

Leadership of Diversity and Inclusion - International Virtual Network

What is it?

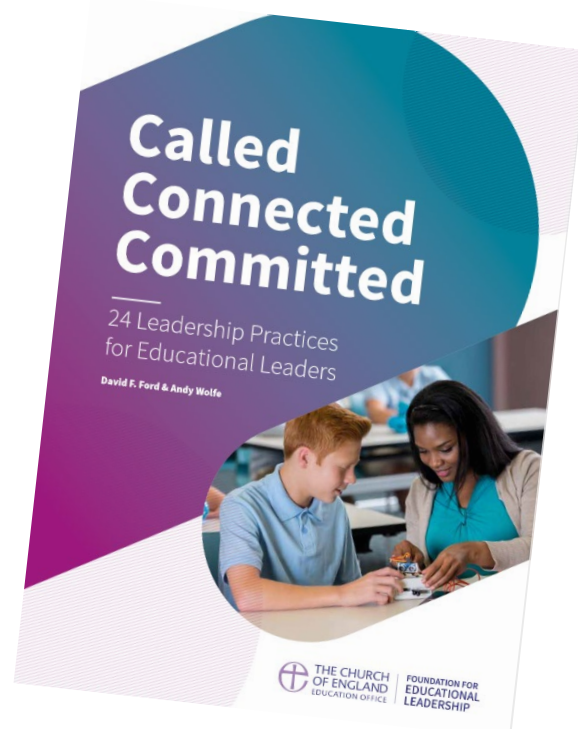
In response to recent awakening to the urgent need to address diversity and inclusion in our schools – especially racial injustice – we are keen to network with leaders in education who are passionate to see real change. We know that not enough has been done yet to address inequality across our schools and we are committed to action which makes this happen. Therefore, *The Church of England Foundation for Educational Leadership* ([CEFEL](http://www.cefel.org.uk)) are partnering with *Baylor University's Center for Christian Education* ([CCE](http://www.cce.org)) to run a joint UK/US leaders' network to explore why things are as they are and how we can set about changing them. Whilst we recognize that the UK and the USA are very distinct countries, with their own distinct cultures, expectations and concerns, there is also much we can learn from one another to help shape our thinking and catalyse us into action.

This virtual network will utilize the Collective Leadership principles (see Appendix 1) to explore issues around diversity, inclusion and racial equality - particularly around leadership and the curriculum - seeking to effect real and lasting change and to grow and improve together. Each session focuses on a Leadership Practice from *Called, Connected, Committed* (www.cefel.org.uk/cc/), enabling us to reflect on what this might mean for our own contexts. In between sessions, participants will undertake a piece of action research focused on making a change within their own context.

We will meet as a UK cohort bi-monthly to explore our current reality, the opportunities and challenges in this work, our vision for a more diverse and inclusive future, our own blind spots and biases and to develop creative and innovative ways of making necessary changes within our communities. These meetings are on a Thursday at 4pm.

In between our UK sessions, we will also meet with school leaders across the USA, where we will have the opportunity to explore these topics collaboratively – asking questions and hearing different perspectives. The US leaders are all involved in independent Christian School leadership and looking to broaden their outlook through this network. These meetings are on a Thursday at 8pm (due to the time difference with the US). We aim to finish with a face to face session where we can share our stories, journeys and developments together and interact with our US colleagues virtually.

UK Session 1: Seeking Reconciliation 1st October 4pm	UK/US Session 1: Nurturing Ambition 15th October 8pm
UK Session 2: Nurturing Ambition 19th November 4pm	UK/US Session 2: Removing Disadvantage 10th December 8pm
UK Session 3: Removing Disadvantage 21st January 4pm	UK/US Session 3: <i>Celebrating Diversity</i> 11th February 8pm
UK Session 4: <i>Celebrating Diversity</i> 18th March 4pm	UK/USA Session 4: Sustaining Vision 22nd April 8pm
UK Session 5: Sustaining Vision 26th May 4pm	UK/USA Final Celebration June 2021



How will it work?

1. Bi-monthly Zoom Gatherings with the CEFEL team (4-5.30pm)

Session 1: 1st October 2020 – **Seeking Reconciliation**

In this session, we will explore honestly and openly why we have chosen to be part of this network, defining our current reality and considering what might need to change – both within our own schools/ contexts and more widely. We will look at what has hindered change from happening in the past, and what is needed to truly heal our communities and pursue the reconciliation required to be able to move forward.

Session 2: 19th November 2020 – **Nurturing Ambition**

In this session we will focus on diversity in leadership, specifically what kind of leadership we need to deliver the sort of change we want to see, who our future leaders need to be, how we can begin to nurture and recruit them. We will consider how diverse our student leadership is and reflect on how well we are listening to the voices of our young people. This is also an opportunity to reflect on our own leadership and our own ambitions for the future.

Session 3: 21st January 2021 – **Removing Disadvantage**

Moving on to consider our leadership of the curriculum, we explore what needs to change in order to dismantle the both the systemic and context-specific barriers our young people face. We will explore what a curriculum that enables equity really looks like, and where the challenges to delivering curricula like this might be. There will also be a chance to reflect on our own biases, attitudes and blind spots in this area.

Session 4: 18th March 2021 – **Celebrating Diversity**

This session considers what it looks like when we truly *celebrate* diversity in our schools, and particularly in our curricula. We will explore how we move from tokenism to seeking genuine knowledge, knowing that only when we seek understanding and wisdom around our past and present can we imagine a future where diversity is fully celebrated. This is an opportunity to share examples with one another, giving and receiving feedback on our approaches and ideas, and contribute to each other's future plans.

Session 5: 26th May 2021 – **Sustaining vision**

Our last session together will be a chance to consider how we embed changes for the long-term, to ensure the ideas begun in the network are put into practice and sustained. We will explore the need for long-term culture shifts and how we stay rooted in our visions for our schools. It will be an opportunity to consider 'what next?'

2. Bi-monthly Zoom Gatherings with Emerging Systems Leaders from the USA (8-9pm)

Session 1: 15th October 2020 **Nurturing Ambition**

Who is in our schools, how far does this reflect our vision for the sort of schools we want, how can we nurture ambition for the future? A chance to explore these ideas with school leaders from across the USA.

Session 2: December 2020 **Removing Disadvantage**

Who is missing from our leadership teams, what barriers and obstacles might we need to overcome, how can we work collectively to remove these?

Session 3: February 2021 **Celebrating Diversity**

What preconceived ideas and biases do staff bring into school – into their teaching, curriculum planning and resource creation, behaviour management, interactions? What needs to change & how might we go about this together? What does it look like to actually *celebrate* diversity?

Session 4: April 2021 **Sustaining Vision**

How do we embed these changes for the long-term, making them future-proof?

3. Summer Learning Event to share findings and leadership lessons from working in this way

Face to face session for UK participants, including Zoom meeting with US participants – June 2021 (link up with Baylor University, Texas)

Links to register for/ join the sessions:

Session 1: Thursday 1 st October 4pm Seeking reconciliation Register for session 1	Session 1 with US leaders: 15 th October 8pm Nurturing Ambition https://vcs.zoom.us/j/81802064354
Session 2: Thursday 19 th November 4pm Nurturing Ambition Register for session 2	Session 2 with US leaders: Thursday 10 th December 8pm Removing Disadvantage https://vcs.zoom.us/j/81802064354
Session 3: Thursday 21 st January 4pm Removing Disadvantage Register for session 3	Session 3 with US leaders: Thursday 11 th February 8pm Celebrating Diversity https://vcs.zoom.us/j/81802064354
Session 4: Thursday 18 th March 4pm Celebrating Diversity Register for session 4	Session 4 with US leaders: Thursday 22 nd April 8pm Sustaining Vision https://vcs.zoom.us/j/81802064354
Session 5: Thursday 26 th May 4pm Sustaining Vision Register for session 5	Session 5 with US leaders: TBC (UK face to face) Zoom celebration with US leaders in June 2021

Who is the network for?

This network is aimed at experienced school leaders who are passionate about securing real improvements in diversity, inclusion and racial equality within their context, committed to reviewing their systems and activities and willing to make changes where these are required. An openness to engage in personal reflection is vital to this network, to consider one's own leadership, perspective and practice. Working in this way involves collaborative problem-solving and planning, so a desire to work interdependently is important.

Participants will need to undertake action research within their context, and therefore need the authority and time to make changes in their school/ context. They will also need to commit to all the UK sessions, and as many of the US sessions as possible.

Ideally participants will be headteachers, senior leaders with a responsibility for curriculum or diocesan advisors supporting schools with leadership and curriculum.

For more information, contact Emily Norman Head of Networks at CEFEL emily.norman@churchofengland.org

Appendix 1: About Collective Leadership

According to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Networked Improvement Communities (NICs) have always been part of human society, but are being used more significantly to improve our work in schools. In their [description and reasoning](#) for NICs they say,

What is new is the attention to networking as a scientific strategy to extend human capabilities in pursuit of shared interests. Also new are understandings about how to effectively implement networks and useful tools and processes for doing so. And what is most especially new is networks, enhanced by modern technologies, using improvement science to solve problems of practice in healthcare, education, and other social sectors.

Likewise, Jon Eckert describes Collective Leadership as “the work teachers and administrators do to influence colleagues, policymakers, and others to improve teaching and learning.” Below is the Collective Leadership framework for developing high-performing schools. We will use the “7 Constructs” of Collective Leadership to consider school leadership in new ways throughout our work together.



This year-long VN will help leaders practice the [skills of leadership](#); therefore, each leader will chose a project focused on Diversity and Inclusion by which to use Collective Leadership principles to grow in the following ways:

- Better articulate each school leader’s sense of personal vocation and vision for education,
- Clarify the connection and implementation of this vision within their organization,
- Create leadership capacity of and within each school,
- Develop professional networks within the Christian school community, and
- Catalyze professional expertise that come from doing this work together.

The projects will take a particular area of desired change around Diversity and Inclusion and will be implemented and evaluated using CEFEL’s Action Learning methodology.