HOW LEADERSHIP EMERGED AS AN ISSUE FOR SCHOOLS – AND SOME REFLECTIONS ON SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TODAY

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ABSTRACT

This paper complements the article elsewhere in the journal by Mick Waters. It traces the origins of the present focus within the UK on school leadership, outlines the importance of applying well-judged approaches to Appreciative Inquiry, Problem Solving and Ensuring Compliance to leadership practices in establishing organisational cultures and managing complex change and briefly suggests a re-setting of schooling purposes and aims for a new age in schooling better adjusted to our citizens' present and future needs.

INTRODUCTION

In the period since the second world war educational 'leadership' has only begun to surface as an issue worth research or discussion in academic journals since the 1970s and 80s. Examine publications before that time and little mention was made of 'leadership'. Those who led the education service in the UK, whether in schools, colleges, Local Education Authorities (LEAs) or Universities, were unlikely to describe 'leadership' as their activity, preferring to call themselves 'teachers' 'lecturers' or, if they were what we would now call leaders, 'Headteachers', 'Principals', 'Vice-Chancellors' or 'administrators'. The bashfulness was deliberate if tacit. Many of them had served in the Second World War and all had been affected by it. They were united in being mistrustful of the overcentralised power in the Axis countries especially Germany and Italy. *Mein Fuhrer* was a chilling warning of what should be avoided at all costs.

These so-called 'administrators' were united in believing that the post-war settlement in education embodied in the 1944 Butler Education Act and based on a clearly understood Beveridge Report of 1942 was their legal framework and that their appointed task was to implement it in all parts of the country and that a whole nation was supportive of its realisation. Nationally and locally, public servants were attempting to rid the UK of the five great enemies of a truly civilised society – namely 'want', 'idleness', 'squalor', 'disease' and 'ignorance'. Educational administrators in LEAs were committed to defeat 'ignorance' and

they created and carried out democratically approved plans which gave medium or longer-term certainty to the direction of travel for a new network of local schools, colleges of further education, the youth service as well as other adult education provision and support services. Education was an uncontested, if loosely analysed and defined 'good thing'. We wanted more of it in our society in what became an age of *Optimism and Trust*.[1]

In schools, colleges and universities, teachers and lecturers could be relied on to get on with their task as they saw fit. Adjusted directions were mapped out after major reports on a particular topic by a Central Advisory Council[2] assembled for that purpose from experts and chaired by some eminent public figures.

In the schools' world, Alec Clegg in the West Riding was probably the pre-eminent influencer of educational development as Chief Education Officer in the West Riding of Yorkshire – the largest LEA in Europe with over 1000 schools and colleges. Along with a few others in the UK he was a persuasive educational innovator who commanded the respect and loyalty of the many thousands of staff ranging through caretakers, teachers, school-meals providers, principals, education welfare officers, educational psychologists, classroom assistants, school advisers and inspectors and the relatively small band of fellow 'administrators'. He worked in a county council which had a 'Clerk' not a 'Chief Executive'. If charged with being a 'manager' never mind a 'leader' he would have replied with a mischievous smile arguing that he was a mere administrator, albeit a creative one.

'Management', in many ways the handmaiden of 'leadership', was similarly shunned. Neither were needed where there seemed unanimity on the course of direction and where each partner in the enterprise – for schooling; the Minister in Whitehall, the Local Education Authority and the teaching profession – knew their role as set out in the 1944 Act and could be relied upon to carry it out. It was truly an age of Optimism and Trust. It wasn't till the 1970s that these confident, if slightly laissez-faire, approaches to education were called into question. It proved to be a turbulent decade where management and leadership came gradually to be regarded as essential characteristics in the public sector in general including education.

The university sector, where Vice-Chancellors had been summoned to a meeting with a dismayed Prime Minister Harold Wilson, who was complaining

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[1] For a longer description and analysis of the period from 1976 to the present cf. *'About Our Schools: Improving on Previous Best'* (2022) Crown House

[2] Among the major reports of the Central Advisory Council were Plowden on primary education *'Children and their Primary Schools'* (1967) and Newsom on secondary education *'Half our Future'* (1963)

about the student unrest on university campuses in 1968, was further challenged by the creation of the Open University to which universities were unanimously opposed as it called into question their essentially exclusive model of what a university should be.

So far as schools were concerned, similar anxieties were expressed. The Ruskin Speech of James Callaghan in October 1976 gave voice to the doubts and disillusion about what was being taught in our schools and followed a few years of scandals which seemed to justify those misgivings. For example, Callaghan's speech came just two years after the Auld Report's coruscating conclusions about how the Inner London Education Authority had mismanaged William Tyndale primary school where methods were used which seemed to bear out all the criticisms in a series of pamphlets, called Black Papers, written by academics and calling into question primary teaching methods and curriculum. Nor was the disquiet confined to primary schools: Risinghill secondary school also in Inner London became a 'cause celebre' and the subject of a best-selling book, 'Death of a Comprehensive school'.[3]

This period of doubt and disillusion gradually gave way to another era which has lasted to this day: it has been one of '*Markets, Centralisation and Managerialism*'.

Kenneth Baker created the defining features of the *market* in schooling through his 1988 Education Act. He inherited a strengthened governance of schools (1986) and parental choice of schools(1980), to which he added almost all the missing features of a market in schooling, namely a national curriculum and the ranking of schools according to the comparative pupil outcomes in tests and exams taken at the end of each of principally three Key Stages at 7, 11, 16 and 18, together with devolving budgets and management from the LEA to the school. Results were published in league table form to promote competition between schools driven by parental choice. His successor but one Kenneth Clarke, in 1991 put the finishing touches to the working of the market in schooling by transforming HMI (Her Majesty's Inspectors) into the regulator, Ofsted, which established regular inspections of schools and the publication of their reports: schools were boxed into different 'categories' so that parents might have more than data to assist their choice of school.

With such a fundamental change, 'management' and even the hitherto tacitly forbidden word 'leadership' were discussed as concepts worthy of considered application initially at the level of the LEA and eventually in schools themselves. LEAs were reorganised in 1974 as part of a general reform of local government and Directors of Education/Chief Education Officers as they were variously

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[3] L Berg *'Risinghill: Death of a Comprehensive School'* (1968) Pelican

called, became used for the first time to working in an environment where there were 'Leaders' of the majority political party as opposed to being Chairmen (sic) of the Policy and Resources Committee. Simultaneously officers within local government were influenced by the Bains Report charged with reviewing the management of local government. This established the role of Chief Executive and what was called Corporate Management.[4] All the misgivings about 'leadership' born from the experiences of the origins of the second world war were replaced by the requirements to do well in a competitive environment.

It is during the 1970s that there was an expansion of Business Schools in the university sector and of management courses in Polytechnics and Colleges of Advanced Technology.

After 1988 the role of Headteacher changed, as Mick Waters points out elsewhere in this edition of the journal. If you are suddenly in charge of how the budget is spent, in who are appointed as your staff and then their wages and welfare besides being progressively responsible for the repairs and replacement/ extension of your buildings, you need to know something of management and its umbilical relationship with leadership. That's what happened to the role of headteachers which changed out of all recognition.

Two other changes have complicated the roles of management and leadership in schools: a change in the culture of our society and the advent of 'school improvement' as a concept.

First, the culture has shifted over the last 50 years away from one of 'deference' and 'acceptance' to a more disputatious and participative society. Secondly, the move towards school improvement, which has its origins in the school effectiveness research of Michael Rutter et al, was an inevitable consequence of the introduction of marketisation and competition between schools during the 1990s and its accompanying sharper accountability. The combination began to demand that headteachers resume an interest in what had been their main supposed task prior to the 1988 Education Act, namely the curriculum, pedagogy and assessment as well as the daily habits of the school as an organisation.

More explicit attention to these widened duties of school headteachers and their senior staff required more attention.

During the 1990s Gillian Shephard as Secretary of State introduced so called 'Headlamp' courses as the precursor to NPQH – a (National Professional Qualification for Headship). Both Headlamp and NPQH assumed that heads needed to know a lot about management and leadership to run schools successfully.

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[4] The Bains Study Group *'The New Local Authorities: Management and Structure'* (1972) which 'set out the considerations which should be borne in mind by local authorities when determining their structures of management at elected member and officer levels'.

This was followed by the creation of a National College for School Leadership (NCSL) which was to last a decade before being discontinued by Michael Gove Secretary of State for Education in the Coalition government in 2011.

Two further characteristics, *Centralisation* and *Managerialism* have been suggested as appropriate to add to *Marketisation* in defining the age since the 1980s and these also affect the context in which leadership and management can be discharged. *Centralisation* arose from the accelerating removal of powers away from LEAs following the 1988 and subsequent Education Acts: in 1988, Secretaries of State already enjoyed 30 new powers where formerly they had three. Subsequent legislation has taken that number into thousands epitomised by the minister at the DFE having contracts with every stand-alone academy and Multi-Academy Trust. Such centralisation inevitably leads to the temptation to intervene, generally when some individual mistake is made at a particular school. In this way in a large schooling system with over 22,000 schools, there is the danger that schools become overwhelmed and distracted by advice that many of them could do without – in other words *'managerialism'*. When it is accompanied by a fierce accountability system through Ofsted, the pressure on Headteachers to ensure that they are Ofsted-proof can so easily shape their behaviour in ways which can be detrimental to the long-term health of their school.

THE KEY DILEMMA FOR SCHOOL LEADERS AND MANAGERS: CHOOSING THE 'SONG SHEET'

Any school leader, whether at departmental, phase or school level, at least in good times, is anxious to have 'imaginative' teachers and learning assistants who have boundless intellectual curiosity which feeds their love of what they are teaching and illuminates how different children learn. They are learners themselves and embrace the truth of that well-worn aphorism that 'It's the learners who inherit the earth while the learned are beautifully equipped for a world which no longer exists'.

So, when it comes to the key question of agreement about consistency of practice or 'singing from the same song sheet' (which some leaders, less careful with the unintended consequence of language, call the 'non-negotiables'), leaders are careful. They know that if they stipulate too much, the most creative of their colleagues will leave because they want more freedom. Stipulate too little and chaos may ensue.

In a school or department with a strong culture, there is a sense of shared values which is epitomised in the consistent behaviour of the leader. What they say, what they do and who they are, match. And the values they exhibit are consistent and overlap with those who are led by them. Members of the team for

which they are responsible therefore are confident in their decisions. It is why there is a metaphorical 'holding of our breath' when a new leader is appointed and an eager wish to see enough to know whether there is a match between 'who they are', 'what they say' and 'what they do' and that if there is, they will appreciate the same things as we do and that therefore, there is a likelihood that when they spot things that need to improve, they will be driven by the right values when making decisions for change. We recognise that they will want to change some things because all organisations are capable of improvement, but we hope that in judging what to change and how to change it, the leader will be driven by values they have always spoken about and acted upon.

The larger the organisation the more difficult those decisions about change and 'singing from the same song sheet' are. There is a world of difference between a village primary school and an urban 2000 pupil comprehensive secondary. Communication is so much wider and more difficult in the latter.[5]

In England these decisions are complicated by the relatively recent establishment of Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) where each of their constituent schools ceases to exist as a legal entity and where the temptation is thereby greater for those leaders running the MAT to insist on detailed practices across all the schools in the Trust. Individual MATs are choosing different degrees of enforced uniformity of practice. In Wales and Scotland where there are no Academies and less delegation of school budgets, decisions about 'singing from the same song sheet' remain at the school level. In Northern Ireland, although different arrangements obtain beyond the level of the school, the school is autonomous.

In the United Kingdom therefore the arrangements in England are increasingly different from those in the other three countries,[6] as powers have been centralised within a fierce school accountability regime with a concomitant temptation to be managerial at a national level, MAT and school leaders have found it very hard not to be influenced by such a culture and overdo the pressure downwards on the pupil/teacher interactions.

This where all leaders need a clear understanding of the theories of David Cooperrider and Srivastva.[7]

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[5] T. Brighouse and M Waters *'About Our Schools: Improving on Previous Best'* (2022) Crown House

[6] Mick Waters' article in this journal elaborates greater detail of those differences in Scotland and Wales

[7] D. Cooperrider and S Srivastva. (1987)

THE BALANCE NEEDED BETWEEN 'APPRECIA-TIVE INQUIRY' AND 'PROBLEM SOLVING' AND THE COMPLICATIONS IN SOCIAL ORGANISATIONS OF APPLYING 'ENSURING COMPLIANCE'.

Put simply Cooperrider and Srivastva illustrated for managers/leaders an approach which had the right mix of putting right mistakes and meeting challenges which had arisen (*problem solving*)on one hand; and, on the other, of finding good practice which could be spread and developed further (*appreciative enquiry*).

Each of these can be easily understood in the tables as follows:

Table 1. Appreciative Inquiry

• Appreciate the best of 'what is'? • Envision 'what might be'? • Dialogue for new knowledge, theory and practice of 'what should be'? • Create the vision of 'what will be'?

Table 2. Problem Solving

• Find a felt need . . . identify the problem • Analyse causes • Analyse solutions • Develop an action plan

Clearly in Table 1 the first step requires an accurate assessment of what is working well. If that is achieved, usually managers (and teachers who are working with independent learners) will often receive a comment from the person responsible for the good work, that it's OK but that the ambition is to make it even better which naturally leads to the second stage of a description of what the next improvement will look like or how the improvement already identified could be spread to other parts of the organisation. In either case visiting or finding out about practices elsewhere in similar situations will precede deciding on what to do next and finally the next steps of development are agreed. This is essentially a process which 'creates energy'.

Problem Solving in (Table 2) on the other hand 'consumes energy' and most will be familiar with the four stages involved. It isn't that problem solving is necessarily unenjoyable – indeed quite the reverse for the outcome is often deeply appreciated in hindsight. But it is to argue that there needs to be some sort of balance between the two.

Moreover, Cooperrider and Srivastva's argument is that successful organisations use three parts of Appreciative Inquiry for every one part of Problem Solving. In schooling, especially in classrooms, the wisdom of that observation resonates, as it will in any ?organisation which is heavily dependent on social interactions.

Working on both these approaches for example was an essential part of the London Challenge which transformed the schooling outcomes in schools in London between 2003 and 2011. Prior to that intervention which is examined shortly it is worth spelling out a third model of management which is all too often used as an alternative to securing the right mix of AI and PS. This can be called 'Ensuring Compliance' and is all too evident in the English schooling following the years of centrally imposed regulation, school inspections through Ofstedand tight accountability: it can best be understood through the diagram in table 3 as follows:

Table 3. Ensuring Compliance

• Decide what is right • Promulgate single solutions • Regulate and inspect • Punish in public deviants and inadequates

It is immediately apparent that the management of organisations which are subject to extensive regulation and inspection as part of strictly enforced accountability will be tempted to comply at all costs with the explicit requirements of those laws and regulations, especially if, like schools, there are dire consequences of being found wanting by Ofsted. So 'health and safety' requirements will have a multiplicity of applications in all sorts of working environments ranging from factories, restaurants, building sites, agriculture, fisheries, the armed and other uniformed services through to hospitals, care homes, universities colleges and schools. To this is added in the case of schools and some other social organisations 'safeguarding'. Overall there is also the process of *accountability* for improved and clearly defined measures of outcome which can be shown in publicly available data sets (e.g. in the case of schools, pupil performance in tests and exams) and through inspections (e.g. in the case of schools OFSTED reports).

When that happens the temptation to give centre stage to '*problem solving*' and '*ensuring compliance*' while forgetting to give sufficient attention to '*appreciative inquiry*' is considerable. Moreover if a school is found by Ofsted to be 'inadequate' (formerly 'special measures') in other words publicly failing, the new leader is likely to face a long list of deficiencies that need to be fixed. It is only natural that such leaders will want to '*problem solve*' and in doing so '*ensure compliance*'.

That, however, is to risk the loss of energy, because *'appreciative inquiry'* is neglected. Schools which spend many years in 'Requiring Improvement' category are usually schools which have fallen into the trap of overdoing the the 'problem solving' and 'ensuring compliance' approaches to leadership and management and underemphasising 'appreciative inquiry'. They fail to keep creative staff and run out of energy.

This is where the London Challenge provided an interesting case study of a different and more successful approach. There was an explicit attempt to focus on what was working well as a means of solving the overall problem of results being worse than in most other parts of the country.

One example from many in the London Challenge illustrates that change in approach. In the discussions preceding the launch of the initiative in April 2003, there was much political pressure to identify and focus on the failures of the capital's schooling system. While working out what needed to be done to rectify the problems; however, there was an equal focus on what was working well in some schools and the 32 London Boroughs and in providing links between them in a non-judgmental fashion. Instead of being identified 'failing' schools, they were called 'keys to success' schools with the explanation that 'if these schools often facing extraordinary disadvantages could succeed, then any school can succeed'. Instead of feeling themselves victims they saw themselves as pioneering a new way of working. The process was facilitated by the creation of what was called 'Families of Schools' dara. This showed different families of 30 or so schools corralled together not by geographical proximity but by having pupils with a similar socio-economic profile. Then their GCSE (secondary schools) and SAT (primary schools) were shown on a graph where the vertical axis was 'rate of improvement' and the horizontal axis 'points per pupil'. Schools which found themselves overall in one of the four quadrants would nevertheless find themselves in a different quadrant for some subject outcomes. Inter-school visits were London-wide rather confined to local rivalries. 'Keys to Success' schools were provided if they wanted it – and all did – with quasi-coaching both through part-time advisers and consultants from other schools.

The outcome of higher performance both overall and for various groups of pupils has lasted and some will say it's in part because of the changed culture which the London Challenge encouraged.

So far this paper has argued that one of the prime tasks of an educational leader whether within or beyond the school is to create (or sustain if already there) a positive climate using the appropriate mix of appreciative inquiry, problem solving and (rarely) ensuring compliance. Once the culture is established, leaders need to tackle the daily business and any more substantial change which either they wish to establish or which are required from decisions beyond the school.

That requires a competence in managing complex change the essentials of which
are graphically illustrated in the following table:

Table 4. Managing Complex Change

VISION +	SKILLS +	INCENTIVES +	RESOURCES +	ACTION PLAN	= CHANGE
	SKILLS +	INCENTIVES +	RESOURCES +	ACTION PLAN	= CONFUSION
VISION +		INCENTIVES +	RESOURCES +	ACTION PLAN	= ANXIETY
VISION +	SKILLS +		RESOURCES +	ACTION PLAN	= RESISTANCE
VISION +	SKILLS +	INCENTIVES +		ACTION PLAN	= FRUSTRATION
VISION +	SKILLS +	INCENTIVES +	RESOURCES +		= TREADMILL

Adapted from Knoster, T (1991) Presentation at TASH Conference, Washington DC
(Adapted by Knoster from Enterprise Group Ltd)

It can be seen that Knoster illustrates the likely outcome from the absence of
any one of the five ingredients identified in the table. He does not speculate on the
calamitous consequences of failing on more than one – or even *all* – of the five.
Many have been unfortunate enough to be members of organisations which have
stumbled in an amateur way through botched programmes of change. Moreover,
Knoster's schema does not explore the subtleties of how each of the five activities
is secured. Questions crowd in.

Vision and Skills

What are the skills required in creating and communicating the visions and
how often does it need to be re-enforced? And with what regularity and by what
methods, to which stakeholders – staff, parents, pupils and governors? Who is
overtly opposed to the 'vision' and are there ways of bringing them on-side? Have
we examples of where it has been successfully implemented elsewhere and are
there lessons we can learn from their experience? Have we the skills of implemen-
tation in-house and if not, how will we secure them? Is the person we have chosen
for any of the vital tasks involved in the change acceptable and respected by other
staff involved? Have we built in teamwork to the task involved?

Incentives and Resources

What resources will we need and have we either new resources, or have we
earmarked sufficient existing resources, to implement successfully the complex
change we have identified? Have we built in a reserve? How will the change be

facilitated by our CPD programme? Who will be adversely affected by the change and how can they be brought on side? How will staff workload be reduced in the long-run by the changes we are introducing? Are there low-effort/high-impact interventions which we can introduce which staff will be enthusiastic about? Are there any high-effort/low-impact features either short-term or more fatally long-term which we can remove? Have we built in a review period when we will be prepared to adjust or abandon the initiative if it isn't in practice delivering what we hoped for?

Action Plan

Are the purposes and aims of the proposed change set out clearly? How are we going to implement the various stages of the development? Who is responsible for each aspect? What are the key dates for reviewing progress? Who benefits and what will be the key performance indicators we will expect to see or measure and on what time-scales? How will we compare those with implementation of the change elsewhere?

These admittedly simplistic questions and Knoster's schema are a start but they are not enough for successful leadership of the inevitable changes which are either generated from within to accommodate changed local community circumstances or imposed from the MAT/Local Authority or DFE. The advent of AI, developments in robotics and digitally based resources and techniques including VR, together with our growing knowledge of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) issues especially neuro-diversity and our greater sensitivity to LBQT+ rights means there will be no slackening in the pace of chosen and enforced change for school leaders, whether it's in curriculum, assessment, pedagogy or school organisation. Any school leader faced with this prospect who has not read Michael Fullan's *'Leading in a culture of change'* will make more unforced errors than are necessary. Much more formidable but providing far more depth is Fullan's *'New Meaning of Educational Change'*.[8]

OTHER ESSENTIAL SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

The comparative neglect of research and literature on school leadership before the 1970s has been more than made up since, in the UK context, by various universities, including the Institute of Education now at Unversity College London and

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[8] M Fullan. *'Leading in a Culture of Change'* (2000) Jossey-Bas M Fullan *'The New Meaning of Educational Change'* (2015) Routledge

the NCSL. In his paper elsewhere in the journal, Mick Waters draws attention to and evaluates different 'styles' of leadership which Hill among others has drawn to our attention. This paper has so far chosen to focus on the relationship of leadership to change – maintaining or establishing a culture conducive to change and then how to manage complex change. Maintenance of an albeit willing to move with the times 'status quo' occupies most of the daily round of school 'managers' and 'leaders'. The fact that these are different if complementary activities are summarised by the comment of the late John Garnett when Director of the Industrial Society that 'UK businesses are underled and overmanaged. There is only one thing worse, namely businesses which are overled and undermanaged'[9].

With such delegation of powers and duties to school leaders, they need to have knowledge of accountancy, law, human resources, health and safety and safeguarding which is only surpassed by their need, as Mick Waters points out, to have a deep understanding of curriculum, assessment, pedagogy and school organisational issues such as timetabling as well as how to secure and develop the right balance and numbers of teaching and support staff. If they are in a MAT, their CEO will have variously decided whether some of those tasks have been centralised in part or completely. Leaders at the level of the school, the MAT/ The Diocesan Trusts, Local Authority, the DFE (and its decentralised Regional Directors[10]) will be only too keenly aware that their habits and behaviours to be fully effective will have to explore how to give almost endless attention to relationships and communication, to chart progress, refresh vision and secure the environment. They will be guided at the school level by a shared map of school improvement such as the one set out in the footnote.[11]

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[9] December 1985 conference at what was *The Industrial Society* (now *The Work Foundation*) of which he was then Director.

[10] In 2022 the Regional Commissioners were renamed Regional Directors and were put in control of school improvement, as well as facilitating the academy and free school programme in adjusted geographical regions

[11] T Brighouse and D Woods *'The A to Z of School Improvement'* (2913) Bloomsbury sets out seven processes of school improvement as follows:
- Courageous and Creative Leadership
- Effective and Efficient Management
- Teaching Learning and Assessing
- Securing an Environment fit for Learning
- Timely Collective Review
- Staff Development
- Parental Pupil and Community Involvement

THE NEED TO RECOGNISE AND EMBRACE THE CHALLENGES OF 'REMOTE LEADERSHIP'

The very idea of leaders being remote is at first sight unattractive. But save for the class teacher and learning assistant with their pupils in a primary setting, leaders are more or less remote. In terms of school leadership as has already been remarked, there is a huge difference between the leadership exercised in a three-teacher village school and a 2000 comprehensive secondary school. And wise leaders do not wish to appear remote, although they necessarily are in most settings: and the larger the organisation the more challenging the task of not appearing to be remote. Some stakeholders are more important than others and it is arguable that in the context described here and in Mick Waters' article it is school staff who are most important, especially teachers who are disproportionately so[12] in schools. The challenge for leaders therefore is how to communicate and foster relationships to that end. The further away the necessarily remote leader is from the classroom, the more extensive their repertoire needs to be in maintaining relationships and communication. At a national and regional level, frequent television and radio appearances are part of the weekly round. Leaders in that situation must decide which of their various important audiences are listening – it could be any – and how do you decide whom you are addressing apart from the reporter? At whatever level you lead, do you write and for which journal?[13] Do you make sure by 'zoom'/'teams'/'google meet' that there is easy frequent access to you as a leader both to special interest groups and the usual stakeholders? Do you balance this by judicious reallife meetings? Do you ask for examples of commitment and good practice on the 'front line' so that you can sent unexpected cards and tokens of appreciation mentioning of course those who told you of their work?

These and many other skills and habits are the basis of successful leadership as well as the elusive matter of 'good judgement' and acknowledging when mistakes are made.

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[12] Educational research and Ofsted agree that the 'within-school variation' is greater than 'between school' variation' in standards of pupil outcome: the proportion is generally estimated to be 8:1 suggest

[13] In education an example of the benefits comes from the late Michael Marland, who among many other publications, wrote the book *'The Craft of the Classroom'* (1975) Heinneman – a practical guide for any teacher and which was a permanent item on Initial Teaching Training reading lists at the time and who, as a result, never had any problems in attracting good applicants for teaching posts in the school where he was head.

CONCLUSION

As Mick Waters suggests and our book argued[14], we think we are in a particularly interesting period as one age in education and schooling, which we have dubbed as one of *'Markets, Centralisation and Managerialism',* is giving way to another of *'Ambition, Hope and Collaborative Partnerships'*. Just as the age of *'Optimism and Trust'* after the second world war was overwhelmed by wider doubts and disillusions in the 1970s, we think the present decade exhibits characteristics remarkably similar to that time. Both in a UK context have a backdrop of inflation, an energy crisis, budgetary problems requiring the attention of the International Monetary Fund(IMF), a squeeze on public services, coming to terms with a changed relationship with Europe, and fears of a third world war.

What that new age will look like should as happened in the 1970s be the subject of a great and urgent debate as changes in our world accelerate. There will be the need to hold on to the pluses – knowing more about teaching, learning and assessment, knowing more about school improvement and using evidence to make decisions – and acknowledge the failures too – an accountability system which, by virtue of its instruments, leads to too much failure both of institutions and individuals many of whom are suffering from poorer prospects, mental ill-health and a lack of well-being. We probably need to see schooling's place in a landscape defined by an equivalent to the Beveridge Report, although sadly those enemies of 'squalor', 'want', 'idleness', 'disease' and 'ignorance' still pervade our society.

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[14] T. Brighouse and M Waters 'About Our Schools: Improving on Previous Best' (2022) Crown House 1