

*Peter Earley*

## **School autonomy and accountability in England: The rhetoric and the reality?**

This paper considers school autonomy and the related issue of accountability in the English education system. It begins with a discussion of the context in which English schools and their leaders are currently operating and the challenges they face. A brief historical account of the development of school autonomy and accountability is then offered which follows closely the historical analysis provided for English schools by Trevor Male in his chapter. The part that leadership – more specifically school headteachers – play in school improvement is next discussed which in turn leads, partly as a result of the unintended consequences of accountability, to the more philosophical question of leadership for what educational purpose. The growth of academies and school-led improvement – or what has been referred to as the self-improving school system – is further considered in the penultimate section. Lastly the question raised in the paper's title about the rhetoric and the reality of school autonomy is discussed along with some concluding comments.

### **1 The work of school leaders – the context and the challenges**

The role of school leaders in England and elsewhere, especially headteachers or principals, has changed considerably over recent decades, in particular with regard to the levels and patterns of accountability, the nature of their responsibilities and the extent of institutional autonomy (Schleicher, 2012). An interest in school leadership has grown globally as there has been a growing recognition of its impact on the performance of schools and national educational systems. Increasingly this leadership is defined in terms of learning-centred leadership or leadership for learning. It is suggested by OECD and others that leaders will need to become more focused on learning and to give it priority over other matters.

School leadership has changed over time to meet the ever-growing and changing demands of policy-makers and other stakeholders (Earley, 2013), yet the constant factor over this period has been the need for schools continuously to raise standards and improve the quality of teaching and learning. This period has been described by Cranston (2013, p. 131) as “an era of standards-based agendas, enhanced centralized accountability systems where improved student learning, narrowly defined, becomes the mantra for school leaders, who themselves are subject to enhanced accountabilities”.

The well-known Finnish educationist, Pasi Sahlberg, has coined the acronym GERM – the Great Education Reform Movement – to describe the process of global borrowing and system reform which he has identified taking place in so many education systems throughout the world, both developed and less-developed (Sahlberg, 2011a, 2011b). Although he makes

no specific reference to leadership, he refers to the growth of accountability in education systems along with other common themes such as competition, testing, standardisation and choice; they are all part of the GERM. For Sahlberg, for education systems to become high performing ones, they need to move from 'test-based accountability' to 'trust-based responsibility' and to stress the importance of professional capital and its development. He argues that high-performing jurisdictions give teachers "agency, moral purpose and autonomy and have accountability systems based on trust" (Earley & Greany, 2017, p. 223).

In England and elsewhere, policy makers have continued the trend towards decentralisation and institutional autonomy, devolving decision-making power and resources to schools in the belief that this will improve quality and increase innovation (OECD, 2011). In order to incentivise these outcomes they have put in place accountability systems that combine quasi-market pressures (such as parental choice of school coupled with funding following the learner) with central regulation and control. Such policies around school autonomy have placed huge power in the hands of, and pressure on the shoulders of, school leaders. In England they sit at the fulcrum of 'high-autonomy-high-accountability' systems and are expected to resolve the policy paradoxes of competition and collaboration. So they should:

exercise their autonomy to innovate in response to parental needs, whilst at the same time meeting centrally prescribed targets and requirements; improve literacy and numeracy scores every year, whilst maintaining a broad and balanced curriculum; close attainment gaps, while pushing the brightest and the best; and collaborate with their peers to develop skills and capacity, while competing to ensure that they move up the local hierarchy. (Greany & Earley, 2017, p. 4)

The policy paradox is not the only challenge however. The challenges faced by heads and other school leaders are many and as noted by Kellerman (2015, p. 263) "(L)eading has become a high wire act that only the most skilled are able to perform successfully over a protracted period of time". Being able to maintain a high level of performance over a number of years is a considerable challenge and is unlikely to be maintained by school leaders without sufficient opportunities for support, development and refreshment (Earley & Weindling, 2007; Earley and Bubb, 2018).

Educational leadership is often discussed in terms of a changing and challenging environment where heads and schools are being given an even bigger job to do either on their own or, increasingly, working with others in multi-academy trusts (MATs), collaboratives and alliances (Earley, 2013; Greany, 2014). The growth of school autonomy and its associated accountability mechanisms has added to this challenging environment.

The term 'work intensification' is often used to describe the state of affairs where there is "increasing pressure to do more in less time, to be responsive to a greater range of demands from external sources and to meet a greater range of targets, accompanied by impatient deadlines to be met" (MacBeath, O'Brien & Gonn, 2012, p. 422). The work of school leaders has intensified and become all-consuming. It is more complex than ever with many

challenges to be met. Gronn (2003) refers to this as 'greedy work'. The challenges for school leaders are many and although they may change they are unlikely to disappear. School leaders, regardless of phase or sector, will continue to operate in what's been termed a VUCA environment – volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous.

In view of these challenges leaders in English schools need to guard against the implicit pressure that such high stakes accountability systems can exert on them to narrow the curriculum and adopt instrumental improvement approaches that do not build sustainable human capacity. As will be argued later this has not always proved possible.

## 2 A short history – how did we get here?

This question is considered in detail in Male's chapter so mention will be made here mainly to the 1988 Education Reform Act. This Act along with the 1944 Education Act were both seminal pieces of legislation which considerably changed the English educational landscape, as did the more recent 2010 Schools Academies Act which promoted the growth of academies and multi-academy trusts.

The 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) stated that local education authorities (LEAs) were responsible for provision and quality of state maintained schools but more significantly it began to introduce elements of competition and the market into the system. Schools in England were given (almost) total control of the student related budget, including the costs of staffing (teaching and support staff) which often constituted over 70 per cent of the overall budget. The Act also introduced 'open enrolment' whereby student admissions and charging for activities were transferred to the school level. Open enrolment firmly placed schools into a market environment as the basis of funding was student numbers. Each child entering the school came with a sum of money so if schools failed to attract students the number on roll would decline with serious implications for school budgets. The government of the day, keen to follow a neo-liberal agenda, felt that 'successful' schools could thus recruit more students and 'poor' schools would close. Significantly, the ERA also established Grant Maintained schools which were independent state-funded schools, separate from LEAs and the precursors to academies.

A series of Acts of Parliament were passed over the next decades (see Male's chapter for further details) with the Academies Act passed in 2010 devised to facilitate the further expansion of academies and multi-academy trusts. The rate of expansion of academies and MATs has been phenomenal and further details of the growth of academisation are provided by Male (2017)<sup>1</sup>. The National Audit Office (2018) notes there are 6996 academies (and this figure accounts for 72 per cent of secondary schools and 27 per cent of primary schools). By July 2018 there were 1082 MATs overseeing 5850 academies in England. With

---

1 Male (2017). *Multi-academy trusts (MATs): A background briefing paper*. London: London Centre for Leadership in Learning. Available at: <http://www.lcll.org.uk/publications.html>

the current rate of academy conversions it is possible that almost all state schools will become academies by 2022. Significantly the percentage of students enrolled in academies in 2018 was approximately 50 per cent of the total school population.

### 3 Making an impact: leadership matters

As noted above school autonomy has significantly enhanced the role of school leaders. It is now widely acknowledged that high-quality leadership is one of the key requirements of autonomous organizations and that leaders can have a significant positive impact on organizational goals, or in the case of education, student outcomes (Day et al., 2009, 2011; Robinson, 2011). Day and Sammons (2013, p. 3), in a review of successful leadership, note that “international examples of original research provide consistent evidence that demonstrates the impact of leadership on school organisation, culture and teachers’ work”. Such research they state offers substantial empirical evidence that the quality of leadership can be a crucial factor in explaining variation in student outcomes between schools. Their earlier study into the impact of school leadership found that school leaders “improve teaching and learning and thus pupil outcomes indirectly and most powerfully through their influence on staff motivation, commitment, teaching practices and through developing teachers’ capacities for leadership” (Day et al., 2009, p. 2). They also refer to the importance of school culture and trust. It is suggested that school leadership influences student outcomes more than any other factor, bar socioeconomic background and quality of teaching. Although perhaps it is unwise to attempt to quantify the exact effect size, there is little doubt that the research evidence suggests that leadership matters. What’s more it is suggested that leadership for learning or learning centred leadership matters most.

An important study by Robinson and her colleagues in New Zealand (Robinson, Hohepa & Lloyd, 2009; Robinson, 2011) has convincingly demonstrated how leadership related to teacher development has by far the greatest impact on student outcomes. In their meta-analysis of the five factors underpinning effective leadership ‘Promoting and participating in teacher learning and development’ was found to have the greatest influence on student outcomes. Such leaders ensure an intensive focus on teaching-learning relationships; promote collective responsibility and accountability for student achievement and well-being; and provide useful advice about how to solve teaching problems (Robinson et al., 2009). The central message of the research was clear: “The more leaders focus their relationships, their work and their learning on the core business of teaching and learning the greater their influence on student outcomes” (Robinson et al., 2009, p. 201).

Similarly, Hattie (2015, p. 2) concludes that the “the greatest influence on student progression in learning is having highly expert, inspired and passionate teachers and school leaders working together to maximize the effect of their teaching on all students in their care”. Developing teachers and teaching makes the biggest contribution to student learning outcomes – school leaders’ actions are crucial for creating that ‘learning atmosphere’ for both pupils and adults. Effective leaders empower teachers and other staff to reach their

potential because it is through teachers and high quality teaching that students will be helped to reach theirs. However, it begs the question of the purpose of learning and it is to this more philosophical question that we next turn.

#### 4 Leading learning for what?<sup>2</sup>

School leadership, especially learning-centred leadership, matters even more in education systems, like England's which operate within a 'high-autonomy-high-accountability' culture where failure and under-performance are not tolerated. Within such systems there is a danger that learning becomes very narrowly defined and the overall purpose of education lost. It is easy in a time of measurement, targets and league tables to lose sight of what the primary purpose of schools should be. The question needs to be asked: What are the core purposes of learning and education, and hence of school leadership? Smythe and Wrigley have remarked: "in the discourse of the new leadership, even the term 'leading learning' has been reduced into monitoring attainment; the complexities of social justice are viewed very narrowly through the lens of reducing attainment gaps" (2013, p. 156). For others the global testing culture permeates all aspects of education, "from financing, to parental involvement, to teacher and student beliefs and practices" which has led 'to an environment where testing becomes synonymous with accountability, which becomes synonymous with education quality' (Smith, 2016, p.x).

Currently, in England there is growing evidence that the narrow focus on exam results and league tables is corrupting the education system; dubious behaviours among school leaders and teachers seeking the best results is relatively widespread (Ofqual, 2017) and malpractice increasingly common. For example, a report published in 2018 by the Standards and Testing Agency (STA) showed that 599 schools (3.5% of approx. 16,000 schools) were investigated for maladministration in either the key stage 1 or key stage 2 tests and assessments in 2017 – a rise on the 524 investigations carried out in 2016. Maladministration covers cheating by pupils, over-aiding by teachers and changes to test papers, as well as inflation or deflation of teacher-assessment judgements (Ward, 2018). Heads and teachers have been dismissed for such activities.

Hutchings (2015, p. 37) notes the "intense pressure on school leaders and teachers to raise attainment as measured by tests and exams" and this pressure to achieve good results and gain positive inspection grades has led to 'gaming the system' in numerous ways, for example a focus on borderline children, massaging exam results by 'off-rolling' students who are unlikely to achieve, removing difficult children during inspections, and 'borrowing' effective teachers. Also leading English schools in a 'high-autonomy-high-accountability' culture has resulted in some being seen as little more than 'exam factories' where pupils' emotional health and wellbeing suffers due to 'high-stakes testing'. The terms toxic leaders and toxic organisations have increasingly been used to describe this state of affairs (Craig, 2017).

---

2 This section is adapted from Earley, 2017

In high-stakes, low-trust systems, only those things that get measured tend to get done. However, we know from OECD data that high achieving school systems not only achieve high test scores but are also improving non-cognitive qualities or the 'soft' domains (e.g. pupil engagement, interest, enjoyment, persistence, social skills, self-perception and growth mindset). Also high test scores are not a good predictor of the future success of students or national educational systems. Similarly, although effective teachers might be defined in terms of the high test scores achieved by their pupils there is a danger that such teaching may promote a negative attitude towards the subject taught or indeed learning more generally (lifelong non-learners?).

For Dimmock (2012, p. 46) discussion about learning-centred or instructional leadership is meaningless in a high-autonomy-high-accountability culture, where:

government policy priorities are measured by league tables and inspection regimes that are nationally defined and unresponsive to local circumstances, since the principalship is increasingly defined by the extent to which these outcome measures are achieved. There is little scope for much else.

The challenge is therefore to create an education system whose success is not just assessed by exam results, but by how it is helping to develop children's and young people's character, resilience and well-being (Earley & Greany, 2017). As noted earlier, Sahlberg (2015) notes how in high performing education systems 'test-based accountability' has given way to 'trust-based responsibility' where accountability systems are based on trust.

Yet in England currently there is often a difference between leaders' visionary rhetoric and the prosaic reality experienced by staff, students and parents. Also visions have to conform to centralised expectations and to satisfy inspectors. As Hoyle and Wallace (2007, p. 139) noted school leaders can have 'any vision you like, as long as it's central government's'. Some school leaders however are attempting to show some agency and autonomy in the way they operate and examples of such schools are shown in a recent report published by the Royal Society of Arts. This report (Astle, 2017) is about a group of 12 English state schools 'that are bucking a growing and concerning trend: that of schools narrowing their focus, and hollowing out their teaching, in their desperation to meet the constantly shifting demands of the government's accountability system'. It found that some school leaders 'simply refuse to play this bureaucratic education-by-numbers game; leaders whose decisions are shaped, not by the government's agenda, but by their own sense of mission – by the higher purpose to which they have dedicated themselves and their schools' (p. 2). Such autonomous schools are attempting to bring back a more holistic or rounded definition of what education means and what learning is for.

Possible future changes in the inspection framework for English schools may also help. It is often said that 'what gets inspected gets done' so the Chief Inspector's recent statement that judgements on the breadth and depth of a school's curriculum will be placed at the

core of the new Ofsted inspection framework from September 2019 is most welcome. The intention is to move away from ‘headline data’ (exam results) with a new focus on ‘how schools are achieving these results and whether they are offering a curriculum that is broad, rich and deep, or simply teaching to the test’. The new inspection framework aims ‘to see which schools are really focused on giving children the very best education’ (Sec Ed, 10 January 2019).

## 5 A self-improving school system – the route to self-improvement

The 2010 Education Act focused on releasing schools from local authority control and since that time the growth of academies (both sponsored and convertor) has been rapid. At the beginning of 2018 approximately 7000 were in existence (including Free Schools and University Technical Colleges, both types of autonomous institutions free of local council control). Since the election in Britain of the coalition government in 2010 the preferred direction of travel of English schools has been academisation and the creation of multi-academy trusts. By 2018 just over 60 per cent of academies were single academy trusts with the remainder (approx. 40%) in MATs varying in size from two to over 40 academies. Of the almost 1,400 multi-academy trusts, three quarters (76%) have between 1 to 5 schools, working together to share best practice.

At the same time as this phenomenal growth in academies and MATs, the government in England has been implementing a ‘self-improving school-led system’ (SISS) policy agenda, which according to one of its main architects has meant ‘a shift from vertical to horizontal ways of working’ (Hargreaves, 2010, p. 5). This has manifested itself in a variety of ways including: a growing number of school federations (hard and soft); the emergence of Executive Headteachers; the appointment and deployment of National Leaders of Education (NLEs) and Local Leaders of Education (LLEs); establishing Teaching Schools and Teaching School Alliances; and perhaps most significantly, academisation and the creation of multi-academy trusts. As argued by central government, these reforms ‘will dismantle the apparatus of central control and bureaucratic compliance’ (DfE, 2010, p. 66) by ‘moving control to the frontline’ (DfE, 2016, p. 8).

## 6 Rhetoric and reality

The government has argued that the above SISS policy agenda is premised on ‘high autonomy’ and ‘high accountability’ for schools, with a promise to ‘trust’ the profession, reduce bureaucracy and ‘roll back’ the state (DfE, 2010; 2016). The rhetoric however has been found to be quite different from the reality. Recent research conducted at the UCL IOE has found that ‘any increase in operational autonomy for schools is more than balanced out by changes to the accountability framework, which have allowed the state to continue to steer

the system from a distance and to increasingly intervene and coerce when and where it deems necessary' (Greany & Higham, 2018, p. 6). The research study concludes that rather than 'moving control to the frontline', the SISS agenda in England has:

intensified hierarchical governance and the state's powers of intervention, further constraining the professionalism of school staff and steering the system through a model we term 'coercive autonomy'. Our findings are unambiguous in illustrating the importance of Ofsted and the wider accountability framework in influencing the behaviour of schools, suggesting that hierarchical governance is more influential than market or network co-ordination in England (op cit., p. 11).

What is more the research found that:

... while a minority of our respondents were optimistic about the potential for their local school system to become 'self-improving', the majority view was that the SISS agenda is creating a system of 'winners and losers'. Many saw the contemporary policy framework as problematic, not least because of the incentives to act 'selfishly' in a highly regulated marketplace. There was also a prevailing view that the system has become increasingly incoherent (op cit., p. 12).

Over half (53%) of survey respondents reported that they did not support the overall trajectory of current policy, while only 20 per cent did. They were also clear about the tensions, paradoxes and ironies that exist (Greany & Earley, 2017). For example:

current reforms were seen to be *moving the system away from the original promise of increased school autonomy and towards a model of MATs in which school-level autonomy is reduced*. Further, as MATs get larger, the number of managerial levels often increases, meaning that the 'bureaucracy' of the LA is replaced by another, potentially more complex and less accountable bureaucratic form – which develops hierarchical authority without a local democratic mandate (Greany & Higham, 2018, p. 13, my italics).

This research-based view of the current English educational landscape is very much at odds with that of the current Secretary of State who has recently proclaimed that the freedom and autonomy of the academies programme has driven innovation and raised standards. The Education Secretary speaking at the launch of the Confederation of School Trusts, pointed to the many successes of the academies system and the increasing number of schools making the positive choice to convert, as examples of the benefits of backing school leaders (11 October, 2018). He said:

It's when you give good people the power to make their own decisions that you unleash their creativity and allow them to drive improvements based on what they know works. Today I want to re-make the case for freedom ... for diversity ... and for accountability in our school system ... for going forwards not backwards, as we strive to achieve a world-class education for every child, whatever their background.

He argued that it was a ‘fundamental point’ that heads and school leaders should have the freedom to make decisions in the best interests of their schools and pupils. Yet there appears to be quite a contrast with continued government rhetoric about school autonomy and the power afforded school headteachers and the reality being experienced on the ground. Some practitioners have argued that the growth of MATs has significantly curtailed school leader autonomy (e.g. Breslin, 2018) however, others have argued the opposite to be the case (e.g. West, 2018).

The most recent research (Greany, 2018) has shed further light on the issue of perceived autonomy for school leaders in academy trusts. It notes that while the majority of MATs have an agreed approach across pupil assessment and data reporting, most do not have a standardised approach to curriculum and pedagogy (although the report states many are working to do so in some areas). “Several of the ‘above average MAT performers’ were ‘consciously resisting’ standardisation in these areas, based on the argument that schools need a good level of autonomy to meet contextual needs and drive continuing improvement and innovation” (op cit, p. 87). Trusts working with underperforming schools tended however to be more prescriptive in an attempt to bring about school improvement.

However, it must be said that compared to 30 years ago and prior to the Education Reform Act, schools – both academies and LA-maintained schools - are significantly more autonomous in their decision-making, and increasingly held to account for their results, which are made public and widely available. As schools have gained more autonomy, the more important the role of school leaders has become. However, for the Australian academic Cranston (2013, p. 131), “the rhetoric of self-management and devolution ... has not resulted in schools and school leaders ... determining and driving educational priorities”. For him many school leaders have become the ‘doers’ of the bidding of others rather than “playing a lead role in shaping school leadership professionalism and education more broadly for the 21st century”.

## 7 Conclusion

As schools in England have become more autonomous, the more important the role of school leaders has become, especially headteachers, and more recently, chief executive officers and directors of multi-academy trusts. A key question is how can educational leaders lead in autonomous and accountable systems in ways which recognise and resolve, or at least mitigate, the tensions that they face? A challenge found in all devolved education systems with increasingly autonomous schools has been how to design and implement accountability systems which provide clarity for schools, parents and government funders on what success ‘looks like’. Also is there a clear assessment of whether or not schools are offering a quality service without descending into an unhealthy ‘performativity’ regime led by toxic leaders (Craig, 2017)? As noted elsewhere:

Overly tight accountability systems can flatten the very freedom and autonomy that governments want to encourage; schools can narrow learning by teaching to the test;

they can look up to second guess what they think the inspectorate wants to see (rather than at the evidence base); and they can game the system through ‘cream-skimming’ or by massaging their exam performance through various subtle tricks (Greany & Earley, 2017, p. 4).

The title of this paper ‘School autonomy and accountability in England’ asks whether autonomy is largely rhetorical or an on-the-ground reality. However, the answer is not clear cut and further research is required to shed light on this issue, especially in relation to school autonomy and agency within an increasingly academised system with a growing number of MATs. For some commentators headship in multi-school settings is about anything but autonomy. “It is line-managed and bound by group rules that can drill deep into the identity and independence of individual schools” (Breslin, 2018). As Cousin (2019, p. 206) notes “the new role of ‘head of school’ has emerged to signify a headteacher working as the operational head of a school answerable to an executive head or MAT CEO”, adding that one result of the reduced autonomy is the increasing reluctance of senior leaders to apply for such headships. What is clear however is that the ‘high-autonomy-high-accountability’ culture in which English schools have operated since the 1988 Education Reform Act has led to unintended consequences not all of which have been positive.

## References

- Astle, J. (2017). *The Ideal School Exhibition*, London: RSA.
- Breslin, T. (2018). The broken promise of autonomy for heads in multi-academy trusts, *Schools Week*, 8 December.
- Cousin, S. (2019). *System Leadership: Policy and Practice in the English Schools System*, London: Bloomsbury.
- Craig, I. (2017). Toxic leadership. In P. Earley & T. Greany (Eds.), *School Leadership and Education System Reform* (pp. 182–190). London: Bloomsbury.
- Cranston, N. (2013). School leaders leading: professional responsibility not accountability as the key focus, *Educational Management, Administration and Leadership*, 41 (2), 129–142.
- Day, C., Sammons, P., Hopkins, D., Harris, A., Leithwood, K., Gu, Q., Brown, E., Ahtaridou, E. & Kington, A. (2009). *The impact of school leadership on pupil outcomes: Final report*. Nottingham: Department for Education.
- Day, C., Sammons, P., Leithwood, K., Hopkins, D., Gu, Q., Brown, E. & Ahtaridou, E. (2011). *Successful school leadership: linking with learning and achievement*, Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Day, C. & Sammons, P. (2013). *Successful leadership: a review of the international literature*. CfBT. Available from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED546806.pdf>.

- Department for Education (2010). *The Importance of Teaching: the Schools White Paper*, DfE, London.
- Department for Education (2016). *Educational Excellence Everywhere*, DfE, London.
- Dimmock, C. (2012). *Leadership, Capacity Building and School Improvement: concepts, themes and impact*, London: Routledge.
- Earley, P. (2013). *Exploring the School Leadership Landscape: Changing demands, changing realities*, London: Bloomsbury.
- Earley, P. (2017). Conceptions of leadership and leading the learning, Chapter 9. In P. Earley & T. Greany (Eds.) *School Leadership and Education System Reform*, London: Bloomsbury.
- Earley, P. & Bubb, S. (2018). Leader development – it's personal! *Professional Development Today*, Issue 20.1, 14–23.
- Earley, P. & Greany, T. (Eds.) (2017). *School Leadership and Education System Reform*, London: Bloomsbury.
- Earley, P. & Weindling, D. (2007). Do school leaders have a shelf life? Career stages and headteacher performance, Educational Management, *Administration and Leadership*, 35 (1), 73–88.
- Greany T. (2014). *Are we nearly there yet?: progress, issues and possible next steps for a self-improving school system*, IOE Press, London.
- Greany, T. (2018). *Sustainable improvement in multi-school groups*, London, DfE.
- Greany, T. & Earley, P. (2017). Introduction. In Earley, P. & Greany, T. (Eds.) (2017). *School Leadership and Education System Reform*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Greany, T. & Higham, R. (2018). *Hierarchy, Markets & Networks: Analysing the 'self-improving school-led system' in England and the implications for schools*, London: UCL IOE Press.
- Gronn, P. (2003). *The new work of educational leaders: changing leadership in an era of school reform*, London: Sage.
- Hargreaves, D. (2010). *Creating a self-improving school system*, Nottingham: National College for School Leadership.
- Hattie, J. (2015). *The politics of collective expertise*, London: Pearson.
- Hoyle, E. & Wallace, M. (2007). *Education reform: an ironic perspective*, London: Sage.
- Hutchings, M. (2015). *Exam factories? The impact of accountability measures on children and young people*, London: NUT.
- Kellerman, B. (2012). *The end of leadership*, New York: Harper Collins.
- Kellerman, B. (2015). *Hard Times: Leadership in America*. Stanford, CA: Stanford Business Books.
- MacBeath, J, O'Brien, J. & Gronn, P. (2012). 'Drowning or waving? Coping strategies among Scottish head teachers', *School leadership and management*, 32 (5), 421–37.
- Male, T. (2017). *Multi-academy trusts (MATs): A background briefing paper*. London: London Centre for Leadership in Learning. Available at: <http://www.lcll.org.uk/publications.html>
- National Audit Office (2018). *Converting maintained schools to academies*. London: National Audit Commission.

- OECD (2011). *School autonomy and accountability: Are they related to student performance?* Paris: OECD Publishing.
- Ofqual (2017). *Annual Report, 2017*, London: Office for Qualifications and Examinations.
- Robinson, V. (2011). *Student-centred Leadership*, San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Robinson, V., Hohepa, M. & Lloyd, D. (2009). *School leadership and student outcomes: identifying what works and why: Best evidence synthesis*. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Education.
- Sahlberg, P. (2011a). The Fourth Way of Finland, *Journal of Educational Change*, 12 (2), 173–185.
- Sahlberg, P. (2011b). *Finnish Lessons, What Can the World Learn from Educational Change in Finland?* New York: Teachers College Press.
- Sahlberg, P. (2015). *Finnish Lessons 2.0: What Can the World Learn from Educational Change in Finland?* (2nd edition), New York: Teachers College Press.
- Schleicher, A. (Ed.) (2012). *Preparing Teachers and Developing School Leaders for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Lessons from around the World*, Paris: OECD Publishing.
- Smith, W. C. (Ed.) (2016). *The Global Testing Culture: shaping education policy, perceptions, and practice*, Oxford: Symposium Books.
- Smythe, J. & Wrigley, T. (2013). *Living on the Edge: Rethinking Poverty, Class and Schooling*, NY: Peter Lang Publishing.
- Ward, H. (2018). Almost 600 primaries investigated for cheating, *Schools Week*, 27 November.
- West, C-L. (2018). Not all multi-academy trusts reduce autonomy, *Schools Week*, 8 December.