what we are thinking. It catalyses insight and uncovers the thinking processes for both the individual and the collective whole.

My own perspective is that an intelligent school will attain creativity through metacognitive dialogue, i.e. management of paradoxical processes in a spirit of enlightened discourse.

The leadership question for the visit to Ysgol Glan-y-Môr School

Based on our consideration of all the above, the agreed leadership issue for the Trio's visit to my school was an examination of the quality of interaction. This was a distillation of individual and group thinking and reflection. Above all else, I had stated that a common priority for me at home, in school and in the classroom was the need for clear dialogue. At school, we agreed that the emphasis for the quality of interaction was to be on pedagogy.

2. Reflections on the Trio's visit to Ysgol Glan-y-Môr School

The programme for the visit was as follows:

Day/date	Time	Activity
Mon., 23 rd Sept.	5.30pm	Arrival in Llanelli, followed by dinner
Tues., 24 th Sept.	8.25am	Attend morning briefing
	8.30am	Attend assembly
	8.50am	Tour of catchment area
	10.30am	Return to school – discussion of programme
	11.15am	Tour of school – by Head Boy and Head Girl
	12.30pm	Meet in Library with Leadership Group, Chair and Vice Chair of Governors, Head Boy and Head Girl, followed by lunch in Dining Hall

	1.02pm	Free time
	2.10pm	Seminar on school and national context, with emphasis on role of Leadership Group in transforming learning and on national standards framework
	3.25pm	Academic team meetings – MFL and Science
Wed., 25 th Sept.	8.25am	Attend briefing
	8.30am	Attend assemblies
	10am	Visit Coleg Sir Gâr, local college of Further Education – meeting with Mr Robert Davies, head of Student Services.
	11.15am	Lesson visits/observation/reflection
		LUNCH
	2-3pm	Visit Ysgol Trimsaran (partner primary)
	3.30pm	Visit to Llanelli town centre
	7pm	PTFA meeting
Thurs., 26 th September (European day for Languages)	8.25am	Attend briefing
	8.30am	Lesson visits/observation/reflection
	10.15am	Meeting with TD to agree way forward (to include e-mail, video conferencing, regular updates of progress)
	11am- 12pm	Visit Burry Port Junior School (partner primary)
	12.30pm	LUNCH
	1.15- 2.15pm	Visit Pembrey School (partner primary)
	3.10pm onwards	Visit National Botanic Gardens
	7pm	Dinner at 'Bengal Lancer' (Llanelli) with other local Trios

During the visit, Paola observed the following:

The school is strong on the 'green sector'. The staffing structures are good, with teachers being clear on their duties and areas of competence. There is evidence of efficient organisation, and effective communication. Parental involvement is low – what can be done? In this respect, there is a need to examine the motivation, purpose and focus of any dialogue with parents. The school assemblies showed students being attentive. Rooms are well-structured and have effective displays. Relationships between teachers and

students are good in the emotional sector. Buildings are clean. There are harmonious relationships throughout. One challenge is to reconcile flexibility and rigidity in teaching groups.

During the visit, Karsten commented as follows:

The morning staff briefing given by the headteacher has the aims of clarity, stimulation, and clarification of duties. It has a combination of authoritative and formal communication. Maybe a more relaxed atmosphere could gain attention. Is it just a formality?

The means of communication reflects the organisational structure of the school.

A Year 7 school assembly had an authoritative appearance yet was more yellow-red in style. Year 7 form tutors were more authoritative – is it that the pupils had not adapted to the school environment? Pupils appeared to be emotionally engaged, although the head leaving abruptly may have interrupted that; it signalled the end of my contribution.

The aim and style of these events need to be examined together. In the assembly, the assistance of the form tutors enabled the head to be less authoritative in style. Teachers are vital as enablers to effective dialogue.

By the end of the visit, the general impression was of easy-going interaction, a school which was characterised more by ‘being’ than ‘doing’. The atmosphere was relaxed, in particular amongst staff. Not all staff-pupil interactions were characterised in this way.

The Leadership Group was ‘yellow-red’ in nature, with evidence of ‘green’. Is ‘green’ the way in to lead to ‘yellow-red’ dialogue?

The theoretical basis for the week-long enquiry undertaken by the Trio succeeded in its practical application at the school. The models examined at the Gwbert Conference assisted the enquiry as follows:

- Individual motivation – Herrmann Profile;
- Leadership style – Hay McBer;
- School analysis – intelligent school model;
- Process analysis – the Rezolv file.

3. Beyond the Trio’s visit

It was no surprise for me to learn that the questions of interaction and communication arose in my school. The enquiry-based approach of the visit enabled a deeper analysis of my own style and motivation which has been sustained. It has gained greater relevance in assisting the strategic direction my school is taking in a number of fields, especially in relation to the introduction of Performance Management. This is a nationally-imposed system of individual reviews with an emphasis on accountability. A requirement was imposed for a policy to be in place by the end of November 2002 and for the process of review and objective-setting for the headteacher to be initiated by the end of January 2003.

Communication between members of the Trio has been hampered by major technical difficulties with the Conference web-site. In spite of this, communication has been sustained through regular e-mails and letters.

E-mails sent between Trio heads

1st October 2002

Dear Karsten,

Hope you arrived back safely after the trials and tribulations of a week in Llanelli!!

Many thanks for your very supportive comments, observations and stimulating conversation. I will correspond in more detail in due course; however, we have a problem with our Internet link and cannot work the 'Roots and Wings' link just yet. I will send you the items promised soon (uniform, etc.)

In the meanwhile, attached to this e-mail you will find the 'photos you took at school using my camera. Would you kindly send me the others you took?

Regards/Ciao,
Tim

1st October 2002

Dear Tim,

Listen, don't talk about "trials and tribulations" in Wales; I'd rather use words like experiences and "ease"...perhaps wrongly chosen words; but expressing the way I experienced the course and in particular the stay with you and your family.

To be honest I also prefer to use this e-mail address for the moment, as I access this every morning, and we are both very busy!! I have just talked about the stay in the staff room. I had gathered the entire staff to welcome a new teacher, who starts today, and at the same time I told briefly about my "holidays" in Wales (a pupil in year 3 - 8 years) came to me this morning: "Hi, Karsten (and this is the usual Danish tone!), have you returned home from holidays..." - so to the staff I said: "Don't know who gave the pupils the impression that I'd been on holidays!" I also made an "exhibition" with books and your gifts, the coal, rugby ball, etc. for the teachers to study.

Tomorrow evening I travel to Sweden; but I'll send you the photos before then...and don't hurry with the uniform, etc.; whenever you have time. Can I ask you Tim, if you have got a spare copy of the students' Calendar/study book, to send it along? I forgot to talk to you about it; but I find it a very nice feature!

Greetings to all your staff.

All the best - send my love to Helen and your boys, too.

Karsten

2nd October 2002

Dear Tim,

I'm writing just now, because I had too much work at school and my daughter

Elena is working for her thesis and the family pc was busy. The travel was very good. I remember your kindness and reception and the Welsh days are in my heart. I remember also your family and its spontaneousness.

My daughter Federica thanks your son Gareth for the CD that all of us have appreciated.

As soon as possible, I'll begin to write some notes about leadership that I'll send you and Karsten.

I thank your staff for reception. I wish you a good work.

Sincerely

Paola Conti

PS: Will you attend an Italian course?

2nd October 2002

Dear Paola,

Many thanks for your kind words. Thank you also for a most interesting week.

It was very useful for me to have the reflections of two experienced colleagues.

I will send a package soon with various items you requested (school uniform, etc.). I promised xxxxxx (our head girl) I would send you her address. I am attending my first Italian lesson next Tuesday - wish me luck!!

Ciao,
Tim

11th October 2002

Dear Paola and Karsten,

I have tried - and failed - on 7 different occasions to access the R&W conference web site. This is so frustrating as I have written lengthy responses to Jeff's e-mail (which I can read) and have lost them in the system!!!

I will try to get some technical advice from Tommy.
I have no time to write more at the moment.

Regards,
Tim.

11th October 2002

Dear Tim!

That is annoying! I have no problems in accessing the intranet, so hopefully Tommy will be able to sort things out for you; he must!

Today we have had our annual "Jogging event", which almost corresponds to your "Sponsored walk"; apart from the fact that we do not get sponsorships for a special purpose, and the pupils can choose to jog/run/walk 5 to 10 km. or take part in a "duathlon" (3,5 km run, 12 km bicycling and 3,5 km run at last. - Weather here was perfect for the event: Clear sky and 5 degrees. I had to "lead the race" and ran 10 km!!

I am clearing my desk; my office is going to be painted over the next week, which is our "Autumn holidays" (half term). I'll need to work again on Thursday!

Hope you are well; I'll do some work on our project next week, and I'll also write something for you to consider regarding the collaboration between our schools at teachers and students level.

As you might remember I took part in a conference in Malmo last week, and we established a good contact to Pennar Junior School in Pennar, Pembrokeshire, so at primary level we'll start co-operation on classroom issues and projects.

Best greetings,
- To Helen and your sons, too -

Karsten

10th November 2002

Dear Tim!

I guess it's about time I send you a warm thank you; and please also pass on to Mrs. Beer, from whom I received the letters! The pupils were thrilled about the uniform and not the least the letters from "their new Welsh" friends. Please tell Mrs. Beer that letters are on their way back; and I'll get in touch with her herself!

How are things as far as the conference is concerned? As far as I can see, you've not been able to access it? - I am still working on my feed back to the visit; hopefully I'll soon have the time to finish it, and send it to you and Paola.

A nice weekend to you and your family;

Best greetings
Karsten

20th November 2002

Dear Tim,

I'm sorry for the delay but I had to do too many things. I postponed the time for writing you, because I needed more quietness. I've received your e-mail of the 11 October, also me I've tried to access the [R&W](#) conference web site without succeeding in it. My Tuscan colleagues, I heard, did not success for the same. Recently, I've received Your wonderful package, as you said me. I showed immediately its contents in the school, the dress and the tie. My intention, as soon as possible, is doing show all Welsh material for students

and school staff and I am thinking to send you something from my school. I've never heard from Karsten and I don't know what to think. Actually, one of my works is about analysis of processes because it's important for quality of the school and also for crediting like Formation Agency with Tuscan Region. I'll tell you about this process after an audit moment that will come soon.

I remain yours very truly and give my compliments to your family and Stephanie's.

Paola

3rd December 2002

Dear Tim!

I regret my "silence"; but I have been so busy; which I can imagine is just like you?!

As you know, I teach English in one English class, and we have started communication with one of Mrs. Beverley Beer's English classes. Is it possible for you to pass this on to her on e-mail, as I have not got her e-mail address, please? - Thank you! - Please, read through it, as I also inform her on some of the activities that we have undertaken in relation to Wales!

Please, confirm to me when having received this e-mail!

Best wishes,

Karsten

Dear Beverley Beer!

I regret that it has taken so long to answer you; but now letters are finally on their way by mail to your students as answers to their letters, which my students were absolutely thrilled to receive. I have posted to separate envelopes: One with the students' letter to their "pen pals" (the "spare" letters/students have been replied to by some of my students, who then write to two of your students. - I regret that as far as I have been able to "keep records" only a single of your students will not receive a reply now, as one of my students have not finished his letter. - I hope that he will finish it soon, and I'll send it then. In the second envelope you'll have more "general" information. - As you know, we have children from the age of 6 in my school, so when I returned from Wales, I brought a Welsh teddy dragon, who has been "touring" the youngest classes. |

named him Gwbert, as this is a particular spelling to us Danes, and as it is an easy and good name to pronounce for the children. At an assembly I told about Gwbert that he had gone with me from Wales, and that he should visit all the classes from "Kindergarden Class" till form 3 (8-9 years). The classes have been very proud to have and be hosts for Gwbert, and they

have given him different things. The two 2nd classes wrote a song to him on "Puff the Magic Dragon. - My students in 8th Class have translated, and we send you the "lyrics" in both Danish and English. I'm afraid that you will not be able to actually song the English version! We have arranged a "Welsh Corner" in the classroom, which you might have an

idea of from the attached photos. - I'll send you some of the photos that I took in your class; perhaps your students can comment on them. I know that my students are eager to know who are in the pictures. From Tim I received a uniform pull over and a tie, so of course you'll have a photo of one of my students in your uniform - and one of the whole class in front of our "Welsh Corner"!

As the main aim of the English lessons this year is simply to learn the language I can basically work with any topic that I want to, so therefore it has been very convenient for me - and indeed very engaging for the pupils to

read and prepare reply letters to your students. - In fact I also prepared an English Essay/Exercise, which I have also included in the second envelope. I have not read the students' essays yet; but if you would like to, I think that it could be funny for your students to read the essays. The students must write about "A trip to Wales": Imagine that you are to visit either your pen pal in Glan-y-Môr or you are going on a school trip with the whole class. - Have a closer look at the "Task sheet" , which I have also attached.

That is it for now, should we ask the students to exchange Christmas Postcards???

Best wishes

Karsten Damgaard

10th December 2002

Dear Tim!

I wonder whether you have received the mail below, or haven't you?

I "feared" that there might be difficulties, as I attached a number of photos; so now I try to send it without attachments! - On the other hand I hope that you/Mrs. Beer have now received the posted letters from me?

Best wishes,
Karsten

10th December 2002

Dear Karsten,
Many thanks for the letters and the photos - we did receive them. I hope you are well and looking forward to Christmas. We are all very busy preparing for the end of a busy term. We have exams going on for our year 11 students (15-16 year olds), we are rehearsing for our Christmas Concert, and the pupils are all practicing for the Talent Competition we will hold on the last day of term (20th December). Although it is very busy, it is all great fun (apart from the exams!).
With regard to Roots and Wings, Mark met with all the Welsh heads to give us some guidance on what we should be doing. We are still having technical difficulties with the Conference. I will try to access it again during the Christmas break. We have also been told to apply for Socrates funding for the visit to Tuscany. It is likely that the first part of the visit will take place in Elba.
Regards to your family and to your pupils at school. As we say in Welsh: "Nadolig Llawen a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda - Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year".

Regards,
Tim.

PS - I was sent the attached Christmas card - I hope you appreciate it!

11th December 2002

Dear Paola,

Many thanks for your last e-mail. I am meeting with one of the local council's technical experts today who will try to help me access the Roots and Wings conference site. It is so annoying not to be able to use the site! Mark Fowler met with all the Welsh heads to tell us that we need to post our leadership question on the site, along with our thoughts on progress. As you will remember, my question was, "the quality of interaction". If you have any observations based on your visit to our school I would be grateful for them.

I am interested in your question about the analysis of processes. When you are able to, please let me know more about your audit process. This will help me to start preparing for my visit to Tuscany. In the meanwhile, as the end of our school term comes to an end, I'm sure that life is as busy for you as it is for me. It is a wonderful time of year in many ways - the pupils are excited, busy preparing for the Christmas Concert in the local town hall; we are all rehearsing for the Talent Contest which we will hold on the last day of term (Friday, 20th Dec); our oldest pupils (15-16 year olds) have examinations at present, and they are looking forward to finishing them on Friday 13th Dec.; my family are all excited as well.

Helen sends her best wishes to you and to your family.

May you have an enjoyable and blessed Christmas time.
Tim.

PS - I have attached an electronic Christmas card. All you need to do is double click on the attachment. As we say in Welsh, "Nadolig Llawen a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda - Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year"!

3rd January 2003

Dear Tim,

I couldn't write before Christmas because of family problems, actually resolved.

I received your messages and the nice Welsh calendar 2003. Tomorrow I'll send to you a volume, written by one of my schoolteachers, about the Story and Art of S. Giovanni Valdarno, (my town) and school material.

I told you about the 'accreditamento' as first way for quality certification and European funds access through competitions. My engagement is to code the phases of every action, initiative, projects, etc.

I'll send the request document of 'accreditamento' with the organigram, foreseen for this intervention area. I would like to give you also a tape with

my poetry.
My sister fell and was operated on the malleolus of the right foot. It's for this reason that I haven't written you before. How is going your Italian? How is your family?
I dream Welsh cliff and North Sea. I hope to see them again. I received a letter from Karsten with much pleasure. I'll write to Stephanie and her husband. I hope he's well.
I appreciate your friendship and apologize for my late greetings.

Sincerely
Paola

4. Some interim reflections (after nearly four months of collaborative working)

In my experience, what is unfolding in the 'Roots and Wings' International Programme for School Leadership will continue to facilitate further developments in our school ethos at many complementary and contrasting levels. This is particularly poignant, as we have identified the need to improve the emotional health of all members of our school through our involvement in the Health Promoting Schools Scheme. In uncertain times for teaching and learning in Ysgol Glan-y-Môr School – proposed changes to our funding formula; projected reductions in our pupil numbers; continuing industrial action over teacher workload; an impending Estyn inspection – it is critical that we address emotional health proactively. This cannot be done by rigid application of models for school effectiveness and school improvement. However, by placing an appropriate emphasis on improving dialogue, there is a fundamental recognition of the human and humane nature of a school as an organisation. This may be achieved by seeking to enhance the nature of interaction at all levels within the school.

In visiting the schools in Tuscany and Velje, I look forward to continuing the professional dialogue and advancing the synergy of the analytical models we have examined. I am confident that what is being done will facilitate leadership development in our respective schools. I also hope that our experiences will assist others in their quest for personal, professional and organisational improvement.

Tim Day – 18th January 2003