Assessing the changes: an investigation into the middle leader leading change - the implementation of formative assessment

Thesis

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Abstract

In England the summative assessment stakes for schools have increased markedly over the last decade with the advent of league tables and value added scores. Research teams have shown empirically that learning can be improved when Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategies are embraced. As a Senior Manager in a secondary school, I was interested in how successfully AfL could be implemented and embedded in my school amidst a myriad of other initiatives.

This research considers in particular the role of subject middle managers (Heads of Faculty) in managing this change. It evaluates the extent to which AfL has been embraced by teachers by measuring both shifts in their values as well as in their practice. It also explores the factors which shape middle managers' implementation of the change initiative by looking closely at four faculty case studies within the school. These include both personal qualities of the individual leaders such as leadership style, the leadership approach adopted, as well as factors within the team and school as a whole. These factors include structures and culture to secure change both within the faculties and across the organisation.

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used for evaluating how the change was undertaken and the extent of its success. However, the research is mainly a qualitative study which used interviewing as its primary research tool. Heads of Faculty, staff, students, OFSTED and consultants all provided their perspectives on the success of the implementation.

The analysis shows that Heads of Faculty used a combination of styles and strategies to secure change and they were supported in their endeavours by both team and whole school structures. Cultural changes included improved and increased discussion and collaboration. The composition of the team, staff understanding of the initiative, the nature of the subject itself and the lead of senior management emerged as factors shaping the effectiveness of the change. Training and continuing professional development were essential to underpin and ensure continued change in values and practice. In-classroom professional development, including coaching and team teaching/observation, proved to be the most effective CPD in securing change.
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Doctorate in Education
December 2008
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFL</td>
<td>Assessment for Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAT</td>
<td>Cognitive Ability Tests</td>
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<tr>
<td>C &amp; EA</td>
<td>Creative and Expressive Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPD</td>
<td>Continuing Professional Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DfES</td>
<td>Department for Education and Skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>HoF</td>
<td>Head of Faculty</td>
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<tr>
<td>INSET</td>
<td>In-service Training</td>
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<td>KS3/4/5</td>
<td>Key Stage 3/4/5</td>
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<td>LEA</td>
<td>Local Education Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>LHTL</td>
<td>Learning How to Learn</td>
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<td>MFL</td>
<td>Modern Foreign Languages</td>
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<td>MLE</td>
<td>Making Learning Explicit</td>
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<td>NCSL</td>
<td>National College for School Leadership</td>
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<td>NPQH</td>
<td>National Professional Qualification for Headship</td>
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<tr>
<td>OFSTED</td>
<td>Office for Standards in Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>PANDA</td>
<td>Performance and Assessment</td>
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<td>PLA</td>
<td>Promoting Learning Autonomy</td>
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<tr>
<td>PM</td>
<td>Performance Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>RE</td>
<td>Religious Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>SLT</td>
<td>Senior Leadership Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>Target</td>
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<tr>
<td>WALT</td>
<td>What we are learning today</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILT</td>
<td>What I’m looking for</td>
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<td>*</td>
<td>Stars</td>
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Introduction

Rationale for the research

Our schools can be wonderful places of enchantment and creativity, opening doorways to new ways of perceiving, new ways of being; but they are most of all places of exquisite hope in the possibility of the future, in the possibility of people'. (Clarke, 2000, p. 38)

There has been a national drive to encourage teachers to embrace assessment for learning, in conjunction with the on-going emphasis on the assessment of learning. Research evidence has shown convincingly that ‘Assessment for Learning’ (AfL) does improve results, and also improves students’ motivation and independence of learning (Black and Wiliam, 1998a&b; Black et al., 2002 & 2003; Assessment Reform Group, 1999; 2002). Research teams, within the UK in particular, have worked in individual schools and have secured improvements in the above stated areas by working with teachers and the managers for example in the Kings, Oxfordshire and Medway Formative Assessment Project (KMOFAP) and the Learning How To Learn (LHTL) project. However, there is limited documentation about the process of managing the implementation of AfL within schools beyond the whole-school level to the individual faculty level.

While a national drive supporting AfL may well raise the status of the initiative (as well as the stakes for schools constantly in search for a Holy Grail or magic formula which will secure improved student test scores) it doesn’t necessarily imply automatic or easy application of the purported theories or strategies. Not only is there the need for teachers to adjust their pedagogy, but they also need to induct their students into different teacher-student relationships. These intricacies are encapsulated by Perrenoud (1991) who asserts
that 'every teacher who wants to practise formative assessment must reconstruct the
teaching contracts so as to counteract the habits acquired by their students' (p 13).
Engaging teachers within an organisation in this significant change process, a process
which requires fundamental pedagogical shifts in how the learner is viewed, is very
difficult. Questions regarding how change is promoted, both within schools and across the
school system, are posed by James et al. (2006):

Claims for the effectiveness of AfL raise a number of further questions for research, which
go beyond the classroom. For example, how does one spread knowledge and promote
changes in these specific practices across teachers and schools? How can one achieve
leverage using minimum resources for maximum impact? (p102)

It is these questions about how change is secured, addressed by the LHTL project, which
are the starting point for my research.

Teachers cannot be expected to take the responsibility for promoting the AfL learning
agenda in their classrooms on their own; they need help and support, in the main from
within their own schools (MacBeath et al., 2007). Direct guidance and support for most
secondary teachers largely comes from their immediate line-manager and Middle Leader,
the Head of Faculty (HoF). Since the Middle Leader's role is a pivotal link between Senior
Leader and classroom colleagues, they are often both the conduit as well as the interpreters
of either discussions with or dictates from senior management. I feel passionately that
Middle Leaders have a complex and difficult task in introducing the huge number of
change initiatives cast upon them as well as leading and monitoring their implementation.
As the Senior Leader working closely with this group of Middle Leaders, I was particularly
interested in examining how these important colleagues went about the task of managing change within their different faculty areas, considering the problems they confronted and the issues that made their task either more or less difficult. This research therefore aims to extend beyond the brief of the LHTL research in that detailed consideration is given to how change took place in the different individual faculty areas. Also while there is much literature on Senior Leaders and how they manage change, there is less available on how Middle Leaders manage change, even though Middle Leaders are pivotal to the successful implementation of any change in a school. It is this area which this research hopes to build on, thus extending research in the area of the management of change.

**Context for the case study**

The school in which this study is located is a high-achieving secondary school with a Sixth Form and Science College status. Originally a girls’ Grammar School, the entrance criteria of the school changed in 1972 and again even more significantly in 1994, resulting in a more genuinely comprehensive intake so that to the less initiated the decline in grades (84% - 2003 from 90%+ in the 1990s) could be seen as ‘falling standards’. There is therefore an ongoing need to ensure that the school is doing all it can to ensure that all students, including those with lower attainment, secure the best possible grades. The scrutiny of current practice is thus an ever-increasing imperative.

My role as Curriculum Deputy gave me oversight of teaching and learning across the school. I line-managed each of the seven Heads of Faculty (HoF) - English, Maths, Science, Modern Foreign Languages (MFL), Technology, Creative and Expressive Arts (C
& EA) which comprised PE, Music and Art) and Humanities. I was responsible for monitoring the leadership of their faculty and subject areas and for their annual Performance Management, reviewing their objectives. I met regularly with each HoF individually, and together with them monitored the performance of teachers in their faculties and their students’ outcomes. I had responsibility for the Heads of Faculty forum and chaired its monthly meetings. HoFs reported that it had previously been a forum largely for administration and information passing with little discussion about pedagogy or student learning, and little cross-faculty exchange of ideas. As the Deputy new to the school I wished to raise the level of debate about effective teaching and learning and also wanted to encourage Middle Leaders to share the practice within their faculties with other HoFs. My initial task was to evaluate the assessment practice and policy within the school so a review of both was undertaken in 2002. It indicated that much of the assessment and marking done by teachers provided minimal guidance for students; some was unnecessary and time-consuming, and almost all showed that there was limited cohesion and coherence in assessment and marking across faculty areas in the school. Little assessment practice adhered to the school’s assessment policy. At the time of the review the Head of Science attended a seminar on formative assessment delivered by Paul Black. She was very inspired by his research and the message about formative assessment in the booklet Inside the Black Box (Black & Wiliam, 1998a). It was agreed that she would report back from the seminar at the next HoF meeting. I purchased copies of Inside the Black Box for each of the HoFs who read it prior to the meeting to inform their understanding of formative assessment. There was unanimous agreement by HoFs at that meeting that the review of the assessment policy and practice within the school should be guided by the research findings presented in

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Inside the Black Box. Shortly afterwards, the emerging national AfL agenda provided a further framework for reviewing our school’s assessment policy and evaluating the purpose of assessment. Also, perhaps as importantly, it provided us an opportunity to consider a wide range of issues surrounding teaching and learning. My role as Senior Leader was to lead the initiative across the school, but also to support the Heads of Faculty in managing the change. I also had input into the whole school Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme and thus was able to direct resources into whole school training and to recruit consultants in to support individual HoFs and their faculties. In my particular role I felt well-placed to examine in greater depth the complexities of managing change within the individual faculty areas.

Two further contextual aspects have had significant influence on this research – one of national and the other of local significance. The first is the introduction of the New OFSTED framework with a shift in focus away from external evaluation to that of internal self-evaluation: the entire climate of accountability of schools has now shifted. The second is the change-over of Headteacher part of the way through the research in September 2005. The national shift to self-evaluation and close local accountability is replicated in the style of the new Headteacher who seeks evidence, delineates clear written policies and who introduced structures to secure teaching and learning expectations. These two shifts enabled easier monitoring and evaluation of the AfL strategies in the pilot’s third year but more importantly changed the culture within the school.
Overview of the pilot (2003-2006)

The pilot ran for 3 school years from 2003, but data were collected in the fourth year. Each of the three years is described below.

**Year 1:** In the first year of the AfL pilot, beginning in September 2003, each faculty and each colleague experimented with AfL strategies as they wished with year 7 students only - most predominantly exploring effective questioning techniques, the setting of clear objectives, and the marking of formative work using only comments (with stars (*) to indicate that which was done well and targets (Ts) to show improvements to be made). Some colleagues experimented with peer and self-assessment.

**Year 2:** In the second year of the pilot, beginning from September 2004, for whole school assessment cohesion, all faculties agreed to implement specific aspects of AfL - the setting of clear objectives and the annotation of all formative work with a comment showing stars and targets. The pilot was extended to year 8 as well as year 7 although subsequently all faculties except Maths extended it to year 9, too. Questioning, peer and self-assessment were trialed as part of whole faculty strategy - as and when Middle Leaders felt it was appropriate to introduce this change within their faculty. Each faculty devised their own faculty ‘interim assessment statement’ customising the AfL strategies for their subject / faculty area.

**Year 3:** The third year of the pilot, from September 2005, was extended to Key Stage 4 as well as 3 and all faculties were expected to implement all AfL strategies cited above as well as questioning, peer and self-assessment. There was a distinct difference between each of the pilot years. The first year was a year for experimentation, discussion, debate,
development and in some instances rebellion. By the second year, there was greater consistency across the whole school and Heads of Faculty were expected to monitor the agreed whole school AfL strategies adopted. In the final pilot year there was a prescriptive expectation that all the agreed AfL strategies were being implemented and the HoFs' monitoring and evaluation of the strategies were written in to their Performance Management targets. By the end of the third year a new ‘Assessment, Recording and Reporting’ policy was ratified by Governors in September 2006, formalising AfL strategies as school assessment policy. It is the development of this pilot that is the subject of my research.

Year 4: Student interview data collection continued into the fourth research and academic year until Christmas 2006 as there was not sufficient time to complete the data collection by the end of year 3.

Research questions

The title of the thesis Assessing the Changes: an Investigation into the Middle Leader Leading Change – the Implementation of Formative Assessment embodies the research question which shaped both the research itself and the structure of the thesis:

How is the change (the introduction of Assessment for Learning) managed and implemented by the Middle Leaders? In particular explore:

- the strategies Middle Leaders employed to secure the realignment of existing values and practice to the new Assessment for Learning values and practice
- the factors which shaped the leadership strategies chosen

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the evidence of the impact of the Middle Leaders’ strategies in realigning colleagues’ values and practice

The answers to this question would help me and other Senior Leaders understand the process and difficulties experienced by Middle Leaders in securing the AfL change. This would in turn facilitate Senior Leaders learning lessons as to how they can support Middle Leaders in the implementation of further initiatives.

The approach to the research depended on the type of evidence (quantitative/qualitative/mixed) that was appropriate and helpful in addressing my overriding research question (Loughran, 1999). Data were collected and analysed to ascertain how the managers were managing the process of change. The people from whom data were drawn include me as Deputy Headteacher, Middle Leaders (the HoFs), the staff, a sample of students, consultants and OFSTED. The research considers how AfL is implemented through the way that Middle Leaders lead. HoFs in implementing AfL needed to influence and secure changes in teachers’ values and practices – not necessarily a linear process – which in turn should shape students’ learning to improve their achievement and make them more motivated, autonomous learners. Consideration is given to the leadership styles and approaches HoFs adopted and the attendant organisational structures and culture which supported the changes to be made, including continuing professional development (CPD).

The research explored a number of emerging variables which interacted in a complex way to influence HoFs’ leadership - and considered how far HoFs were able to shift colleagues’ values and practices. Alterations in the teachers’ assessment values and practice, and student, consultants’ and OFSTED’s observations of AfL strategies in the classroom, provided evidence of the impact of Middle Leaders’ strategies in implementing change.

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Review of the Literature

Change is a recurrent theme in the life of education in the UK and teachers’ anecdotal comments express weariness and at times frustration at the regularity and extensiveness of changes imposed on the profession. This study’s consideration of the implementation of one particular change initiative, AfL, was one among many change initiatives confronting staff at the time of the research. The review of the literature aims to explore three interrelated areas which encompass the research questions:

1. Assessment & AfL
2. Change and the school improvement agenda
3. Leadership theory: leadership styles and approaches, and continuing professional development.

The first part of the literature review examines the copious evidence of the successful implementation of AfL in the schools where research was undertaken. It shows how AfL requires a different view of learning, a changed student/teacher relationship and a different pedagogy. The second part contextualises change within education and wider society, and considers the tensions of securing any change. The third part examines how leaders secure change through influencing and changing teachers’ values and practice. Structure, changing culture and CPD are all means by which the literature points to leaders securing change.

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1. Assessment and Assessment for Learning

Social and political contexts of assessment

Assessment can be the most significant influence on the quality and shape of students’ educational experience, on their motivation and therefore in promoting or inhibiting learning (Broadfoot, 1996). From the advent of mass education, it has been summative or terminal assessment procedures that have shaped the content of the curriculum, how schools are organised, pedagogy and students’ learning priorities. International ‘standards’, league tables, inspection, and performance indicators dominate education discourse and shape assessment practice and pedagogy; this is because outcomes of summative assessment can be manipulated to both effect desired changes in the education system, and as a measure for government to show the education system and thus learning of students has ‘improved’ (Scott, 1989). Ministries or education departments use assessment as a means to ‘hold publicly funded schools accountable for providing quality education’ and international summative assessments are important for ‘comparing national education systems to developments in other countries’ (OECD report, 2005, p21). Noting this trend, the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (1996) critically asserts that assessment should be used as a powerful tool for learning, and should not be just a political solution to perceived problems over standards and accountability. Formative assessment offers to be this powerful tool but requires a major shift in teachers’ pedagogy. As will be shown, there are enormous tensions created for teachers who are still bound by the demands of the stated summative assessment accountability measures while trying to change their practice to accommodate the pedagogic shifts that Afl requires.

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The changing nature of assessment: Assessment for Learning (AfL)

The ongoing work of Black and Wiliam (1998a & b), Black et al. (2002, 2003) and the Assessment Reform Group (1999; 2002) has emphasised the importance of formative assessment in improving and promoting students' learning autonomy. Formative assessment can be viewed as the process by which teachers gather assessment information about the emerging learning needs of their students as their learning is undertaken. Teachers take cognisance of this assessment information by adjusting their teaching to respond to how effectively students are learning to ensure progress. Formative assessment must include students since it is through the teacher-student interaction that they receive feedback on what they know, understand, and can do. By reflecting they are able to evaluate their learning progress, and generate opportunities for furthering their understanding enabling them to become more independent learners. The Assessment Reform Group (1999) summarises that successful learning will occur when learners are motivated; have ownership of their learning; understand the goals they are aiming for, and have the skills to achieve success. Formative assessment is not a bolt-on to current practice. It is a dynamic interaction with teaching and learning (Gipps, 1994); and is integral to it (James et al., 2006). Black and Wiliam (1998a & b), Black et al. (2002, 2003) and the Assessment Reform Group (1999; 2002) have shown that formative assessment is absolutely central to the teaching and learning process and have 'proved without doubt' (Assessment Reform Group, 1999, p1) that, when carried out effectively, informal classroom assessment with constructive feedback to the student will raise levels of attainment, and will have a profound influence on the motivation and self-esteem of pupils as they are enabled to become autonomous learners. Assessment to promote learning, they
claim, is ‘the single-most powerful tool for both raising standards and empowering lifelong learners.’ (Assessment Reform Group, 1999, p2). It is when teachers come to value the importance of developing student learning autonomy (Marshall and Drummond, 2006) and start to make pedagogic changes to the practice in their classrooms that they will promote learning independence and see a difference in students’ motivation.

Since February 2004, formative assessment has been embraced by the DfES - under the umbrella title of ‘Assessment for Learning’ - as part of the Key Stage 3 Strategy (now National Strategy) - and the Personalised Learning Initiative in 2004. This recognises the importance of formative assessment as one of the strategies in raising achievement and standards significantly, and improving student motivation. AfL is the term applied to ‘any assessment for which the first priority is to serve the purpose of promoting students’ learning’ (Black et al. 2003, p3). It differs from summative assessment which is designed primarily to serve the purposes of accountability, or of ranking, or of certifying competence (Black et al., 2003). There are a number of pedagogic strategies identified by Black and Wiliam (1998a) and The Assessment Reform Group (1999) as integral to diagnostic formative assessment and these include:

- the sharing of learning objectives with students at the outset of a lesson or module of learning

- effective feedback and student target-setting which includes, instead of grades on students’ work, detailed comments which highlight that which has been done well (stars) and that which needs to improve (targets for improvement)
• peer and self-assessment for students to monitor their own learning and interrogate and engage with the assessment objectives

• effective teacher questioning to elicit and challenge students’ understanding and to encourage independent thought

The following paragraphs review the research undertaken into teachers’ implementation of AfL and highlight the importance of the AfL agenda for every practicing and training teacher.

**Research examining Assessment for Learning in practice**

Following the publication of the summary booklet, *Inside the Black Box* (Black & Wiliam, 1998a), further development work was undertaken with Science, Mathematics and English teachers in six schools in the KMOFAP project (Black *et al.*, 2003). This research was underpinned by extensive support for teachers in the six schools. Teachers in the KMOFAP Project were provided with ‘exceptional levels and quality of training and opportunities for peer exchange’ (James *et al.*, 2006, p 102) which were not available to all teachers attempting to implement AfL in other school contexts. As already stated, one of the questions raised by James *et al.* (2006) regarding this research is about the sustainability of rolling out AfL to all schools and into all classrooms. Thus was born the ‘Learning How to Learn’ (LHTL) research project, which received one of the largest grants ever awarded to the UK’s Teaching and Learning Research Programme. The central theme in the LHTL project of nurturing students as autonomous learners - encouraging responsibility to be taken for their own learning - is reflected in the title of the project itself, ‘Learning How to Learn’. Unlike the KMOFAP project, it had minimal researcher support for teachers in
schools - thus attempting to replicate the experiences of teachers across the system in their endeavours to implement AfL (James and Pedder, 2006). This was a four-year (2001–2005) development and research project which had as a primary instrument for gathering data the LHTL questionnaire (see Pedder, 2006) which was administered twice - in 2002 and 2004. (This questionnaire was also used in my research (in 2004 & 2006 see appendix 12). The LHTL project had two main areas of research: i) formative assessment/AfL and ii) securing organisational change. The outcomes of these two areas are considered in the following paragraphs.

i) Formative assessment/AfL
The questionnaire, drawing on theory and other research, was constructed to examine teachers’ values and practices of the AfL pedagogic practices cited above. A factor analysis of the teachers’ responses to questions on assessment produced three factors, elaborated on in the methodology section of this thesis:

- **Making Learning Explicit (MLE)** using the pedagogic strategies cited above

- **Promoting Learning Autonomy (PLA)**

- **Performance Orientation (PO)**

The outcomes of the detailed analysis of the LHTL questionnaire revealed that there were gaps between teachers’ values and practice; this emerged when evaluating how they promoted students’ learning autonomy through the use of specific AfL strategies, and in how their performance was orientated by external factors – such as the imposed curriculum and the summative assessment criteria. These two factors were in tension with each other - the demands of summative assessment and the externally imposed curriculum were at odds
with promoting students’ autonomy - and teachers were not able to align their practice with their values. The research concludes that although teachers are committed to the values of assessment for learning there are contradictions that need to be resolved if their practice is to be aligned with their values (James and Pedder, 2006). The LHTL research highlighted that cultivating values is very important to avoid teachers simply adopting AfL strategies without truly understanding and believing in the underlying purpose of the strategies. This is very difficult to secure as is demonstrated in Pedder and James’ (2007) research where the initial indications showed that only a few (20%) teachers’ application of AfL promoted students’ learning autonomy, an essential factor for demonstrating that AfL changes have been embedded. This is because teachers’ practice may go through the motions of applying the AfL strategies without any real effective results for the students they teach - described by Marshall and Drummond (2006) as practice conforming to the ‘letter’, rather than embodying the ‘spirit’ of AfL (p133).

Pedder and James (2007) identified in the LHTL project that some subjects are more conducive to adopting AfL strategies than others. They used cluster analysis (see Pedder and James, 2007, for details) and identified five clusters with each having a distinctive assessment profile. Their data showed that two clusters which showed the highest scores in the questionnaire for two areas that ensure successful implementation of AfL - the making of learning explicit (MLE) to students and promoting students’ learning autonomy (PLA) - accounted for 75% of PE staff, 62% of creative arts staff, and 50% or more of English and Modern Foreign languages staff. Pedder and James (2007) conclude that:

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This might suggest that there is something in the nature of these subjects (or the way such subjects are construed by teachers) that is particularly conducive to the promotion of LHTL through the use of classroom assessment practices (p271).

These same clusters accounted for the smallest percentages of Science (22%) and Mathematics teachers (25%) suggesting the converse – i.e. that the nature of these subjects (or how they are viewed) constrain the promotion of LHTL in classrooms. Pedder and James (2007) and Hodgen and Marshall (2005) note that the generic concepts of AfL show themselves differently in different subjects depending on the skills required in each subject. So although formative assessment has generic ideas (such as questioning, feedback, sharing criteria, and self and peer assessment) they are shown in different subjects in very different ways. English encourages debate, an individual’s critical response and the provision of alternative perspectives which makes peer and self assessment easier. Maths on the other hand is generally taught as formal and abstract concepts. Maths and Science teachers in particular, as well as Design Technology and ICT, are characterised by a strong focus on assessment of learning (viz. helping students achieve performance goals defined by the curriculum, through closed questioning, with outcomes measured by marks and grades) and internal testing (Pedder and James, 2007). The converse would appear to be so for Creative and Expressive Arts, PE and English. The cluster of Maths, Science and Humanities reflected the lowest practice for promoting learning autonomy explained by Pedder and James (2007) and Black et al’s (2003, pp. 67-74) conjecture that these subjects may be seen as being ‘content heavy’, driven by the provision of ‘correct’ responses. As a result, they conclude, these subjects have particular issues to surmount in making learning explicit for
students and promoting learning autonomy. It is the exploration of these subject differences within the varying faculties which are of particular interest in my research.

**ii) How organisations secure change**

The second area of the LHTL research investigated the conditions that would support the implementation of AfL to secure educational change - thus promoting students’ autonomous learning; it included the consideration of teachers’ professional development and school improvement. The main findings of this aspect of the LHTL research, using the tool of the LHTL questionnaire, are cited here but the details are elaborated on subsequently under the section which considers CPD to secure change. They are as follows:

i) continual professional learning, particularly through in-classroom teacher learning is essential in order to close the values/practice gap in promoting students’ learning how to learn

ii) schools need to support teachers in using and carrying out research and consulting pupils for it is these in-class teaching learning practices particularly that are linked to the promotion of student learning autonomy and in making learning explicit

iii) teachers value organisational strategies to secure change to improve the quality of students’ learning, however, they do not see that managers always put these into practice and this is a particular challenge for schools looking to secure longer-term change (Pedder, 2006).

From the LHTL questionnaire, a range of classroom-based approaches to collaborative teacher learning appeared to be most directly and powerfully associated with learning how to learn in the classroom through promoting learning autonomy (Pedder and James., 2007).
Pedder et al's (2005) research considered both out-of-classroom learning (including with other colleagues and out-of-the-classroom training provision) and in-classroom learning (including using colleagues’ and students’ feedback for evaluation) and showed that teacher learning is fundamental for ensuring high quality student learning in classrooms. Teachers, however, appeared to value and benefit from participating in out-of-classroom learning but they placed less value on in-class teacher learning practices which are not so directly linked to the promotion of learning how to learn. In particular teachers seemed neither to attribute high value to nor to use the practice of inquiry - one aspect of teachers’ in-classroom learning which includes the use of research as a source of learning; pupil consultation; joint research; team teaching and peer observation. Pedder et al. (2005) argue that even though there are associated risks, teachers’ classroom-based learning, needs to be supported by the institution, as it is ‘indispensable to the sustained provision of high quality education in schools’ (Pedder et al., 2005, p209). Classrooms need to become ‘crucibles of learning for teachers as much as for their students’ (Pedder et al., 2005, p237). My own research examined the practices of in- and out-of-classroom learning to see how it impacted on shifting staff values and practices and considered how teachers were supported through continual professional learning and through systems of support.

No matter how extensive and powerful the research evidence, classroom teachers need to be convinced of the merits of AfL for themselves and must practise the strategies correctly if there are to be any notable outcomes. Black and Wiliam (1998a) themselves caution that the collection and publication of research data and evidence is not enough: rather it is only ‘if each teacher finds his or her own ways of incorporating the lessons and ideas...into her
or his own patterns of classroom work’ (p16) that will yield real results of transforming students’ learning. The need to induct and train staff gradually is borne out by Black & Wiliam’s (1998a) own counsel that change ‘can only happen slowly and through sustained programmes of professional development and support’ (p15). In order to embrace the benefits that research indicates formative assessment offers in raising achievement and improving student motivation, teachers need to adjust their focus to improving the effectiveness of formative assessment in order to improve summative results. This requires a major culture change in the way teachers value and practise assessment. This is by no means an easy road and both Pedder et al. (2005) and Marshall and Drummond (2006) in the LHTL project highlight how teachers are pulled by the tensions of external policy and the focus on summative results - and accountability for these results - which act as barriers to this culture change. The literature on change is thus considered next.

2. Change and the school improvement agenda

Introduction: school improvement and change

School improvement can be defined as a distinct approach to educational change that ‘enhances student outcomes as well as strengthening the school’s capacity for managing change’ (Hopkins et al., 1994, p3). Change is a continuous dynamic process of development and growth which involves a reorganisation in response to felt needs. It is a process, either initiated by internal factors or external forces, involving individuals, groups, or institutions resulting in the realignment of existing values, practices, and outcomes (Morrison, 1998). The leader’s role is to manage change to improve school performance through influencing teachers’ values and practices.
Leading in a complex constantly changing world

This section explores educational change within the wider context of change in society and considers educational leaders' responses to it. Schools need to respond and adapt to the changing post-modern world - with the dissolution of certainties - to technologies which are constantly changing, and to challenges to traditional social and economic relationships. Both the profession and leaders constantly need to review, refresh and recreate themselves (Fullan, 2001). There is abundant literature which highlights how this constantly changing world has an impact on educational leaders and their approach to managing change. In particular much of the literature asserts that leadership is not a precise science and there can be no pre-determined, exact course for leading change. For instance Fullan (2003) asserts that there should be an acceptance of the unmapped territory ahead where a new map will be made as the journey is undertaken. West-Burnham and O’Sullivan (1998) also recognise that the process of change is unpredictable and individuals should ‘develop a response within a redefined culture and set of expectations’ (West-Burnham and O’Sullivan, 1998, p.187). Similarly Sergiovanni (2001) asserts that each organisation needs effective leaders to evaluate the context and think through the solutions for themselves rather than to base their practice on the assumption that there is an exact course of action for managing change for the problems that they face. The metaphor of a journey down a road or path is used to outline the same message by Hargreaves and Fullan (1998):

You can get ideas, directions, insights, and lines of thought, but you can never know exactly how to proceed. You have to beat the path by walking it. Today’s leaders must learn to think through solutions themselves...This is the essence of the learning organisation.

(p27).

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While the literature cited above indicates that educational leaders’ response to the changing world in which they find themselves should be organic rather than prescriptive, it does not take cognisance of the paradox that the educational system itself tends to be centralised, prescriptive and top-down (Frost et al., 2000). External pressures on schools, leaders and teachers often strait jacket their responses to localised contexts and often maps leaders’ journeys for them. It is exactly this tension that this research, in the context of this secondary school, explores.

The challenge for leaders: managing change with colleagues

The anxieties of uncertainty and the joys of mastery are central to educational change, and to its corresponding success or failure (Fullan, 2001). All real change involves ‘passing through the zones of uncertainty of feeling as though one is lost, or confronting more information than can be handled’ (Schon, 1971, p12); change therefore involves loss, anxiety, and struggle, and response towards it is often ambivalent (Marris, 1975). When staff consider embracing change, the new is considered in the light of the familiar, and its usefulness is evaluated in relation to past experiences. While this conservative impulse seeks to consolidate the security of past skills and attachments, it does not necessarily preclude growth or change: rather it may provide assurance as something new is explored. If the change is successfully engaged it can result in mastery, accomplishment, and professional growth (Schon, 1971). However, change is by no means viewed positively by everybody. Leaders will have to confront and manage the resistance generated by change with great sensitivity and should be open to their colleagues’ responses to these uncertainties of change. A leader ignoring colleagues’ uncertainties towards change means

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that aspects of the change initiative may be ignored, while others are misinterpreted. Even when people are committed to the principles of change, they may not know what they are doing because they don’t fully understand the change - or they are not skilled at it – for example the already cited conforming to the ‘letter’ rather than the ‘spirit’ of AfL (Marshall and Drummond, 2006, p133). In order for reform adoption, implementation and sustainability of school change to be secured, individuals and initiatives cannot be in isolation from one another but instead there need to be ‘interrelations between and across groups in different contexts at various points in time’ (Datnow and Stringfield, 2000, p199). The importance of internal and external networks are also identified in the concluding comments from the LHTL project as being essential - especially if the school is to work towards becoming a ‘learning organisation’ (Carmichael et al., 2006), a concept examined later in this literature review.

**What it means to make changes in values and practice**

When trying to get people to change, especially when changing is difficult, leaders need to engage a change both in colleagues’ values and practice. These changes can either be entrenched and ‘embedded’ or superficial ‘surface’ changes. ‘Embedding’ is described by Swaffield and MacBeath (2006) as lasting and deep-seated change. It is ‘a concept applied to a vision, a set of procedures which become integral to the structure and culture of an organisation’ (p 2). Schein (2004) outlines the process of embedded change as having three stages: unfreezing of current assumptions, cognitive restructure and a refreezing into new constellations of thinking. In contrast surface change is change which is neither long-lasting nor deeply entrenched in people’s practices and values or in the organisation’s structures or
culture. Surface change is often the result of teachers not fully understanding the principles, rationale or implications of the change for their own practice, even though teachers may be able to articulate the goals of the change. Embedded change is particularly difficult to secure because it involves the alteration of values and role behaviour, with there being uncertainty about how values impact on or shape practice and vice versa, and may take an inordinate length of time and effort to achieve. Similarly changes in practice may be difficult if new skills must be acquired and new ways of conducting teaching and learning have to be established. It is particularly hard to clarify and accomplish changes in practice because of the complex interrelationship of values, resources, and teaching methods. A further real challenge in securing long-lasting change is the meshing of the myriad subjective realities of the organisation’s and people’s individual contexts and histories, with those of the new programmes and policies (Fullan, 2001). The multi-dimensional nature of change according to Fullan (2001) embraces at least three dimensions which include: the possible alteration of values; new/revised materials; and altered teaching approaches. Each dimension is viewed by Fullan to be absolutely necessary for embedded change because they together represent the means of achieving a particular educational goal. However, this is not always evident in the educational practice in the UK. Much change which is dictated from the DfES, for example as part of the Key Stage Three (KS3) or National Strategies, is imposed on teachers as an imperative with the expectation that it is evident directly in their practice. The KS3 Literacy Strategy for instance, supported by copious new and revised materials, has achieved significant success in the change of teachers’ practice (HMI 2090, 2004) with ‘some results in the national tests improved most significantly in Mathematics and in the proportions of pupils achieving level 6 in Science’ (HMI 2090, 2004, p3) - in

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spite of there being little tangible evidence of alteration of teachers' values. This would indicate that it is possible for practice change to occur without value shifts; however deep sustained embedded change is unlikely to occur because it does not embody the 'spirit' of the change (Marshall and Drummond, 2006); a caution must be made here though that there is very little widespread robust research evidence for this. Beyond the brief of this research (because of the relatively short period of time the change initiative is under examination), is the question that once the extensive focus of AfL is no longer central to the school improvement plan whether other initiatives and imperatives - e.g. surrounding the external national summative assessments - will once again eventually come to the fore as important influences on teachers' practice, and the AfL strategies will simply fade away. These questions are pertinent in considering how leaders endeavour to secure long-lasting change; this is the next area of literature to be examined.

3. Leadership theory

An introduction to leadership

The AfL initiative was introduced and led across the whole school by Senior Management whilst the task of leading and overseeing individual staff's changed assessment values and practice was delegated to faculty Middle Leaders. Leadership is 'the process of persuasion or example by which an individual (or team) induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and his/her followers' (Gardner, 1990, p1). The training materials for the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) (DfEE, 2001) state that 'securing commitment of others is probably closest to pure leadership...The leader is required to lead and vigorously encourage others to follow' (p6). Leadership for
continuous school improvement however, with its corresponding need for change while still paradoxically maintaining the stability of the daily running of the organisation, is eminently difficult and is described as becoming ‘more and more like trying to run in soft sand’ (Sergiovanni, 2001, p2). Leadership style describes the type of interaction between leaders and followers. Interactions with staff were central in HoFs’ endeavours to secure change and HoFs adopted leadership styles which they deemed appropriate to achieve the desired outcomes. Leadership approach on the other hand outlines the strategies utilised to secure change. The research literature on change is separated into two approaches which are differentiated by the strategies used and the extent of the involvement of people in the change process. Leadership styles and approaches, central to considering how Middle Leaders implemented AfL, are outlined in further detail.

**Leadership style**

Leadership style includes the way an individual expresses leadership, uses power and authority, arrives at decisions, and interacts with teachers and others. There are a huge variety of typologies of leadership styles although it is not the brief of this literature review to examine and evaluate the various types in depth. Hay consultants, as part of the Leadership Programme for Serving Headteachers (a programme run by the National College for School Leadership ([NCSL]), identify six styles but it should be noted that others may use different words to describe essentially the same styles. Their terminology has been selected for review as these identified styles underpin leadership discussion for the National Qualification for Headship (NPQH), a mandatory NCSL-run qualification for
prospective Headteachers, explicitly for the English educational context. The six styles (DfEE, 2001, p6) are:

• Coercive – uses many sanctions and few rewards; issues directives rather than direction

• Authoritative – has clear vision; justifies and takes responsibility for long-term direction

• Affiliative – aims to avoid conflict/confrontation and develop harmony

• Democratic – encourages participation and collaboration; seeks consensus and aims to seek commitment through ownership

• Pace-setting – focuses on task accomplishment to a high level of excellence; takes the lead

• Coaching – encourages development of others; identifies strengths and weaknesses

There is much debate surrounding the most appropriate leadership style to be used in securing and monitoring change. Research (DfEE: 2001; Earley and Fletcher-Campbell, 1992) comments that effective leaders do not operate in one style only but use a range of styles and understand how to match these styles to the context and the people being led; each style is helpful in almost any organisational context since the ‘meaningfulness of each approach to leadership is significantly dependent on the context’ (Leithwood et al, 1999, p23). The NPQH guidance is that the key is having ‘a broad repertoire of styles from which to match the different demands of many different situations (DfEE, 2001, p7)’ and that ‘judgement is vital’ (p6) in deciding the most effective style. Similarly, Hersey and Blanchard’s (1969) situational leadership asserts that an effective leader is one who has

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different relationships with their colleagues depending on the situation; however they qualify this further by saying that leaders should also adapt how they relate to their followers’ maturity. This is defined by how ready and willing the follower is to perform required tasks - i.e. their competence and motivation.

While there is recognition of the need for leaders to be versatile in their choice of style in securing change, there is much in the literature which overall favours collaboration - a democratic, coaching or affiliative style - with its emphasis on support and teamwork - especially in more complex contexts. Harris (1999) in her research discovered that the most effective departments have the leader collaborating and predominantly adopting a democratic leadership style. In particular when complexity within an organisation increases, mutual adjustment is more effective than a directive leadership style (Sergiovanni 2001) and informal communication is seen as essential for the completion of tasks (Minzberg, 1979). Bradley et al. (1994) concur and assert that a leadership style which is delegatory is preferable, but also suggest that there needs to be accountability to ensure that things happen. Monitoring and evaluation of assessment activities need to be undertaken but support needs to be provided which is facilitating rather than directive - people need to be given the space to work in the way that suits them. This poses some tension; while the literature appears to favour a collaborative style the large number of external changes thrust upon schools to be implemented immediately often mean that Middle and Senior Leaders are obliged to adopt a more authoritarian, pace-setting or coercive leadership style in order meet the accountability requirements which ensure that change is enacted straight away, even if it is not securely embedded. This is discussed
later. This tension is reflected also in the type of approach to secure change that leaders feel obliged to adopt, especially when confronted with colleagues that are obstructive or extremely resistant to embracing the change, the focus of the next paragraphs.

**Leadership approaches to managing change**

There are two approaches outlining the different strategies in securing change although the various researchers each name them differently. The adoptive (or dominant/rational) approach is top-down while the adaptive (or community of learners/emergent) approach involves people and is bottom-up.

**Adoptive approach**

The adoptive approach emphasises preplanning and the predictable nature of change in school development planning and embodies a rational attitude towards implementing change. Adoptive models tend to disregard the variables within the individual school environment, and strategies utilised to manage change are linear and top-down, motivated by an authority figure. External pressure generally provides the motivation for change. However, the complexity of change is not considered in this model, especially when considering the human element in securing change. The approach is about control rather than growth and is governed by lists or competencies based on assumptions of how people are, feel, and should behave and about how organisations should work (Barth, 1990). Formula-driven approaches to understanding change have been suggested by Carnall (1995) who has derived equations to approximate the change process. Though his formulae can be viewed as clinical and disregarding of people, they can be useful in identifying key features for successful change. These features include dissatisfaction with the status quo.
the desirability of the proposed change; the practicability of the proposed change; the cost of the change and the energy for change. The Research, Development and Dissemination model (RDD) (Guba and Clark, 1965) of educational change is the most well-known of the adoptive models and outlines four stages: research, development, dissemination and adoption. The National Literacy Strategy, already cited, utilised this method and achieved notable success in raising literacy standards, and in forcing implementation of its strategies (Fullan, 2003). There is yet evidence to be provided, however, of its long-term success in the deep embedding of its principles in teachers’ values and practice. In spite of the adoptive approach’s general lack of success (because of its imperviousness to local context, its conviction that change can be planned and sequenced, and its disregard of the complexity of change - especially when considering the human element in securing change) it is still the preferred approach of policy makers and politicians.

Adaptive approach

The adaptive approach on the other hand emphasises change as continuous, open-ended, and unpredictable because of the dynamic nature of the organisation itself which constantly undergoes flux. The adaptive approach commences with problem identification, is strongly rooted in reality, and involves the move from analysis to practice, but importantly builds in ownership and involvement. It thus places a strong emphasis on people as part of the change process recognising that change changes people but people also change change, and the best laid plans stand or fall on the people involved (Hoyle, 1975; Dalin et al., 1993). It allows for all stakeholders’ skills, aspirations and energies to be rallied to improve themselves according to their own organisational culture and identified needs (Barth, 1990).
This emphasis on growth and self-fulfilment in school improvement, rather than jumping through externally imposed hoops or meeting specified criteria, is reiterated in the literature of other academics of the change process notably Fullan (2001), Day et al. (2000), Morrison (1998) and Hopkins et al. (1994).

The development of social capital, teachers’ participation in social networks within the school, is a very important aspect of the adaptive approach. Developing social capital to support the school improvement agenda is most likely to be realised when:

- Teachers talk about their teaching practice – constantly and precisely
- Teachers and managers frequently observe each other teaching and provide each other with useful evaluations of their observed teaching
- Teachers and managers plan, design, research, evaluate and prepare teaching materials together
- They teach each other the practice of teaching (Little, 1981).

The development of social capital, openness of communication and collaboration were features of schools good at managing change (Fullan, 1982). The nurturing of social capital through the development of teacher and school networks was also acknowledged to be an important part of knowledge construction in the LHTL project but a caveat was that careful management had to support their successful development and workings in order to reap the benefits; developing social capital is not deemed sufficient on its own (Carmichael et al., 2006; Pedder, 2006).

Subject leaders in secondary schools are the link between the whole-school domain and the classroom; they are in direct contact with Senior Management policy and vision and are

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responsible for both interpreting the policy and vision and implementing them with their teams. Busher and Harris (2000) note that ‘creating social cohesion (between senior management and classroom teachers) is not an easy job for subject leaders’ (p6). Without encouraging effective teams, Middle Leaders will find it difficult to assist their colleagues to meet the challenges set by Senior Management of responding to ‘the shifting external environment’ (Busher and Harris, 2000, p6). It is the Middle Leader’s task to enable individuals to construct their own definitions of situations with other colleagues through active problem-solving to enable teachers to start to transcend their own individual practices. The adaptive model of change - with its emphasis on the involvement of people - recognises that change concerns people more than content – an especially pertinent consideration given that education is a human service.

Adoptive and adaptive approaches in a changing world: the tensions of accountability vs. autonomy

There are advantages and disadvantages in the research literature to both the adaptive and adoptive approaches – outlined as follows. The widespread use of the adoptive approach with an authoritative or coercive style of leadership has not improved schools in the ways intended and the rational theories of leadership neither reflect nor explain effective leaders’ current practice (Day et al., 2000). Leadership which is influenced by market forces and driven by management systems and structures can inhibit professional judgement by creating dependency on external agents and directives (Fullan, 2003). Hague (1997) similarly criticises external directives for limiting teacher learning in schools noting that politicians too often engage in what Hargreaves (1994) terms utopian social engineering in
which ‘...policies are generated with enormous confidence and then subjected to instant implementation’ (Hague, 1997, p124). Fullan (2003) asserts that change needs to be knowledge rich, drawing on professional judgement rather than relying merely on external prescription. While Fullan (2003), Elmore (2002), Barber (2002), Hague (1997) and others campaign for an adaptive approach if embedded change is to be secured, they do not outline in any depth what embedded change is or how it is to be secured practically by leadership. More significantly - as with the leadership styles - their commentary does not take cognisance of the political contexts in which British schools find themselves and in particular the huge tensions allied to externally imposed changes. Government initiatives, Specialist School bid expectations, political imperatives often have funding tie-ins and strict accountability measures (e.g. through OFSTED judgements) meaning that schools’ leadership need to devise strategies to ensure their staff embrace external changes and expectations as quickly as possible. The detailed and prescriptive nature of the curriculum, the sustained introduction into schools of various Government initiatives, extensive bureaucratic demands and surveillance (Hannon, 1998) all curtail professional autonomy at both an individual and an organisational level – already illustrated in Marshall and Drummond’s (2006) and James and Pedder’s (2006) LHTL research. However, while prescription may well hamper the creativity of teachers, it can be argued that it does serve the purpose of controlling permissive but questionable or maverick practice. There are other factors to consider, too: the more top-down approach is quickest at the point of decision-making but is less effective in embedding while the reverse is true of a more consultative mode. Certainly commitment and embedding are likely to be faster in the latter where people have ‘bought into’ and been part of the decision process (Hull and Adams,
However, long drawn-out discussions can be counter-productive as followers get frustrated with indecision and look to their leaders to make conclusive decisions. Where change is desired quickly to secure results in the short-term, the adaptive approach would be inappropriate with its lengthy process of collaboration and debate. Also where change in a precise form is required, the organic and collaborative nature of the adaptive approach could mean that the outcomes of the change may mutate into something somewhat different from that which was originally sought – a concern especially when safeguarding the entitlement of effective teaching and learning for students. Thus the adoptive approach is more effective if some measure of uniformity is to be secured. There are merits and demerits in both approaches; quick and discontinuous alteration of practice and structures may mean that they never become embedded in people’s values. On the other hand, championing a cause may take too long and therefore may never be reflected in the deep structures which underpin organisational continuity and resilience.

Swaffield and MacBeath (2006) provide a more balanced view of these tensions implicit in the adoptive and adaptive approaches of change, and put a case forward for schools to be versatile enough to embrace both simultaneously. They suggest that embedding of change by means of the adoptive approach can be secured through ‘structures’ while an adaptive approach means working within or changing the ‘culture’ of an organisation. Structures are procedural mechanisms which define the locus of control and internal accountability, and are related to specific tasks with explicit lines of authority. Swaffield and MacBeath (2006)
draw on Weber’s (1961) classic organisational theory to describe how changes are embedded through structures. There is a top-down flow of information from management to teachers and others and embedding occurs through clearly defined organisational structures which identify roles, describe linking mechanisms between roles and explain communication patterns. Culture on the other hand refers to norms, values, traditions and rituals of people that are built up over time within a particular context. It comprises the informal expectations and values which shape people’s thoughts, feelings and actions (Deal and Peterson, 1998) and focuses on the informal flow of activity and conversation (Perkins, 2003). While structural embedding relies on top-down flow of decision-making within the traditional school hierarchy, cultural embedding encourages staff to ‘choose the path of action most consistent with the values and beliefs of organisational members and key constituencies’ (Swaffield and MacBeath, 2006, p205).

Swaffield and MacBeath (2006) consider too the leadership styles of the contrasting approaches to embedding change. They assert that a leadership style leaning towards cultural embedding has the characteristics of ‘leading by example, modelling behaviour, and encouraging a permeation of ideas through developing and sharing understandings’ (p210); these are features of a coaching, democratic or affiliative leadership style, embodied in the adaptive approach. As a result of shared understanding, individuals become champions for the new cause, gradually sharing it with other willing volunteers. Eventually, however, structures need to be introduced to ensure more permanent and extensive change. Coercive, pace-setting or authoritative leadership styles are more readily applied to the adoptive approach with structures used to secure change. In it the leader may
use these leadership styles to move straight to adopt new practices by creating and enforcing new structures and procedures (particularly when it is an external imperative). This may lead to antagonism but through ‘persuasion, demonstration and intervention’ (Swaffield and MacBeath, 2006, p212) people may come to embrace the new ways and a new culture may emerge.

Structures or management mechanisms can shape the culture within an organisation; conversely cultural changes will eventually need to be underpinned by structures. There is therefore a symbiotic relationship between structure and culture where one affects or leads to the other and each is used by leaders managing change. In the main, the adoptive approach relies on structures and close monitoring and evaluation in order to secure change while the adaptive approach relies on working through the organisation’s culture through collaboration, continuing professional development, and coaching. However, there is no simple linear relationship between ‘leading and following, between hierarchy and authority, between formal status and personal influence’ (MacBeath and Myers, 1999, p3); adaptive and adoptive approaches cannot be neatly packaged as one or the other. Swaffield and MacBeath (2006) point out that it is the timing, sequence and emphasis that determine whether an approach relies on structural or cultural means as in fact both approaches embody the other - sooner or later.

This analysis is helpful as it locates schools in a real rather than the idealist world since externally imposed change is a daily part of a school’s life. Schools need to try to build an

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individual character or culture within the organisation while at the same time meeting top-down adoptive expectations from external sources, thus balancing both external demands with desired internal requirements (Sergiovanni, 2001). To do so takes time with securely embedded lasting change in practice taking place over a period of years, rather than months (Hall and Hord, 1987; Fullan, 1992; Bell and Cowie, 1993; Morrison, 1998). There is no doubt that the process of change, whatever it is, takes on a life of its own once underway as a result of people’s responses, and that it is not an easy process. The next section looks at the practicalities of how leadership has to manifest itself in contexts which are constantly altering - whilst trying to implement changes within the organisation itself. For it is the role of leaders – Middle and Senior - to convince their colleagues of the purposes of a change.

Leaders leading change through structures and culture

Research has shown Middle/Subject Leaders as being the driving force in improving the quality of the learning process and their potential to influence classroom practice is significant. Scheerens (1992), Harris et al. (1996), Sammons et al. (1997) and Harris (1998) suggest that subject leaders can make the same sort of difference to student performance in their subject areas that a Headteacher can make to overall school performance. The next sections explore how leaders may secure change by creating or implementing structures as well as developing cultures.

Developing structures to support change

Structures to support change include the Middle Leader establishing norms, boundaries, expectations and routines with their team members. Department policies are important
structures by which subject leaders influence and change practice, especially in developing standard practice across the department. Monitoring, evaluation, feedback systems and structures are critical to ensure the execution of any policies, decisions, expectations and changes, and effective departments have been found to establish a continual planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation cycle in which staff are involved and where they feel supported and guided by clear structures (Harris, 1999). In their research into effective departments Harris et al. (1995) found that effective leaders paid meticulous care and attention to the student assessment process and created clear structures: record-keeping was excellent; there was consistent marking within the department; students were involved in the process of marking and assessing where it was possible, and feedback was given to students based on criterion rather than norms-referenced assessment - all principles underlying AfL. Good leadership ensured that assessment was adapted ‘in concert with shifts in curriculum design and teaching strategies’ (Stoll and Fink, 1996, p124). Structures are clearly an important aspect of this assessment change process. However, while agreeing standards may be at policy level by school Senior and Middle Leaders often there remains a reticence by Middle Leaders to monitor and evaluate to ensure that policy is evident in individual teachers’ classroom practice - largely because it challenges ideas of collegiality and professionalism (Bennett et al., 2003) - and creates a culture of accountability. This paradox of respecting teachers’ professional autonomy and collaboration with others while overseeing policy imperatives for change and new expectations through the imposition of structures remains a balancing act for every Middle Leader, and reflects the culture versus structure tension.
Developing culture: moral leadership and the leader’s role in developing symbols and values

Culture is both part of the process to secure change and is a change outcome. Culture will be created in a particular context through the everyday interactions which combine to create a consensus of values and beliefs:

It is the way business is handled that both forms and reflects the culture...Culture building occurs...through the way school people use their educational, human, and technical skills in handling daily events or establishing regular practices (Saphier and King (1985, p72).

Cultural forces rely on common purposes, values, commitments and norms, and it is the role of an effective middle leader to generate and share these commonalities with colleagues. S/he needs to create a moral order that ‘bonds both leader and followers to a set of shared values and beliefs’ (Sergiovanni, 2001, p9). To do this the Middle Leader needs to understand and engage with both those who resist as well as those who will adapt so that staff can be encouraged to embrace the change in a manner that is consistent with their beliefs and values (Swaffield and MacBeath, 2006). Once purpose and shared values are in place, they become the guiding light for what is to be done and how it is to be done and gradually there may be a change in the culture of teacher learning (Keay, 2006). The challenge for the leader is to ensure the connectedness of each stakeholder in the team to each other, not just interpersonally, but morally and spiritually as well. Leaders therefore need to show values-led leadership which is based on firm convictions, personal integrity and commitment to action (Day et al., 2000).
Leadership influences will be shaped by other factors, too - not just sharing the vision and values - including considering the values and perspectives of the change held by other colleagues within the subject area (Busher and Harris, 2000). Thus, while the literature emphasises the importance of a leader creating and shaping symbols, culture and values to ensure a cohesive team by means of moral leadership, this cannot be enough; there is a danger of emphasising the esoteric at the expense of the practical. This research will thus interrogate the importance of team and culture building as important factors for effective and embedding change. However, it also needs to evaluate practical considerations including Middle Leaders’ need to work with differences in attitude, commitment and experience of the team’s members. Hersey and Blanchard’s (1969) model of situational leadership is again helpful as it enables leaders to adjust their leadership to the stated ‘maturity’ of their followers in embracing a task – either individually or as a faculty team – to secure the desired changes. Professional development, which is considered next, is a practical means for developing teams and a culture of teacher learning, as well as endeavouring to shift values and practice.

**Leadership and Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**

Systematic professional development and training is essential if embedding the desired change in values and practice is to be secured (Pedder, 2006; James et al., 2007; Black and Wiliam, 1998a; Fullan 1992; Hall and Hord, 1987) – no matter which leadership style or approach is embraced. Much research – as has already been outlined when considering the LHTL research outcomes ‘How organisations secure change’ - shows that learning by all members of a school community both at the wider organisational level as well as the

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individual classroom level should underpin every aspect of the life of the organisation. There is a close inter-relationship between i) the organisation, ii) leaders and iii) teachers in developing teachers’ learning; the learning organisation is created by a commitment of leaders encouraging and supporting teachers in their professional development – and the following paragraphs consider each of these three facets.

i. The organisational context: learning organisations

The ultimate purpose of professional development is less to implement a specific innovation or policy and more to create a learning organisation where individual and organisational habits and structures make continuous learning a valued and endemic part of the culture of a school and teaching (Ruddock, 1981). Developing into a ‘learning organisation’ (Senge, 1990; Carnall, 1995; Handy, 1989) is important in order for schools to respond to rapidly changing environments. The learning organisation is one which constantly evolves and develops, and which continually expands its horizons and capabilities through the development of its employees – individually and collectively – in order to achieve individual and organisational goals (Senge, 1990). Being a learning organisation implies an ability of staff to ‘stand back from the conduct of classroom learning in order to reflect more deeply on their experiences, to learn more about themselves, individually as well as collectively, through the activities in which they were participating’ (MacBeath et al, 2007, p96). It is through ongoing critical inquiry (Pedder, 2006), cited previously, that an organisation can develop new ways of thinking about the quality and the nature of individual and shared learning (Argyris and Schön, 1978), thus supporting the classroom promotion of learning how to learn.
ii. Leaders' role in professional development

Subject leaders have a crucial job to assist colleagues in identifying individual development needs and requirements through dialogue and personal review so that they can ensure that the quality of teaching is maintained and enhanced. Integral to improving the quality of teaching and learning are mutual observation and professional partnerships within subject areas; subject leaders may identify needs by listening to or watching other colleagues in action or through the Performance Management process. Critical friendships in particular can increase professional learning and decrease isolation by stimulating reflection, generating new ideas and creating a more collaborative culture of mutual support (Bush, and Harris, 2000). This research endeavours to show that professional learning depends on 'a distributed cadre of formal and informal leaders (particularly Middle Leaders)...who have the vision and ability to help them (teachers) reach their potential' (Wenger et al., 2002, p192) - and secure organisational aims.

iii. Teachers' effective CPD

Fundamental to students' learning, which is the core purpose of schools, is:

Those who are responsible for student learning should also be learners themselves – not just subject experts but people who make mistakes, are anxious, fail, are exhilarated by understanding and filled with awe when something new is discovered...the issue for professional learning is ...far more than providing functional knowledge and skills – it is to model and exemplify and so reinforce a culture of learning (West-Burnham and O' Sullivan, 1998, p 47).
However there is much CPD undertaken within schools which has failed to give rise to effective change or to affect practice (Day, 1999a), and financial resources are often spent on sessions and workshops that are ‘intellectually superficial, disconnected from deep issues of curriculum and learning, and are fragmented’ (Ball and Cohen, 1999, pp3-4). This poses the question about what forms effective teacher development should take. Research (Pedder, 2006; MacBeath et al., 2007; Black and Wiliam, 1998a;) indicates that effective professional development needs to focus upon classroom change and development of new patterns of teaching behavior. These are secured through learning communities and professional learning; collaborative CPD in particular is critical for the implementation of reforms and is an essential component for securing lasting change as already outlined in the LHTL research outcomes. MacBeath et al. (2007) observe from the data of the LHTL project that ‘...interviews revealed that teacher collaboration on classroom-based approaches was beginning to play an increasingly important role in embedding LHTL in the classroom... (p117). Similarly the Eppi Review (Cordingley P. et al., 2003) concludes that collaborative CPD was linked with improvements in both teaching and learning - and that many of these improvements were substantial:

Collaboration and coaching, highlighted in this review as being linked with positive effects for teachers and students, are grounded in classroom observation and sustained support related to it (Cordingley P et al., 2003) p6).

For staff development to change classroom practice, there needs to be a culture of teacher learning and a commitment by teachers to review their performance to allow for development since ‘knowledge is the act of conversing, and learning occurs when ways of talking, and therefore patterns of relationship change’ (Stacey, 2001, p98). A combination

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of teachers working together utilising presentation, modeling, practice, feedback and coaching is more effective than teachers simply hearing a presentation which generally only raises awareness but has little impact on changing or even affecting classroom practice itself (Joyce and Showers, 1991). Collaborative learning needs to shape and become part of the school culture as it encourages openness, trust and support between teachers and colleagues and capitalises on collective expertise in securing the organisation’s endeavours. Through collaborative feedback on performance in simulated or real settings, or coaching and assistance on the job, isolation is removed and practice enhanced and teachers will find it easier to implement new ideas where there is the support of collaborative relationships (Hargreaves, 1994).

While there is no doubt about the advantages of collaborative learning as effective CPD, collaborative cultures are not easily secured; they do not evolve quickly and they are unpredictable in their outcomes. Collaboration may also be very localised with practice, curriculum and pedagogy just being explored in pockets rather than across a whole organisation (Hargreaves, 1992) and change may not be embedded securely. Many professional learning communities are often quite superficial and narrow and while there may be intensive implementation support, it is often only for highly prescriptive initiatives and interventions which leaves little room for genuine debate and exploration of pedagogical issues (Fullan, 2003). The collaboration of close-knit groups can also mean that sterile or poor practice may be perpetuated or reinforced instead of new ideas being explored and implemented (Fullan, 2003). Collaboration and coaching relies on classroom observation and the attendant support and this is an expensive process and the opportunities...
need to be negotiated (Cordingley et al., 2003). Importantly, reflection and enquiry are central to the collaboration process – otherwise collaboration becomes simply working collegially with no critical evaluation of the work undertaken and shared (Hargreaves, 1994). However, teachers, as a result of intense daily pressures, may have little time for sustained reflection (Huberman, 1984); they are also often isolated from other adults and meaningful interaction with colleagues. In spite of all these constraints if student learning is to be accelerated collaborative learning, inclusive of reflection and inquiry, needs to be encouraged at all levels of the school organisation. Pedder et al. (2005) argue for an inter-relationship of a school’s culture and structures (Swaffield and MacBeath, 2006) if these stated obstacles are to be overcome and if teachers’ reflection and inquiry are to be supported and secured. They call for structures which include the provision of time and resources for reading and digesting research; for discussing teachers’ own research in development groups, and for planning and carrying out joint research. Trust and a climate of support for teachers’ experimental actions are seen as cultural preconditions for reflection and enquiry. It is the role of both Senior and Middle Leaders to provide the structures and nurture a culture for collaborative learning since the ‘risks and costs of interdependence are nothing next to the risks and cost of...working in isolation, in opposite corners of the sandbox’ (Barth, 1990, p32).

**Summary and conclusion**

AfL as a strategy places the student learners back in the centre of their learning experience. It encourages and promotes the student to become an autonomous learner for life, rather than simply acquiring examination grades for utilitarian ends. However, the delivery of AfL
is set in a context which emphasises these summative examination results above all else and this provides a tension for teachers. Also AFL demands a new perspective on pedagogy and a change of practice which is not to easy to secure. Often when change in practice is secured this may be mechanical or by the ‘letter’ rather than encompassing the ‘spirit’ of the initiative and as a result long-term embedding is uncertain. It is however possible to rise above the external prescribed pressures when the spirit of AFL is enacted by teachers in practice; in these instances colleagues have a greater sense of autonomy and agency within their own classrooms and are not solely governed by external pressures such as the examination system, students’ ability or the school culture.

If AFL is to be successfully implemented, it is the role of school leaders, and particularly Middle Leaders who have direct responsibility for colleagues’ classroom practice, to assist colleagues changing both their values and practice. The literature has shown that there are two approaches to implementing change - adaptive and adoptive - which have corresponding leadership styles. Both approaches have been shown to be appropriate for different contexts and different people in order to secure change. However, often change is demanded instantly and leaders have little choice but to embrace the adoptive approach to secure prescriptive political change imperatives. In order to secure change which embeds, Middle Leaders need to use structures – whole school and faculty - and encourage a shift in the culture of teacher learning within their areas. Teachers’ professional development is critical to moving the assessment values and practice change agenda forward. Collaborative CPD - which engages debate, reflection and inquiry and sharpens colleagues’ understanding of the initiative - is particularly important to further teachers’ and
subsequently students’ learning. When considering the literature, if the organisational culture and structures in the school foster professional learning, then the school has the foundation stones laid to move towards becoming a learning organisation where staff are constantly learning and growing. However, while a climate needs to be developed in which learning is of fundamental importance – where all endeavour to learn from each other - the intensification of teachers’ work and the external pressures of generating excellent summative results and accountability make the challenge that much greater.
Methodology

In order to examine the question ‘What strategies did Middle Leaders employ to secure the realignment of existing values and practice to the new Assessment for Learning values and practice?’ it was necessary to evaluate what Middle leaders did in order to encourage staff to change their practice and values over the course of the three year pilot. The evidence included:

- an examination of whether they used an adoptive or adaptive approach to secure change
- how structures were used
- how the culture within the faculty was changed.

Data were collected by means of interviews with Heads of Faculty at the end of each of the three years to trace the evidence for these strategies employed to secure change, and were triangulated by other data such as from consultants and students. The interviews also evaluated the factors which shaped the leadership strategies chosen and the evidence from HoFs’ interviews when they outlined what shaped how they chose to manage their colleagues. To assess the impact of the HoFs’ strategies on realigning colleagues’ values and practice through the strategies employed, the evidence was drawn from teacher reports of their values and practices, and the evidence of practice from other sources (students, their work and from observations by consultants, HoF and myself). This evidence was collected by means of:

- the LHTL questionnaire undertaken with all teaching staff part-way through the first year and again at the end of the third year of the pilot.
- Book Looks (evidence from student work)

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classroom observations of teachers’ teaching

- student interviews and questionnaire.

Some time was spent debating the research methodology to be employed. Action research and case study, as well as simple qualitative/quantitative methodology, were each considered.

**Action research**

Initially it was felt that the research had features of action research which is defined as ‘a small-scale intervention in the functioning of the real world and close examination of the effects of such intervention’ (Cohen and Manion, 1989, p 92). It is research activity which:

- centres on practitioners investigating a question and devising an informed response to meet the challenges within their classrooms and schools (Seider and Lemma, 2004)
- studies ‘a social situation with a view to improving the quality of action within it’ (Elliott, 1981, p92)
- is a disciplined inquiry whose efforts aim to improve the quality of an organisation - and its overall performance (Calhoun, 1993) by focusing on a specific problem in a particular setting
- embodies the discussion of problems followed by group decisions on how to proceed; group members are active participants and intra-group relations are essential Lewin (1946)
- is deemed a particularly appropriate methodology where change to the organisation of a school or its curriculum is to be implemented
• develops new understandings (Elliott, 1981), refines and makes changes as the study proceeds, and objectives are redefined after each cycle of a rolling project (Brown and Dowling, 1998)

• involves regular deliberate systematic analysis of the teaching process (Seider and Lemmer, 2004).

In the first two years of my research the review process was too irregular and inconstant to fulfil the requirements of action research and the cycle for evaluating and adapting the research questions and procedures was too long. Neither HoF nor teachers themselves were involved in the systematic analysis of the implementation of their strategies - nor was the teacher’s deliberate scrutiny a regular part of the teaching process. I as the inside researcher, not the HoF or teachers themselves, led most of the strategic decision-making as part of the development of teaching and learning in the school - as well as creating and implementing a research design - and the change process being managed was too large for the close consideration required of action research. Also while the direction of the action to be taken was indeed refined and changed as the research unfolded, again the cycle for evaluation and adaptation of research activities was too long and irregular.

**Case study**

Yin (1988) defines a case study as:

...an empirical study that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (p23).

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A case study is a useful way to look systematically at a specific situation, collect data, analyse and interpret findings within the particular context in order to report results. However, it is much more than a description of an individual, event or situational context; it is concerned with the interactions between various events and situations with the researcher having little control over the event or when the research is being carried out in a real life context (Burns, 1990; Yin, 1988). This research may be deemed a case study since it endeavours to ‘analyse or evaluate a specific phenomenon or instance’ and it ‘deals with contemporary events in their natural context’ (Anderson, 1998, p152 &153); it is the preferred research strategy when 'why', 'how' and 'what' questions are being asked to ‘illuminate a decision or set of decisions – why they were taken, how they were implemented and with what result’ (Schramm, 1971, pg 12). Translated into my research the questions become: Why was AfL implemented in the way that it was?; How was it implemented?; What were the outcomes? I endorse Donmoyer’s assertion that case study research might be used to ‘expand and enrich the repertoire of social constructions available to practitioners so that it assists in ‘the forming of questions rather than in the finding of answers’ (1990, p182); case study can therefore straddle both the academic and professional worlds in presenting relevant findings. My research fulfils Donmoyer’s 3 particular commending features of case study:

i) accessibility – case studies allow insights into areas where otherwise readers would never be able to venture, allowing experiences of unique individuals and situations

ii) seeing through the researcher’s eyes – which means being able to see things that otherwise may not have been seen and as researcher minimizing the bias of the participant’s eyes

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iii) decreased defensiveness - documented case study experiences may well avert or cause less defensiveness and resistance to learning (1990, p.193-197) as it can resonate with professionals who see similarities of aspects of this research in their own situations.

The ‘case’ itself is the school, however there is more than one unit of analysis as the seven individual faculty areas - English, Maths, Science, Modern Foreign Languages (MFL), Technology, Creative and Expressive Arts (C & EA) and Humanities - constitute seven sub-units creating an ‘embedded’ case study (Yin, 1994, p.41). However, only four faculties – English, Science, MFL and Technology - were chosen for detailed consideration. These four faculties were chosen because they had distinct areas of interest for me emerging from the data which warranted closer consideration and they also illustrate the contrasts in subjects indicated by Pedder and James (2007) and Hogden and Marshall (2005). A justification for adopting the case study approach is that I as the researcher have an opportunity to observe and analyse a phenomenon more closely than external researchers may be able to do. This is because the research is inextricably linked with my development role in my own school and sometimes it is ‘only by taking a practical instance that we can obtain a full picture’ (Nisbet and Watt, 1984, p.114) of an interaction. Clearly, while there are advantages of adopting a case study approach, there are cautions to be made, too, especially when considering generalisability which is considered next.

**Generalisability**

By specifically looking at one context, the choice of case study involves greater detail and likely accuracy of information about particular cases; however, this is done at the expense
of being able to make effective generalisations to a larger population of cases. Case study method has also been criticised for lacking reliability since another researcher could come to a differing conclusion. It can too be dangerous to draw general conclusions from a case study since a case study cannot be truly replicated. As an inside researcher, my particular context was very specific to my role/case and I had direct access to the subjects of the research as I managed and had oversight of the implementation of the change initiative. The study could not be replicated elsewhere in its entirety because my role as inside researcher is symbolically and practically dependent on my development role as a senior manager. However, research which is involved with individuals (especially in education), and not aggregates, can never be completely statistically generalisable. It can only be ‘heuristic’; it can suggest possibilities but never ‘dictate action’ (Donmoyer, 1990, p182). Nonetheless there are aspects of this study - viz the LHTL questionnaire results, of which more later - which can be linked to the larger national LHTL research whose results may be viewed as broadly representative. The main approach taken to generalisation in this study is that argued for by Yin (1994), namely analytic generalisation, where the case is generalised to a broader theory. My work builds on the general literature of leadership and change and on the specific work on it in relation to initiatives such as AfL, as indicated in the review of literature. Good case studies create a data base which incorporates multiple data sources and varied means of triangulation which facilitate generalisations being made. Triangulation is used to interpret findings, test alternative ideas and identify negative cases. Patton (1987) identifies 4 types of triangulation – all of which are used in this research: data source triangulation; investigator triangulation; theory triangulation, and methodological triangulation. Case studies which have the aim of 'probing deeply and analysing

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intensively' (Burns, 1990, p366) the many phenomena that make up the activities of the unit under study, may then allow for tentative generalisations to be made to the wider population. As researcher I strove to establish a chain of evidence with different sources confirming and verifying the data since the more variations in places, people, and procedures a case study can withstand and still yield the same findings, the more external validity. Thus multiple data sources and triangulation underpin this research and will be outlined at a later stage under ‘Methods’.

Wider significance

While located in a specific context, and with my assuming and occupying particular research and development roles respectively, this study has relevance for practitioners in other contexts, too. It is hoped that the in-depth examination of one particular context will allow questions to be raised that facilitate further exploration in other schools. Our learning experiences – both good and bad – can signpost the way for others in different contexts to implement AfL or other change more effectively. While other extensive studies have been undertaken by research teams into the implementation of AfL in schools, it is outsiders making judgements often within a short space of time about an environment about which they have limited in-depth cultural knowledge. An inside researcher, on the other hand, is immersed in rich data as part of his/her every day development role and this creates a rich tapestry of knowledge. In addition this case study’s close focus on faculty management makes it unique as other studies are either at classroom level or across many schools or do not have the same detail of close faculty study (for example the KMOFAP and LHTL projects).
Researcher's dual roles

Some researchers proclaim the value of inside researchers in schools. Practitioner research can be viewed as more meaningful and relevant to classroom practice than that carried out by outside researchers and academics because of its practical application for the teacher's own practice (Carr and Kemmis, 1986). Also, a participant provides unusual opportunities to collect data (Yin, 1994). Teaching is a moral enterprise and to practise effectively means that there should be a conscious systematic collection and evaluation of information which affect and result from practice (Day, 1999b). My dual roles of Senior Leader and researcher embrace this 'moral enterprise' and I endeavoured to have reciprocal purposes and gains for teachers and the school, as well as for myself as the researcher. The application of research methodology and tools provide rigour, structure to and careful analysis of data yielded. On the other hand, the development work embodies the real life and work of a school without the intrusion of external agents/researchers. As an inside researcher, but also being in a senior role in the school, I was in the position to respond to the outcomes of generated data - and if necessary I was also able to shape and influence school and organisational structure and policy to address any of the arising issues. While the symbiotic relationship between research and development work has the potential to be richly rewarding, this dual role also creates great tensions. For instance the development had to continue with the ever-evolving daily life of the school and could not wait for the refinements or appropriateness of timing that may be required by the research (for example waiting until a research instrument had been developed); at times it was difficult to determine whether the research should be driving the development or vice-versa. Problems of inside research include the degree of my involvement with the situations under study;
confidentiality of the data; the possible political use of the data; issues of anonymity on publication; the need to clarify what is data and the researcher’s interpretation of data. As I am the primary instrument for data collection for the research, this raises issues of both power and bias. As an insider I had insights into the meaning of the data that an outsider, who would not necessarily be party to the details of the school culture, did not have. On the other hand I did not have distance from the data sources which could affect bias.

**Power**

My position of power within the school is an issue that could easily have altered the responses staff gave to me because their perception of my research role was not separated from my senior management role; I am leading the AfL project, the school’s most significant development initiative, as part of my teaching and learning role across the school. As the researcher I needed to be aware that my role is inscribed in the social practices, language and discourses which constitute the research process (Usher, 1993). Because I line-managed each of the HoFs and held them to account through the Performance Management (PM) process, my role of power could have shaped or altered their interview responses so that they represent their AfL experience more positively. However, my senior management position also afforded me oversight over the PM process providing me the opportunity to include a standardised AfL PM target for all HoFs. This target was very prescriptive, was time-related, and had clearly delineated outcomes; HoFs needed to provide measurable evidence of both the impact of AfL, as well as how they managed the implementation - which was significant in helping counter this power issue.

My measurement and write-up of their PM performance was subsequently checked and...
evaluated by my Headteacher who held me to account for the HoFs' performance — a further check on the influence of my role of power. The need for triangulation was also imperative to counteract the potential effect of my position of power in eliciting distorted or inaccurate responses from those I manage. Others’ views on some aspects of the responses — OFSTED, consultants, students — verified in particular HoFs’ responses, but also staff responses gleaned from the LHTL questionnaire. There was also an issue of power in my access to the results from teachers and in an attempt to minimise this, I shared all of the outcome data with HoFs prior to their interviews. They were able to examine it and brought responses to the data where they felt that there were surprises or where they felt that there was justification needed.

An advantage of the introduction of AfL (initiated by one of the HoFs and embraced as the school’s development initiative by all HoFs) being made *prior* to my embarking on the research into it is that the initiative has been viewed as development driven: the research has emerged from it and provided the structure, academic rigour, and in some instances the impetus for steady progression and accountability. This has meant that the development has not been viewed as a product of my position of power and status in the school but rather has been initiated from the grassroots. HoFs have been open in their evaluation, criticism and objections as the change has been implemented because it is an initiative introduced by one of their members and owned by the HoF team.

Additionally my relationship with the HoFs has been long-standing pre-dating the research. The openness and cohesiveness of the team was evaluated as excellent by the National Elizabeth Moore: M7180949 -Doctorate in Education

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College for School Leadership (NCSL) team questionnaire (Appendix 1). This helps to negate the negative aspects of power that could shape the research endeavours because the team culture has exceptionally ‘positive work satisfaction’ and a ‘supportive social climate’ (Appendix 1). Particularly encouraging is the evaluation that:

The team is fully committed to achieving the highest performance possible. Team members critically appraise their work. Help in developing new ideas is readily available (Appendix 1: NCSL team questionnaire).

A further advantage of the power allied to my role as Senior Leader has meant that I have been able to introduce and shape policy that supports AfL development and make it a prominent teaching and learning strategy. At the end of the second year of research, a lack of school structures to evaluate effectively the AfL strategies being undertaken was identified. In order to address this, my development role enabled me to shape the documentation for the newly implemented observation routine to address the school’s development needs for ensuring the implementation of AfL - as well as attending to my research needs. My research role on the other hand demanded more elaborative and extensive observation tools than development can usually afford. As a Senior Leader, my role as Continuing Professional Development (CPD) coordinator enabled me to support and prioritise AfL professional development opportunities, policy and provision for professional training for staff. This has included organising whole staff training days for AfL development, faculty meeting time designated for AfL discussion, and classroom observation time when examination classes were suspended in the summer. I was also able to respond to HoFs’ faculty training needs when they arose. My selection of AfL as one of 6 possible whole school development areas, attracting both money and consultant support.
for AfL, was clearly influenced by my development commitment to AfL but also by the research. There were however limitations to my power and position within the school and I was bound by school protocol and policy. For instance an AfL check-list observation sheet, acquired from and used by our AfL County consultant, could not be incorporated into the official PM observation paperwork since it had not been ratified as part of PM school policy; this would have been a useful development and research tool. It could only be utilised informally within the PM process with the agreement of both the HoFs and then the colleagues in their departments. Also competing external demands and other new initiatives called for whole school and HoF attention, and over the three years threatened to oust the central profile of AfL.

Throughout the research I have needed to be closely critical of how I adjusted, changed, and shaped the implementation, given the information acquired in the course of the research, so that I was not utilising my vested power for my own purposes. Whether or not being an inside researcher poses advantages or not, it was important that at all stages I was conscious that research ‘imposes closure of the world through representation; it is always and inevitably involved with and implicated in the operation of power’ (Scott and Usher, 1999 p1).

Bias

Allegations of bias are common in the social sciences (Hammersley and Gomm, 1997) and may arise when a researcher’s personal interests influence the objectives of a study, the ability to make fair judgements or if relationships are put at risk (Anderson, 1998). Bias is
how a particular point of view can make a difference in the way one observes and makes sense of a specific situation. Bias can result from interactions between participants and researcher which makes the data flawed – often resulting from the participant giving the answer s/he thinks the researcher wishes to hear. In addition, participants may not report fully to the researcher if they perceive that the information given may display them in a negative light (Borg et al., 1993). Opportunities for the researcher to influence findings exist in any case study research particularly where the sample size is small and the relationships between researcher and participants are frequent and close. My role as both inside researcher and as a Senior Leader had this potential for bias. Potential sources of bias which could be caused by my position and power are indicated in Figure 3.1 below which also outlines how the various data sources counter-act possible bias through triangulation.
As both a research and development stakeholder, and as a Deputy, I am responsible and accountable for improving standards; I therefore wanted AfL to produce the desired improvements. I also wanted the HoF to be successful in their endeavours as it reflects positively on their leadership, but also on mine in leading them! Working so closely with them in my development work could have blinded me from asking critical and probing questions. My desire for the initiative to ‘work’ could have led me to misrepresent or misinterpret data or, given my optimistic demeanour, could have led me to view outcomes too favourably. I had to use Yin’s (1994) suggestion for testing for possible bias by challenging myself about how open I might be to contrary findings; if a quest for contrary
findings yields documentable findings, the likelihood of bias will be reduced - as was indeed the case in my instance.

A more secure means to reduce bias however is to subject evidence to the four means of triangulation - already cited under 'Generalisation' - illustrated in Figure 3.1; it was thus imperative that data collected was triangulated to reduce bias and to counteract the problems of being an inside researcher. For example:

• Different consultants’ perspectives explored contrary findings and triangulated HoF interview data especially since consultants’ had more distanced relationships with the HoFs than I did; they had no line-management or Performance Management responsibilities over them, and no direct vested interest in the success of the initiative (investigator triangulation)

• Students’ perspectives, were helpful in triangulating HoF interview data and the LHTL questionnaire data, but also provided different data giving insights into the outcomes achieved (data source triangulation)

• The participants confirmed the data and data analysis (Hammersley and Gomm, 1997). For example, HoFs were asked after the interviews to verify the field notes and transcriptions made (data source triangulation)

• Observations over an extended period of time were undertaken by different people – e.g. HoFs and Senior Management - which provided copious data on AfL strategies being undertaken which were cited in the HoF interviews. Constant comparisons between multiple sources of data relating to common situations are used for the validation of data (data source triangulation)
• Theory triangulation is undertaken by the extensive use of the LHTL research theory and data against which my data is considered and evaluated – explored later in this section

• The different data collection methods – quantitative and qualitative - are also used for triangulation to verify data collected with the intention of ‘increasing the case study investigation’s quality’ (Yin, 1994, p78) (methodological triangulation)

**Ethics**

Inextricably linked with the act of producing knowledge are ‘issues to do with rights, responsibilities and activities of participants in the research’ (Scott and Usher, 1999, p134). The main ethical concerns are informed consent, confidentiality and potential harm to the participants often arising from the previously cited issues of power. Ethical considerations and confidentiality issues were discussed with all participants at each phase of the research. To address the ethical concern of informed consent, the general aims of the research project were discussed with the teachers prior to the beginning of the study and at times when renegotiating the research direction. Permission to gather data in the school was sought from the Headteacher, HoF, the consultants and the students concerned. Particular potential ethical complexities which embody my dual role of researcher and Senior Leader included the maintaining of objectivity and confidentiality. Responses from the staff LHTL questionnaire and the student questionnaires were confidential and were shared respectively only with the HoFs and the students concerned. Data collected from the student questionnaires, as well as interviews, were confidential and none of the outcomes were communicated to their teachers. A proviso for both questionnaire and interview responses
was that no teachers should be identified in students’ responses. Similarly anything said by a HoF about specific teachers was kept confidential. Other aspects of confidentiality were more problematic: as inside researcher I gleaned information formally and anecdotally as part of my development role and it was very difficult to separate and differentiate (and therefore know what should be safeguarded as confidential) data collected for the research and that gleaned in the course of ‘doing my job’ and vice versa. My research journal therefore became a useful tool to record my observations and to allow for reflection on my own and others’ perspectives gleaned in the course of duty. All of the data collection for the research informed and was part of my developmental role, particularly in the evaluation and review of teaching and learning processes in the school. HoFs therefore agreed that a review of their implementation of AfL as part of my development work could be tape-recorded and used as research data. HoF have been openly frank about difficulties and struggles they have experienced, and from my perspective – triangulated by the consultants - have not been reticent, where necessary, to question, challenge or criticise the process of change (as cited under ‘power’). I have been openly transparent about the dual and complementary roles of the data collection process - data have informed the development work I am doing in the school and have informed the research.

**Methods**

An over-riding principle important to any case study data collection is having a ‘chain of evidence’ which makes explicit links between the questions asked, the data collected and the conclusions drawn (Yin, 1994, p78). The research questions, italicised in this paragraph, drove the data collection. The HoF interviews were the core source of data and
also a means of data collection. The three sets of interviews were a means to explore the strategies employed by Middle Leaders, as well as of identifying the factors which shaped the strategies chosen to secure the realignment of existing values and practice to the new AfL ones. The changes in staff values and practice were measured by means of the Learning How to Learn (LHTL) questionnaire. Data drawn from other stakeholders – viz. consultants in interviews and discussions, OFSTED and students in interviews and by means of questionnaires – was a means of triangulation and provided data on the impact of managers’ efforts to secure the desired outcomes of change amongst their colleagues. Although I analysed each data source on its own, I iteratively used findings from one to help check out others and to make sure important issues were not missed out. Appendix 2 provides a summary of the time-scale/rationale for the collection of the data and the following paragraphs outline the details of the methods of data collection which are listed in order of the research questions addressed (viz: strategies used; factors affecting strategies used; outcomes):

i. HoF interviews (strategies used; factors affecting strategies used; outcomes)

ii. Faculty questionnaire (strategies used)

iii. Book Looks (strategies used)

iv. Consultant discussions (strategies used, outcomes)

v. LHTL questionnaire (outcomes)

vi. Student interviews and questionnaires (outcomes)

i. Semi-structured interviews with HoFs (see Appendices 3a, 3b & 3c) took place at the end of each of the three academic years of the pilot. All seven of the HoFs were

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interviewed but just four of the faculties were selected as the cases. Because interviews were at the end of the year they enabled HoFs to reflect back on what they had achieved, and how they had achieved it, and to evaluate outcomes to enable planning for the following year. Interviews were used with the HoFs as they are an excellent technique for collecting data with greater depth and breadth than, for example, questionnaires. The interviews explored the HoF management of the pilot, their use of structures and their changing of the culture within the faculty, and the factors affecting how they chose to lead to shift colleagues' values and practice. They also aimed to ascertain the HoF perceptions of how their subject staff had understood the AfL strategies and how and if they had adapted their assessment values and practice. The importance that HoFs placed on professional development and training in changing values was also explored. As part of the development work, a day was set aside in the third year to examine how change was managed; it was a very useful development session for the sharing of problems and solutions in securing change. The two approaches, adoptive and adaptive, cited in the literature review were discussed amongst HoFs so that they could compare their experiences and the reasons for their chosen leadership strategies. As a result of this development work, HoFs when interviewed in the third year were able to use the adoptive/adaptive terminology. The semi-structured interviews allowed HoFs to reflect on the outcomes of AfL strategies evident in teachers' practice gleaned through lesson observations, faculty discussions, Book Looks and student feedback. Unannounced drop-in joint lesson observations by Senior Leaders and HoFs were introduced in January 2006 by the new Headteacher. These lesson observations provided more extensive data of classroom practice, in comparison to the single annual formal 'window-dressed' P.M. observation in

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previous years, and also revealed everyday classroom AfL practice. Therefore in their final interviews HoFs had more extensive evidence to draw on in making their comments on their colleagues' AfL classroom practices. A cautionary note must be made about lesson observations as they were not an entirely robust manner of acquiring data on AfL effectiveness as both Senior and Middle Leaders were not trained in distinguishing the subtleties of AfL strategies which reflected the 'spirit' rather than the 'letter' (Marshall and Drummond, 2006). Thus, even though there may have been evidence of strategies being used, the observations by different observers could have yielded differing judgements on the effectiveness of the strategies. The interviews yielded rich data, but interviews with the wider staff to validate HoFs' perspectives on how they had managed change would have been further useful triangulation, as well as a source of further data. However, there was not sufficient time to undertake such interviews.

ii. A faculty questionnaire (see Appendix 4) was completed by the HoF with faculty members at the beginning of the second year of the pilot in September 2004; this was both a research and a development tool and was a means of triangulating the evidence yielded in the HoFs' end of year one interviews. In response to faculty discussion of the questionnaire, which reviewed the work that had been done in the first year and planned the strategies which would be employed in the second year, individual HoFs devised provisional statements of intent. These provided an interim faculty assessment guideline in lieu of a whole school assessment policy while the research was underway. These statements of intent outlined the aspects of AfL to be applied in the second year of the pilot in each faculty area; HoFs stated how they planned to manage the implementation and how the
outcomes would be measured. This statement of intent was reviewed and evaluated in the HoF interviews at the end of the second year. All HoFs in a HoF meeting had agreed that their faculties would in the second year use ‘comments only’ in formative work (evaluated in the Book Look reviews) and that lesson objectives would be highlighted at the beginning of lessons with assessment leading from these stated objectives (evaluated in lesson observations). Other AfL strategies could be experimented with as HoFs chose.

iii. Book Looks yielded data in the form of a written review (Appendix 5) to me by HoFs and evaluated the implementation of the HoF faculty team agreed practice and triangulated the evidence in the HoF interviews. HoFs were also able to refer to the evidence in these Book Look outcomes in their interviews when considering how effective teacher written feedback was. The Book Looks highlighted commendable practice and concerns and were undertaken in different ways over the three years – by the HoF team and SLT; by HoFs with their faculty members or by HoFs alone. The intention of the Book Look was to ascertain the effectiveness and the extent to which desired teacher-pupil written feedback was being implemented in practice. In year one of the pilot, in November 2004, a sample of the books of five Year 8 students with a range of academic abilities, determined by their Cognitive Ability Test scores, was selected. This sample was drawn from each of the five tutor groups so that there was a maximum representation of teachers teaching Year 8. These books were looked at by the HoF team and me in a HoF meeting twice during the course of the year. In the subsequent year HoFs drew their own sample of books and the Book Look took place within a HoF meeting to allow for discussion and comparison of outcomes across faculties, and the standardised faculty review form was completed.
third year SLT delegated responsibility for HoFs to undertake Book Looks on their own or with their faculty members, rather than utilise HoF meeting time; a review of the marking in their faculty was required by me at the end of the year.

iv. Consultant interviews: In order to triangulate my evaluation of the progress of the project drawn from HoF interviews and questionnaires, I interviewed the whole-school, MFL and Science AfL consultants who were allocated to the school as part of the AfL whole-school initiative. These interviews (unstructured) took place on various occasions between September 2004 and July 2006 and were recorded by means of field notes. The whole-school consultant who worked closely with HoFs, and who had observed lessons in the respective faculties, was able to discuss with them any problems in managing the changes without the issues of power and bias that faced me in my interactions with HoF; this enabled triangulation of both HoF data and my perceptions of both how the initiative was managed and the AfL implementation outcomes. The Science AfL consultant worked solely with the Science department providing coaching, workshops and collaborative CPD through paired observations (one colleague observing with the consultant and one colleague being observed). Paired observations facilitated colleagues’ self-evaluation and reflection while still being assisted by an ‘expert’; this practice was continued by the HoF after he had left. Reports written by him provided data both of the strategies used by HoFs to elicit change and the outcomes achieved. An MFL AfL consultant did similar work with the MFL faculty. She provided training sessions and arranged for observations of staff and on occasion worked one-to-one with MFL colleagues. All consultants provided both written and verbal feedback evaluations to me and the HoFs concerned.
v. The LHTL questionnaire (Appendix 12) was administered in November 2004 and again in July 2006 (results shown in Appendix 6a & 6b respectively; information about the details in the spreadsheet for Appendices 6a, b and c is listed in Appendix 6a). July 2006 was selected because there was to be a large number of staff leaving at the end of the academic year and the cohort of responders would have been significantly different in September 2006. The questionnaire was extremely useful as it provided a measure of change (shown in Appendix 6c). It also was used to triangulate staff perspectives against HoF perceptions of existing practice and values, gleaned in the interviews. The next paragraphs provide details of the questionnaire as an instrument.

In the LHTL research factor analysis was undertaken in order to evaluate the data more incisively; the factors identified in the LHTL research were used in my own research (for details see Pedder et al, 2005; James and Pedder, 2006; Pedder, 2006). Factor analysis is a combination of statistical procedures and theoretical interpretation; it is a statistical means for evaluating the level of consistency with which the questions attract certain responses. In the LHTL project the statistical program SPSS revealed how staff responded to the different questions, and in particular highlighted similar responses to different questions; similar responses suggest that these questions have something in common – called a factor. Factors enabled a closer examination of the issues that might be reflected in these questions. The question items were grouped in the three sections and each section was then analysed for factors. The sections are as follows:

- Section A: Classroom Assessment

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• Section B: Teachers' Professional Learning

• Section C: School Management Practices and Systems

Section A provided information about assessment and evaluated how colleagues valued and practised the AfL strategies. Sections B and Section C produced information about how change was managed through:

• supporting teachers as learners and the provision of professional development (Section B)

• leadership providing vision and encouraging collaboration (Section C).

Section A (already touched upon in the Literature Review) comprised the following factors:

• Making Learning Explicit (evaluated the strategies used by teachers to elicit, clarify and respond to evidence of learning and work with students to develop a positive learning orientation)

• Promoting Learning Autonomy (evaluated strategies to support students to become independent learners)

• Performance Orientation (evaluated how teachers orientate themselves towards that which drives the assessment of students' performance).

Section B's factors were:

• Inquiry (evaluated teachers' use and response to different sources of evidence and the extent of joint research and evaluation with colleagues)

• Building Social Capital (considered the extent to which teachers learn, work, support and talk to each other)

• Critical and Responsive Learning (considered the extent of reflection, self-evaluation, experimentation and feedback response)
• Valuing Learning (evaluated how teachers value their own and students’ learning)

Section C’s factors were:

• Deciding and Acting Together (which provided information on how management involves others in the decision-making processes)

• Developing a Sense of Where We are Going (provided information on how management provides the vision)

• Supporting Professional Development (provided information on how management supports the professional development and networking of its staff)

Questions in each of the three sections were evaluated by means of two Likert-type scales throughout the questionnaire which sought to glean staff perceptions of their current practices (scale X) and the value they placed on these practices (scale Y). (See Data analysis later.)

A concern however needs to be noted that the level of management was not defined in Section C of the questionnaire which would have been useful for this case study research particularly since it is adding a refinement to the LHTL study by looking particularly at the role of Middle Leaders. The instructions for Section C stated that staff should ‘indicate whether and to what extent you think that particular management practices are carried out at any level of management in your school’. Staff anecdotal comments noted that they found section C difficult to answer because they would have different responses depending on whether they were evaluating senior management or middle management. In some feedback, comments indicated that staff were evaluating senior management but this cannot be assumed when interpreting all the responses especially since teachers in a secondary
school often have closer experience of being managed by their HoF middle manager. It threw up anomalies particularly when the LHTL Section C Management scores remained low even though the consultants validated some HoFs’ own judgements that they had provided very clear direction or involved their teams in the minutia of the decision-making process; this was especially apparent later on in the research.

In addition to using factor scores (details are given in Data analysis) individual questions which interrogated specific AfL assessment strategies in Section A of the LHTL questionnaire were extrapolated and analysed more closely to investigate specific staff practice. The AfL strategies considered are highlighted in the following question numbers of the LHTL questionnaire (Appendix 12 & 7) and were selected by drawing on the LHTL questionnaire theory (Pedder, 2006) and faculty averages created for questions and for each group relating to specific strategies:


These individual faculty averages were an approximate and not statistically exact measure which indicated trends of changed practice. Practice scores only are considered for the outcomes as they enabled triangulation with HoFs’, consultants’ and students’ observations of whether individual strategies were being practised in the classroom.
The questionnaire response rate was high with an overall staff return of 91% (62 of 68) in 2004 and 88% (60 of 68) in 2006 with similar returns in all faculties. This was because the questionnaire was administered in a mandatory staff meeting with time allocated for its completion. The only staff who did not complete a questionnaire were a few part-timers and in most instances HoFs pursued returns from these staff, too. The questionnaire responses therefore can be seen as representative within all faculties. In 2006 though, four colleagues new to the school did not answer the practice questions in Section B: Teacher Professional Learning because they did not feel they could comment on other teachers’ learning practices. This affected the factor averages, particularly in Technology and is commented on in the analysis of the data.

vi. Student interviews and questionnaires: The interviews and questionnaires had a dual purpose. They provided both new data for evaluating teachers’ changed practice, based on changes in student motivation and the improvement in their learning, and a means for triangulating the data sources drawn from HoF and external agents’ interviews and the LHTL questionnaire about teachers’ practice. The data generated explored AfL strategies that students were observing of teachers’ practice in their classrooms and in their marked books; this enabled some indication of the extent of the effectiveness of HoFs managing the change of their colleagues’ practice. Students had been informed of the AfL pilot by me in assembly in Year 2 of the pilot and they knew how assessment practice was changing; they were thus conversant with the AfL strategies and language, enabling responses in both the questionnaires and in the interviews. The schedule for and discussion of interviews and questionnaires follows:

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• The first student interviews were undertaken in December 2004 (Appendix 8)

• The first questionnaire (Student Council - Appendix 10a) was administered in February 2006 and the second questionnaire (Student Body - Appendix 10b) was administered in March 2006

• Second student interviews took place in December 2006 (Appendix 9)

In the first year of the pilot the same sample of 5 Year 8 children whose books were chosen for the November 2004 Book Look was interviewed on perceptions and experiences of teachers’ written feedback and other types of feedback. The sample was too small to be representative of the larger student body but the interviews provided useful initial insights.

In the third year a questionnaire was devised and administered to gather more extensive student views on how teacher practice had changed over the course of the pilot, and on students’ understanding of AfL and how it was helpful to their learning. A student questionnaire was issued first to the Student Council. The open responses to this first questionnaire were evaluated and the questionnaire was then refined with the help of the Student Council members to create a bank of closed responses created from the Student Council members’ responses. The respondents could also provide open responses to each answer under ‘Other comments’. This second questionnaire was issued to a random 15 students from each of the 6 year groups, Yr 7 to 12 (almost 10% of the year group’s population) creating a total sample of 90 students. The questionnaire aimed to ascertain two different things:

i) whether students had observed the AfL strategies being used in the different faculties

(findings shown in Appendix 11a)
ii) how the students’ felt the different strategies assisted their learning (findings shown in Appendix 1b)

Objective setting, peer and self assessment and effective target-setting on written work were the AfL strategies evaluated but questioning was not included. This was because it was discovered in the first year student interviews that students found it too difficult to evaluate effective teacher questioning. Initially data were considered across all the three Key Stages, Years 7-12. However, only a very small number of responses were gleaned in KS4 and KS5 because not all students opted for subject options in every faculty in these Key Stages. As a result the data for the whole cohort could not be accurately compared so to improve the validity only the 45 Yr 7-9 KS3 student data were used for the analysis of questions considering practice in faculty areas (Appendix 1a). It is important to note that this part of the questionnaire provided a very broad representation of students’ views and was not a precise quantitative tool for evaluating practice in individual faculties and the results had to be dealt with some caution. Data were also drawn from a whole school council meeting which was called to discuss and explore issues arising from the outcomes of the questionnaire; discussion was recorded by means of field notes. In it students elaborated on the changes that had been noted in teacher assessment practice and how this impacted on their motivation and learning. For ethical reasons they were not allowed to cite any specific teachers’ practice (good or bad), but they did talk generally about their assessment experience. In some instances they cited their experiences in specific subject areas. This was deemed appropriate, given that there has been an increasing emphasis on student voice in the school, drawing on students’ perspectives of their learning experience in faculty areas.
In the final year, interviews were used to explore further data yielded by the student questionnaires. 8 students, representing each Key Stage (2 each from Years 8, 10, 11 and 12) who were members of the Student Council were interviewed (Appendix 9). These interviews explored the data in the questionnaire about students’ understanding of the role of assessment; the current practice of assessment; changes noticed; ideas of how they felt that assessment is aiding improving their learning and motivation, and how it could be made more appropriate. Opportunity sampling was used to select the Year groups for interview; members of the school council were asked to explore issues arising from the results of the questionnaire with their peers. Not all students had done this by the required date, and because of time pressures only those members of the council who had gleaned the information were interviewed. This sample was also small but students had explored the emerging issues with their peers and were able to represent wider perspectives. Also the interviews were intended to examine and explore outcomes from the questionnaire which had a much larger more representative sample of the whole student population.

**Data Analysis**

The *HoF interview data* were the starting point for the qualitative examination of how change was undertaken and for considering the outcomes achieved. The case study HoF interviews were examined to determine changes in leadership and resulting outcomes over the course of the three years. Data were:

i. interrogated for themes that would explain the choice of leaders’ leadership approach and the reasons for any changes in approach during the three year pilot

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ii. examined to establish the type of structures used and the changes of culture both within the faculty and the organisation as a whole, including examination of the extent of CPD and the types of CPD used to support change

iii. examined to determine the changes in teachers' values and practice in relation to the school AfL initiatives

Following detailed consideration of the individual faculty cases, comparisons were then made across all the faculties to see the degree of commonality that existed and to increase the confidence in the themes and issues raised in the case studies about the strategies, structures, culture changes and CPD used by HoFs (i & ii. above). The whole school structures (including whole school CPD) and culture changes were also examined as these had implications for the organisation as a whole, not just individual faculties.

Other data were used to triangulate the HoF views emerging from their interviews. The LHTL questionnaire, a tool to measure the extent of change of colleagues' practice and values (iii. above), was a primary means to triangulate HoFs' interview data. This instrument (see Appendix 12) consists of three sections, with approximately 28 items in each, which invite staff to record practices and values on two scales. Within the LHTL project the questionnaire was administered on two occasions, in 2002 and 2004 and item, factor, regression and cluster analyses were carried out (see James et al., 2007, Appendix). Factors were derived from the recorded 'practice' responses in 2002 of 1212 teachers from 32 schools in England. These schools represented a range of urban/rural, large/small, primary/secondary, mono-ethnic/multi-ethnic schools and most had an average 'C' grade in their PANDA profile in 2000 (indicating room for improvement). This sample size and the
range of schools give grounds for assuming that the results are broadly representative of the population of teachers in England. For this reason it seemed reasonable to use the results of item analysis and factor analysis carried out by the LHTL team on their data as benchmarks with which to compare results in this single case study. However, it cannot be claimed with absolute confidence that the same factors would have emerged had factor analysis been applied to the questionnaire data from this particular school. This was not done because the small case study sample did not, of itself, warrant the application of procedures beyond simple descriptive statistics. Nevertheless, it was possible for numerical scores to be calculated and aggregated to give faculty means. In some cases (as in the LHTL project) these scores were rescaled to make comparisons easier. These scores then enabled some comparisons to be made between LHTL and case study results, between items, between factors (assuming that the LHTL factors might hold good for this school), and over time.

To this end the teachers’ responses to the questionnaire were entered into a spreadsheet especially devised for this research (checked by the LHTL project team and subsequently used on its website (http://www.learntolearn.ac.uk) for other schools to use to interpret the LHTL questionnaire). This spreadsheet enabled the calculation of the means of the item and factor scores for the school as a whole which enabled comparisons with the LHTL questionnaire sample. Each question was attributed a score of 1 to 4 points with 4 points being the highest score of ‘mostly true’ (Scale X) or ‘crucial’ (Scale Y) (see Figure 3.2 below); this enabled the calculation of mean item and factor scores for each faculty.

Figure 3.2 (from Pedder, 2006, p174)
values and practices are reported and compared for each factor. This enabled gaps between staff’s current practice and values to be identified and examined. Changes – and the gaps in teachers’ values and practices could be measured because the differences in the practice and value scores were evaluated over the course of two years (appendix 6c). This in turn enabled comparisons both between the seven faculties and with the overall school change.

The comparisons between faculties merely showed *trends* of improvements /decline of values and practice; this was because:

- the size of the faculty samples were relatively small
- a small change of personnel within the two-year period meant that the sample was not identical between the two years
- ‘within’ faculty variance is likely to be as high as ‘between’ faculty variance

As a result any claims of change based on the LHTL questionnaire data can only be tentative and may be subject to measurement error. However, this quantitative evidence is useful as an element of case data discussed alongside the other kinds and sources of evidence. It serves as a source of triangulation for the HoF interview data and connects the study findings to the wider secondary school context represented by the LHTL data.
The extent of practice of *individual* AfL strategies was calculated by selecting specific question items in Section A which interrogated a specific strategy - e.g. the setting of objectives (see Appendix 7). The means for each of these questions and for the clusters of questions relating to specific strategies were calculated for all teachers in each faculty - and for the school as a whole - to give an indication of any changes in each of these strategies over the two year period. These faculty means could also be compared with the whole school means for each of the strategies. Only practice item scores were considered at the item level; value scores are, however, considered at the factor level. This is because the HoFs, students and the consultants mainly made comments in their interviews/questionnaire only on practice changes for individual AfL strategies, and not value changes.

*Book Looks* were drawn on in HoFs’ interviews as evidence of how their management had yielded changes in assessment practice (iii above). *Consultants’ data from lesson observations* they undertook were cited in discussions with me and with HoFs and were used to corroborate HoF and LHTL data. Data emerged from direct questions posed by consultants about strategies used by managers, and outcomes observed in colleagues’ practice and values changes (iii. above). Similarly *student interview data and questionnaire data* were derived from direct questions asked to students about their experience of the specific AfL strategies (iii. above). The data yielded from specific questions in the questionnaire shown in Appendix 11a was analysed to see how the various AfL strategies were used by the *different faculties* while the data from the other questions shown in Appendix 11b were analysed to ascertain how *students* perceived the strategies were useful.
to them. As noted earlier, triangulation with other data enables any confidence in the trends and themes to be tested and corroborated, but where appropriate other explanations are examined. Finally, Yin (1994, p44) advises that an embedded case study must return to the original unit of analysis – which in this instance is the school. The outcomes of the analysis will reflect the changes which need to be representative of this particular organisation rather than just the individual faculties. Similarities and differences of approach in securing change across the faculties are evaluated in order to extrapolate if there are any emerging themes which may inform this school’s future approach to securing another change, and which might help other schools’ in implementing AfL or other changes.

In conclusion, case study methodology has been chosen because it is very effective in providing a description of a real life context in which an intervention has occurred and helps to explain real life interventions that are too complex for experimental strategies. Case study yields rich data which provides deep insights into a school and its workings – demonstrated in the following chapter which outlines the findings.
Findings

How change is managed by the school leaders

The findings are considered in two sections:

- the first provides a detailed consideration of how change is managed in four particular faculty areas, drawing on the literature of change and leadership.
- the second draws on these individual faculty findings to examine the changes at an organisational level and to provide insights into all the Middle Leaders’ management of change.

In the final paragraphs of the examination of HoFs’ strategies in managing change, consideration is given to how far all teachers changed their practice and values. The LHTL questionnaire data, showing teachers’ shifts in practice and values, and the student and consultant data all give insights into the extent that AfL was embedded into faculty areas, and hence the extent to which HoFs’ management efforts were successful in securing change.

Section 1: Case Studies

The four case studies explore how change was managed in each different faculty. The interplay of the variables of leadership approach, structure, changing faculty culture and CPD, outlined in the literature review, are examined in these case studies to evaluate, through the HoF interviews, how the HoF endeavoured to secure change. Other data are also considered to triangulate the HoF interview data, and to provide further perspectives
on how the initiative was managed in the individual faculty areas, and the outcomes. The following provides an introductory outline at the outset of the pilot about the HoF and the context and composition of the four case study faculty teams under consideration:

- **The English HoF** was new to her post and keen to make an impression. She was tasked with raising achievement of an under-performing faculty and was, from the outset, very committed to the initiative. Her English team in year one was composed of eight members most of whom had been at the school for over ten years and who were very experienced. All but one colleague were very involved in their wider whole school responsibilities and their attention was often located outside of the faculty and teaching; openness to initiatives challenging their pedagogy was in my judgement limited. In the second and third year the addition of new members changed the nature of the faculty and how the initiative was received and implemented in the faculty.

- **Science** was led by a very experienced and highly respected HoF who had been in the school for over 15 years and was recognised both within the school and in the county for running a very successful faculty and for leading the Science College status. She introduced AfL to the school and was fully committed to its implementation. Her in-the-main static team of twelve was one of the largest of all the teams and comprised a range of experience from newly qualified staff to the longest standing member of the school; there were, from my perspective, varied attitudes of openness towards initiatives.

- **MFL** was led by two HoFs over the course of the 3 year pilot; the first left after the end of the second year of the pilot and had a periphery interest in AfL and he took only some part in the HoF discussions. His successor was a temporary position and had

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taken on the interim leadership role for a year only; she was committed to the principles of AfL. There had been no change in personnel within the faculty of six for at least seven years, bar the addition of an NQT at the end of the first year of the pilot. I had not noted the individuals ever working together cohesively as a team and there had been limited history of colleagues sharing resources and ideas or working together. As a significantly under-performing faculty it was constantly under the microscope resulting in colleagues feeling bound by external curriculum and assessment requirements.

- Technology was a run by an experienced HoF who was highly respected by her team of nine colleagues who engaged enthusiastically with the principles of AfL. The faculty had enjoyed outstanding results for many years. Technology, a non-compulsory subject at GCSE, had extensive coursework. The faculty was very experienced and all members had been in the school for over 10 years. In my judgement they were a cohesive team who at the outset of the project worked together well, sharing resources and collaborating on lessons. Two of the long-standing members acquired leadership positions outside of the faculty in the third year of the pilot.

**English faculty case study**

The Head of English was tasked with improving the results of an under-performing subject at the same time as being faced with the challenge of trying to pull together a team of colleagues who had other foci and commitments in the school. She was fully committed to the initiative and in her interviews demonstrated a good understanding of the principles of AfL. It emerged that there was a complex interplay of team composition and colleagues' knowledge and understanding of the initiative which affected how she led the initiative. In

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her first interview she articulated her leadership challenge; her team members were very
experienced, half of whom had been in the school for more than 10 years (See end of
Appendix 6a and 6b for teachers’ experience.) She commented in the end of year 1
interview that she felt that her colleagues had not understood AfL/FA because:

• they hadn’t had the CPD in previous years to keep up-to-date with new initiatives
• there was an attitude that because staff were so experienced, they didn’t need to make
  any changes
• there was a feeling that if a member of staff was not involved in KS3 where the pilot
  was focused, then they didn’t need to make any changes
• Staff had multiple responsibilities and were very busy so hadn’t prioritised the
  workings of the pilot.

The HoF needed to mesh the myriad subjective realities of the people’s individual contexts
and histories with those of the new programmes and policies. Many, she felt, were resistant
to new ideas and were not open to exploring different ways of doing things since ‘AfL is
such a different way of working from before’ and at times she felt that ‘we have tried to run
before we can walk’. The HOF also had assumed that staff knew as much as she knew
about the initiative – which wasn’t the case. From the outset therefore she embraced a
‘telling approach’ (Yr 2), although she felt that her leadership of the initiative did also have
at times a ‘combination of consultation and discussion’. Even when the leadership of the
initiative had become easier from the second year, she asserted that: ‘...(the) only strategy
that seems to have worked to ensure adherence to required policy is...a telling
approach’...‘I will have to state: ‘These are the things you must do; these are the things
you’ve got flexibility over’’(Yr 3) because she felt it was ‘the nature of the department’.

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assessment
Change in the second year was still managed in a linear and top-down manner (the adoptive approach) and was motivated by the HoF as the authority figure. This is because there were still a number of long-standing members of the department who were resistant to the change since there was a lack of understanding: ‘...Older members know that they need to apply AfL but needed to know how’ (Yr 2).

The third year of the pilot was the catalyst in moving both values and practice forward and was attributed to there being a significant staff change; the English HoF identified the new members as having a positive impact on moving the initiative forward. One newly qualified teacher joined the team as well as two further new English teachers who had faculty rather than whole-school responsibilities. The new younger colleagues were a significant factor because the critical mass of staff opinion had changed. This resulted in the changing of the culture of the faculty and the HoF noted:

3 new staff have come in living and breathing AfL: that’s the way they work. That has altered the critical mass of the faculty and that has changed the culture because they’re talking the talk and colleagues who’ve been here a while need to catch up (Yr 3).

Greater openness to doing things differently meant that the more experienced staff began to alter both their values and their practice to conform to the changing culture and this is shown by year 3 in a shift in both practice and values for the LHTL questionnaire factor Making Learning Explicit (2.1 and 1.1 points respectively; see Appendix 6c). Promoting Learning Autonomy showed a more modest shift in practice and values (0.5 and 0.6 respectively) by 2006. However, even with a changing more receptive culture, in the final
year the HoF’s approach still appeared to remain adoptive and her style autocratic/authoritarian:

…it has to be done and I’ve imposed it…Other more experienced colleagues are changing their practice to suit the climate because the climate or ethos is changing. (Eng, Yr 3).

This may well be a feature of the naturally more coercive/authoritative style of the HoF. Her third year interview hinted at this throughout by the number of verbs which reflect these styles: ‘(the HoF was) imposing a structure’, ‘it has to be done and I’ve imposed it’; ‘this has got to happen’; ‘I am pushing in an adoptive fashion’; ‘I am having to force it because I believe in it; ‘….I might impose something and it may not work’. Also the HoF’s reflections in her interviews make limited reference at all to discussion.

Structures also supported the more adoptive approach she embraced and were seen as important means - especially Book Looks and Performance Management observations - for the HoF to secure change and to provide greater accountability. In particular she was committed to doing regular Book Looks each term and building on whole staff INSET in her faculty meetings and she saw the ‘need to have AfL as a regular item on Faculty agendas’. The HoF did not rely only on whole-school structures to support her changes, but also introduced her own:

The main structure is assessment – having common schemes of work, common assessment and deadlines. This way there was tangible evidence in teachers’ mark books and children’s books so that there is no possibility of hiding (Yr 3).
In year 3 newly introduced structure of the moderation of students’ work to monitor the effectiveness of teachers’ feedback resulted in her observation that ‘(the outcomes are) tangible – we can see them through teachers’ mark books and children’s books. We have had moderations to support this where we’ve sat down together to look across the board’. She felt that her staff welcomed in particular the structures provided and she recalls in her year 3 interview that ‘There was a request from a colleague for structure ‘please tell us’ and I responded by imposing structures to hold to account’. She justified her use of structures to secure change as she felt her staff seemed to want tighter parameters. Her reliance on structures to implement the desired changes also affected the culture within the faculty resulting in a distinct culture of transparency and accountability. This was a repeated theme throughout her third year interview:

Structures are being requested – they see the sense in it and feel safer in the structure…This year where we’ve become much more accountable; it has meant that colleagues feel safer as we’re all doing the same thing and we all feel accountable together (English, Yr 3).

Expectation and ways of working have become habitual. The structures have led to the change of culture (English, Yr 3).

The structures had made people accountable so they have to get on with it, and then having got on with it they start to see the benefits of collaboration and working with me. I shifted practice first and beliefs have followed (English, Yr 3).

In order to try and secure the shift in values and understanding of the initiative, INSET was seen from the outset by the HoF as an essential structure to support the changes she was endeavouring to introduce: ‘The faculty needs INSET/training’ (Yr 1). Whole school
INSET she felt was very helpful and raised the initiative's status and united staff in addressing a specific teaching and learning initiative:

INSET led to a big change in people's practice as it was a public event which raised its profile... (Senior Management) supported it hugely by constantly having a constant high profile (English, Yr 3).

Here the reference to 'high profile' and the role of the Senior Management indicate that it is the structural effect of the CPD (rather than its cultural effect) that is emphasised. At the end of the second year, after there had been significant whole-school CPD input she recognised there was 'greater flexibility, collaboration and co-operation' amongst her colleagues which she attributed to some staff now 'seeing the purpose of AfL' and to having 'new members who agree with the principles and support the change'. This observation would be verified when considering the Building Social Capital factor of Section B of the LHTL questionnaire (Appendix 6c) where both practice and value scores increased by 2006 from 2004 (0.9 & 1.8 respectively). As a result the HOF 'pushed forward' and she was able 'to demonstrate the value of the strategy' (Yr 2). She also introduced structures to support the professional development of staff, and paired observations were undertaken in English to share and refine practice. The practice of coaching, initiated in Science by the Science consultant and the outcomes shared with the HoF team, was adopted in English. At the end of the first year the Head of English asserted that she would '...be involved in coaching with individual Key Stage coordinators', and would 'encourage one-to-one coaching' establishing pairings of teachers to team-teach and share good practice. She felt that paired observations and coaching were useful as a reflective tool for individual teachers to evaluate themselves as well as monitor the
effectiveness of practice and to understand concerns which colleagues were experiencing. Paired observations and coaching provided opportunities for staff to develop skills to observe learning in the classroom and were verified by the HoF as a most valuable and effective structure and form of CPD:

In the middle of the second year we had a project which was...peer assessment of each others’ lessons and we team-taught lessons and reviewed them and fed back to the faculty. This was a significant change in the thinking of the faculty about AfL. I had structures and I was working alongside colleagues...(The most effective strategy) was working in twos and threes in a non-threatening/non-judgmental way supported by structures that make them do it and make them accountable (Yr3).

This indicates how the cultural element of the CPD is now taking effect. With coaching, hierarchies of expertise were shattered with the least experienced offering support and expertise to those more experienced; even trainee teachers had a role to play in coaching experienced staff. The HoF commented that ‘In addition teacher trainees are talking the talk too. They want to work that way. I’ve paired them up with people who aren’t used to this – indirectly they’re teaching them’ (English, Yr 3). By year 3, the HoF English was enthusiastic about the role of coaching to encourage reflection on practice: ‘The most helpful INSET has been giving people time to team-teach and to review it together in a coaching relationship’. The 2006 English LHTL Inquiry and Critical and Responsive Learning (C & RL) factor scores (see appendix 6b), which evaluate joint staff evaluation and reflection of classroom practice, returned some of the highest practice and value scores of all the faculties with all scores above the faculty averages (Inquiry achieving 20.5 practice/21.4 value and C & RL achieving 20.1 practice/21.1 value of a possible 28 points);

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both factors also had some of the greatest improvements in both practice and value scores of all faculties over the two years for both factors (Inquiry improved 2.4 points for practice & 1.3 points for value; C & RL improved 2.0 points for practice/1.4 points for value). This can be viewed as verification of the HoF’s interview data above showing the positive impact of joint observations and the attendant reflection, experimentation, feedback and evaluation that they encouraged.

There was a very distinct change in colleagues’ assessment practice and values outcomes over the course of the three year pilot as shown in Section A: Assessment of the LHTL questionnaires (Appendix 6c):

- The already cited practice and values score improvements (2.1 and 1 points respectively) for Making Learning Explicit over the two years showed the greatest improvements of all of the faculties. English had some of the highest value and practice scores of all faculties for Promoting Learning Autonomy in both 2004 and 2006 although the improvement over the two years was not as great as the factor Making Learning Explicit

- When considering the individual AfL strategies employed in Making Learning Explicit (Appendix 7) English was the one faculty that recorded that all strategies (bar questioning which had a slight dip in 2006 to ‘rarely’) were practiced ‘often’ in both 2004 as well as in 2006.

All this appears to indicate that an initial focus on structures led to one on culture. The whole-school AfL consultant who worked with each of the HoFs was able to confirm the
progress made in English which he felt was note-worthy in all of the AfL strategies. Even as early as in the second year he commented that in English the HoF ‘...understands AfL. She knows “what” – the challenge is now “how”’. She, though, is at least one person getting her head around the “how”’. These data were triangulated by the third year student interviews and questionnaire. The student questionnaire returned very positive indications that English teachers were implementing AfL strategies and that student learning was benefiting. The English scores were some of the highest of all faculty scores when evaluating the item scores of objective setting, peer and self assessment and the effective use of targets (Appendix 11a). It returned the highest scores for peer and self assessment questions of all faculties. However the starting points for both of these strategies were high and there was not a noticeable shift in practice in these individual strategies over the 2 years. This may indeed indicate that peer and self assessment in particular are strategies which are supported by the nature of the subject itself where students are encouraged to reflect on and discuss their achievements in both their own and their peers’ work (as indicated in the literature review). Almost half of all Key Stage 3 and 4 English students felt that their teachers used peer assessment and that the targets provided in feedback helped them improve. 28% of students were encouraged in English to assess their own work. Over one in three students noted that teachers provided them with effective learning objectives and in the final interviews students cited English, along with Science and MFL, as one of the subjects where the setting of objectives was used effectively. In the third year interviews specific mention was made of target-setting in English; students said that teachers ‘gave lots of feedback – paragraphs with stars and targets’ and ‘set targets that were worked on’. Also:

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Targets are effective when like in English you get a good comment, but also when the teacher shows you how to improve (Yr 3, Student 1).

Each source intimated that the AfL strategies were used in teachers’ classrooms and the LHTL questionnaire shows teachers’ increasing value of these strategies.

The English faculty returned some of the highest change scores (Appendix 6c) of the faculties in all 3 of the LHTL questionnaire sections (Classroom Assessment, Professional Learning and Management) in 2006 (Appendix 6b) in both practice and values on the 2004 (Appendix 6a) questionnaire results. There are many elements in explaining this:

i. The HoF’s relentless drive to secure a shift in practice and values, through making the initiative a constant focus, and her very strong and determined leadership, certainly helped to make the difference. She was focused throughout the pilot on the whole school agenda of implementing AfL. To do so she adopted a very particular autocratic/authoritarian style and an adoptive approach for the duration of the pilot, and used both whole school structures as well as her own structures to provide a framework for supporting change. She also clearly delineated expectations and monitored closely how colleagues were delivering the strategies.

ii. A significant change of personnel which altered the composition of her team also assisted her in shifting the culture within the faculty; the departure of two colleagues who were resistant to change and the arrival of newcomers who were conversant and confident in AfL certainly helped shift attitudes within the faculty.

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iii. She was one HoF whose strong commitment to developing in-classroom CPD through coaching and peer assessment seemed to have helped in moving colleagues’ understanding on and in securing change in practice.

When considering the very high scores for *Making Learning Explicit* at the outset of the project in comparison to other faculties it does seem to indicate that the nature of English makes it more conducive to the adoption of AfL principles. Nonetheless while there are very pleasing practice improvements for *Making Learning Explicit* by 2006, there is also a very positive shift in the value scores. This would seem to indicate that team composition, assertive leadership and collaborative CPD combined to ensure that the change in practice was not merely a mechanistic application of the strategies but was one which was embedded in the culture, values and practice of teachers in the faculty. This is indicated at the end of the third year when the HoF with a sense of celebration when noting the shifts in and embedding of colleagues’ values and practice proclaimed that:

> Staff now see the purpose of AfL...At KS3 AfL is like oxygen; it is just part of it (the faculty) (Yr 3).

**Science faculty case study**

The Head of Science was instrumental in introducing formative assessment to the school, as already noted. She attended a meeting at which Paul Black outlined his research into formative assessment and she returned to school, with the booklet *Inside the Black Box*, converted to the value of formative assessment principles. She was invited to share her experiences at a HoF meeting and from that point onwards she was viewed as a harbinger of the formative assessment message, both within her faculty and in the school. Unlike...
some other Heads of Faculty, she needed no convincing of formative assessment’s merits and from the outset was committed to the principles and endeavoured to practise its strategies. While she did not have the initial hurdle that some other HoFs experienced of trying to fully understand the principles herself, she did confront some of the same issues in trying to initiate the change with her faculty. The HoF commented in the end of her first year interview that she wanted to encourage her Science colleagues into embracing the new initiative by using a more collaborative style. However, within the course of the first year there was limited evidence of colleagues changing their practice although the principles appeared to be valued. HoF observations and Book Looks in the first year revealed that the strategies weren’t being used by everyone, nor were they appropriately used. The HoF reflected back to the first year:

Everybody understood the logic of objective setting…but then the nitty-gritty of doing it…People believed in AfL but it wasn’t transferring into their practice…Partly staff were confused about how to do it but also it takes a long time to change and when people get stressed they revert to what they’ve always done (Yr 3).

Objectives weren’t being used by everyone all the time or they weren’t setting sensible objectives…questioning goes up and down, up and down and after a 10 minute talk in a meeting everybody will go off and try and do it right. Then you observe a lesson a bit later on and I’ve observed straight questions being shot out with hands up again (Yr 3).

The HoF outlined how they discussed and revisited the various strands of the strategy in meetings and that colleagues appeared to embrace the ideas. However, teachers did not fully understand some of the principles when actually implementing AfL, and teachers
were struggling to make the strategies truly effective: ‘Teachers had ‘lost the plot’ with stars & targets. They lost track of what targets related back to and we became in muddle’. And indeed the 2004 mean item practice score for Science for target setting was second lowest of all faculties (3.12; Appendix 7). She felt that colleagues’ lack of full understanding of the initiative was a major barrier to securing a change of practice and as a result she put into place structures to provide some support:

‘... I had to come up with a clear set of guidelines, rather than people doing it their own way. I directed the setting of the guidelines quite strongly at a meeting’ (Yr1).

Her observations are borne out by the practice scores on the other school AfL strategies, which were below average for the whole school (and close to the lowest in most) and by the factor scores for the 2004 LHTL questionnaire (Appendix 6a) *Making Learning Explicit and Promoting Learning Autonomy* (Section A). On the latter, the value scores for each factor were the highest/second highest of all faculties (34.9/15.2) but the practice scores were the lowest (31.4/12.9) for both.

Where other faculties did not value the AfL strategies, her faculty appeared to buy into and valued the principles but found implementing them difficult and this may, as literature suggests, have been because the nature of the subject makes the application of AfL more difficult. As a result of her colleagues’ difficulty in changing their practice the HoF embraced, during the course of the first year, the adoptive approach in leading the implementation of AfL. She herself ‘made the decision’ to focus on implementing the questioning and objectives strands of AfL and she stated to her team that clear lesson objectives were a ‘HoF driven requirement’ (Yr 1). Certainly she felt she needed a more...
autocratic leadership style when persuading the faculty to accept a consultant’s assistance in supporting its first year implementation and the threat posed by having someone work closely with them in the classroom and the culture change that this implied. However, in spite of resistance from colleagues to the consultant’s support, her persistence yielded results after initial antagonism and she reflected at the end of the second year that:

There was an awful lot of whingeing…but when it happened there wasn’t anybody who didn’t say how useful it was. A lot of people said how they’d like to do similar things again (Yr 2).

In the second year she maintained an adoptive approach in order to have central control over the implementation of AfL and in order to secure change; she admitted that she was ‘a bit bossy’ and that one ‘needs to be bossy to get things done. I don’t think we’d get anywhere at all if I were otherwise’! Not all team members were accepting of the changes though and she observed in her interviews at both the end of the second and third years that individuals’ attitudes and contributions could shape others’ responses. She needed to manage discussions carefully to ensure that more negative colleagues did not have an adverse effect on the attitudes of others:

How something is going to turn out depends on if the first comment made is positive. It’ll turn out OK but there are one or two people who are negative about everything all the time’ (Yr 2);

‘Discussions…haven’t always been positive. If it starts off negative – I need to select carefully who starts speaking first’ (Yr 3).

She also identified personal attitudes and qualities of individuals which shaped her leadership approach:
There are some people who argue every single point, who wanted to stick to the letter of the law and who wanted a law for everything. As soon as they step outside of that they can’t cope. It’s meant I’ve moved from an adaptive approach to adoptive – and then to a combination’ (Yr 3).

As the pilot progressed in the second year with increased CPD and whole school consultant support, she made reference to progress in shifting both colleagues’ practice and values. She observed that ‘for some people it’s changing their culture of teaching’ and that ‘staff are understanding targets…and objectives’.

Whole school structures were used to support and monitor the implementation of the AfL strategies but not all of these were as rigorously imposed as in the faculty of English. Book Looks when imposed by SLT were an effective mandatory structure to monitor the effectiveness of formative assessment in book marking. However, when no longer driven by SLT only one Book Look was undertaken in Science in year 2 and the HoF admitted: ‘I haven’t done enough Book Looks…’(Yr 2). Performance Management and faculty observations were a structure which allowed the HoF to monitor the implementation of AfL. Observations did enable the monitoring of assessment in students’ books which supplemented the irregular Book Looks and ‘were an eye-opener’ in enabling her to identify misconceptions or address people who were not providing the necessary feedback to move students’ learning forward. The HoF also introduced her own faculty structures. She prepared some sample objectives and targets for staff to use as a framework to develop their own. Science staff involved in working on the new KS4 curriculum had specific AfL strategies included in the template for reworked schemes of work: ‘objectives, key
questions, differentiation...very clear structures are shown in schemes of work’ (HoF,Yr 3). It was also a HOF-driven requirement that clear lesson objectives were evident in lessons since she viewed students understanding objectives as a means to ‘enable children to be fired up about the lesson’. Science had very specific CPD and training in the form of a Science AfL consultant and the lesson observations done with staff provided a further structure for refining practice. As in English, the 2006 LHTL Inquiry and Critical and Responsive Learning (C & RL) factor scores (Appendix 6b), which evaluate teachers’ research and enquiry and their ability to reflect on their practice, returned some of the highest practice and value scores of all faculties (Inquiry = 20.5 practice/21.1 value; C & RL = 21.3 practice/20.4 value) validating the impact of the consultant in encouraging the collaborative in-classroom CPD of joint peer observations and coaching. The HoF commented that these paired observations with the support and guidance of the Science consultant were seen by colleagues as a significant factor in moving staff practice and understanding on, and in shifting the teaching/learning culture because colleagues ‘...got to see AfL in practice. Being observed helps as you make an effort to do it properly and then colleagues realise it works...Lesson observations did pull the whole thing up’ (HoF, Yr 3). There were two individual questions in Section B of the LHTL questionnaire evaluating professional learning which support the HoF’s assertions:

- Q9: Staff reflect on their practice as a way of identifying professional learning needs
- Q14: Staff modify their practice in the light of evidence from evaluations of their classroom practice by managers or other colleagues

Both questions’ value and practice scores by 2006 showed some improvement on 2004 scores with the question item score averages valued in 2006 as ‘important’ by Science
colleagues; scores were veering towards being practised by ‘most staff’. The Science consultant observed that the changes in Science were ‘the most rapid change in teaching ever seen’ (November 2004) and that ‘in most lessons pupils are really aware of objectives – and it is spreading to other subjects...questions are much more focused and relate to objectives’. Certainly the consultant’s work with the faculty at the outset of the project helped shift the culture within Science by encouraging discussion and reflection; as a result, teachers were more collaborative and the faculty as a whole became more cohesive. This is shown in some of the highest practice/value scores (24.9/24.5 out of a possible 28 points respectively) of all the faculties for the factor Building Social Capital (LHTL questionnaire, 2004). This was apparent especially in 2004 when the consultant worked with the faculty, and although scores did not improve by 2006 (24.1/23.6), they were still some of the highest of all the faculties. Following the consultant’s input with teachers, the HoF noted that colleagues regularly discussed in the faculty office what had happened in their classrooms. The HoF felt that colleagues in her faculty ‘want to teach well’ and that teachers had ‘the need to offload straight away’ which generated informal discussion in their faculty office. The HoF’s interview comments about discussions surrounding AfL strategies were evident throughout the course of the pilot. For example:

Initial discussion indicated an interest in questioning techniques which built on KS3 Science Strategy AfL input (Yr 1).

(There is) more discussion to continue to reinforce formative assessment marking...there is discussion at break, lunch and faculty meetings. People talk about it (AfL) a lot and bounce ideas off each other (Yr 2).

We discussed in many meetings how to check that targets had been addressed (Yr 3).
In spite of the above observations from the HoF and there being a noticeable culture shift and greater receptiveness to colleagues valuing AfL, it is interesting to note that the outcomes of Section A (Assessment) in the LHTL questionnaires (Appendix 6a & 6b) showed that practice was not as embedded as might have been expected:

- as already stated the Science faculty returned some of the highest value scores of the faculties for *Making Learning Explicit* (2004) and *Promoting Learning Autonomy* (2004 & 2006) but some of the lowest scores for practice in both years

- the individual questions which evaluated specific AfL practices (Appendix 7) - regular objective setting, questioning, peer and self assessment and provision of targets which help the student improve - had some of the lowest scores when compared to the averages of other faculties and showed that Science staff felt that they were finding implementing the AfL strategies more challenging. However, there was some improvement by 2006, particularly in questioning which showed the most marked improvement being now undertaken ‘often’ from having been ‘rarely’ undertaken in 2004.

- By 2006 the *Performance Orientation* practice and value scores were, along with MFL’s, much higher than other faculties’, indicating external pressures on teachers’ delivery of the curriculum and assessment.

The introduction of module tests at GCSE in year 10 and year 11 could well be the reason why the *Performance Orientation* scores were higher than other faculties’; in spite of colleagues valuing AfL, they may have felt obliged to focus their teaching on the delivery...
of the requirements of these summative tests. The lower practice scores in both years for *Making Learning Explicit* and *Promoting Learning Autonomy* compared to other faculties are surprising given the consultant’s supportive input and support and that value scores are high in comparison. The Head of Faculty had her own explanation; she felt that the consultant’s support in the first year of the pilot had sharpened colleagues’ understanding and had secured their commitment to the AfL strategies. However, she felt that the direct input of the consultant had made colleagues more aware of correct AfL practice, and that their critical self-evaluation of the effectiveness of their AfL practice is reflected in the rather surprisingly low practice scores. Colleagues’ critical self-assessment of their practice may explain the large practice and values gap especially in the 2004 year (when the consultant was working with the faculty) but also evident in 2006. When considering other sources’ observations it seems that Science teachers’ practice was indeed better than they were giving themselves credit for. The consultant was very affirming about the progress in practice but students’ were also very complimentary about how AfL strategies were used to support their learning *particularly* in Science. In the 2006 interviews Yr 8 students felt that in Science students were expected to follow through and practise targets that teachers had set on their work in future tasks. Almost 90% of KS3 students in the 2006 student questionnaire (Appendix 11a) commented that objectives were regularly set confirming the HoF’s statement that ‘Most staff are confident about WALT/WILF – they are used in all KS3 lessons – I see them all over the department’ (Science, Yr 2). Students in their third year interviews cited Science as one of the subjects where objective setting was used effectively. Yr 8s noted that they ‘refer back to the objectives...because the
teachers use WALT & WILF\(^1\). The Yr 10s had recognised that Science was the first subject to set objectives which they found helpful. It was therefore surprising to discover that the average for the setting of objectives was ‘rarely’ when analysing Science colleagues’ practice in individual objective questions in Section A of the LHTL questionnaire in 2004 (Appendix 7). However, this score was skewed by the effect of one question (number 6) evaluating objective setting: ‘Students are given opportunities to decide their own learning objectives’. The scores for this question were the lowest of all faculties for objective setting in both years, and the lowest individual score of any question in the *Making Learning Explicit* section of the questionnaire (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Faculty averages for Objective Setting and Peer Assessment - drawn from individual questions: LHTL questionnaires 2004 and 2006

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<td>Question Average</td>
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<td>3.73</td>
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Scores: 4=mostly; 3=often; 2=rarely; 1=never

\(^1\) WALT – What we Are Learning Today; WILF - What I am Looking For

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This is likely to reflect the nature of the subject, where a performance orientation results in the curriculum determining the learning objects definitively. However on the other hand, questions 11\(^2\) and 21\(^3\) evaluating objective setting had very high averages in 2004 (3.55/3.75) and 2006 (3.36/3.5) respectively and which by 2006 were veering towards ‘seen in most practice’. By 2006 there had been marginal overall improvement in the responses to these questions examining teachers’ use of objective setting but a further decline in question 6’s scores. Most of the individual questions interrogating the specific Science AfL practices in the *Making Learning Explicit* factor (Appendix 7) showed some very slight improvement over the two year period but peer assessment was viewed in Science as particularly challenging to put into practice (see Table 4.1). Science also reflected the lowest practice scores by 2006 of all faculties for the factor *Promoting Learning Autonomy* (Appendix 6b). (Science notably so – 13.5 points compared to 14.8 average faculty points). There was some in-faculty variation with a number of the more reticent individuals (already cited) resisting the implementation of the strategies to promote learning autonomy and this skewed the faculty averages. The lower scores may however reflect the difficulty of implementing certainly some aspects of the AfL strategies in Science. This reflects the findings of Pedder and James (2007) cited in the literature review, particularly for Science and Maths, that indicate that the nature of the subject may make it more difficult to implement AfL strategies in these particular subjects. However, even though Science colleagues’ item responses evaluating assessment in Section A of the LHTL questionnaire returned more modest practice improvements and indicate a lack of confidence in their implementation of AfL strategies, the students’ and consultant’s affirming observations of

\(^2\) Students’ learning objectives are discussed with students in ways that they can understand

\(^3\) Students are helped to understand the learning purposes of each lesson or series of lessons

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good practice of some of the AfL strategies indicate that possibly more significant progress was being made than teachers were giving themselves credit for. It may be that the LHTL questionnaire as an instrument did not adequately capture teachers’ practice for the individual questions evaluating the strategies, or that the questions were misconstrued or interpreted in different ways particularly for the subject of Science. While there were varying outcomes in the successful implementation of the specific AfL strategies, there was a pleasing overall improvement in the factor *Making Learning Explicit* practice score (2.2 point) so progress was being made in developing AfL practice in Science.

The HoF altered her leadership style and approach throughout the course of the three years in response to her team’s composition and reaction; in particular individuals’ attitudes and qualities affected how the team operated and consequently how she led the team. At the outset of the pilot Science colleagues indicated that they valued the principles of AfL but their knowledge and understanding of the strategies proved to be barriers in implementing AfL. However, with the consultant’s support, imposed whole school and faculty structures and the increased faculty discussion and observations, progress - particularly in the factor *Making Learning Explicit* practice and in the AfL strategy of questioning - was made. Nonetheless there was a noticeable shift in culture in Science and the debate, discussion and shared practice generated in Science had an impact on practice across other faculties and encouraged debate across the school. The Science consultant ran workshops for other colleagues in other faculties, thus supporting the professional development of staff across the school for example in English - as already stated – and Humanities. The HoF’s commitment and enthusiasm for AfL were catching in HoF meetings. Her positive support

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for the AfL initiative was a significant factor in moving the initiative forward within the organisation, and shifting the culture within the HoF forum. Her leadership, noted by the consultant and anecdotally by other HoFs, had wide-ranging impact beyond her faculty area into the rest of the school. However, even by the final year in spite of the HoF’s commitment and drive to have AfL as a central agenda item, Science colleagues found the implementation of some of the strategies difficult. This may because they were particularly self-critical of their practice but it may also be because as the literature asserts the nature of Science makes the implementation of AfL more difficult.

MFL faculty case study

The MFL HoF had the most difficult time introducing AfL to his colleagues. When the principles were presented to his faculty, his colleagues had the most vociferous resistance against the initiative of all faculties. The HoF reported in the first year interview that the extremely sceptical experienced staff felt that AfL was a new innovation which in five years time would be abandoned for something different. He stated at the end of the first year that ‘...there was initially hostility – it surprised me...there was anger. People felt very threatened by it’. The LHTL questionnaire indicates this clearly and the Making Learning Explicit value scores (32.2; Appendix 6a) are the lowest of all the faculties in 2004. Not only this, but at the outset the faculty were not united in purpose and were not working together collaboratively at all also shown in the 2004 LHTL questionnaire scores for Building Social Capital– practice and value scores were the lowest of all faculties in 2004 (21.4/21.2 respectively) and again the scores were the lowest by 2006 (20.2/21.3). Following the SLT and HoF forum decision in the first year to implement the AfL.
strategies of objective setting and formative marking with stars and targets, the HoF embraced an approach with his faculty that was adoptive and his leadership style autocratic. Because of the difficulties the HoF had in presenting the initiative to his faculty he deflected responsibility for the initiative’s implementation on to Senior Leadership and reported that he had stated to his faculty that ‘Whether we like it or not, we’re asked to do this’ (Yr 1). He said he needed to ‘cajole and persuade’ his staff to embrace the practices.

The second year saw the adoptive approach still firmly entrenched by the HoF in order to ensure that strategies were implemented. When the resistance continued in year two he responded to the antagonism by asserting that ‘whatever you may think, I’m afraid we’ll just have to get on with it....because it is going to happen’(Yr 2). Nonetheless the MFL HoF felt that in the second year there was slightly more openness to the initiative attributed to improved understanding as a result of increased whole school CPD time dedicated to AfL which he said led at times to ‘...good faculty discussion in meeting times (MFL, Yr 2):

As we’ve moved on there has been a greater understanding. Whatever this is and isn’t about, this should be about more effective teaching and learning. I think people have taken that on board and suddenly there has been more willingness to discuss these issues - once people knew that ‘Look, it was going to happen’ (Yr 2).

However his colleagues still felt that there appeared to be little choice about their adopting the strategies. At the end of the second year the Head of Faculty left and the acting HoF who took the leadership role was tasked with leading the turn-around required to address the significant underperformance of both the languages, French and German, in the third
year. She attempted to bring new impetus to the AfL initiative in her faculty. However, she also notes that colleagues’ values were a barrier:

...They say they definitely don’t believe it works and that it takes up too much time and it gets to the stage that every time I bring it up people say ‘Oh, God, not that again’ (Yr 3).

Their responses determined her distinctly adoptive approach in trying to secure change and she felt that older members had to be ‘pushed on to the bandwagon’ (Yr 3) and that they felt that AfL strategies had been ‘harped on about’ all the time (Yr 3):

People who have a different mindset have not been on it (AfL strategies) from the beginning and it’s been a case of pushing them on to it and then trying to show them from sharing my own practice with them that I can see a difference in my classroom (Yr 3).

Unlike in the English faculty there was no wide-spread change in personnel in the course of the three years which could help to change staff attitudes. A trainee did bring AfL practice into the faculty and the HoF in Year 3 commented that ‘The trainee who has been extremely diligent has been able to show people good practice...she would write comments on children’s work using comment banks (MFL, Yr 3)’. However, neither her presence nor her practice helped to shift the weight of feeling against the initiative, even though she was demonstrating good practice.

There were a number of structures that the first HoF used to try get his colleagues to embrace the strategies:

- Whole school structures of Book Looks were used to monitor the delivery of AfL strategies and initially exercise books were taken in for checking before the official HOF Book Looks to allow for the monitoring of progress of how colleagues were
providing feedback; they revealed a variety of practice with very different levels of understanding of effective formative marking. However, the HoF admitted that he ‘needs to have more frequent ‘Book Looks’ (Yr 1) to monitor teachers’ feedback practice thoroughly

- A set bank of targets was devised so that staff could be guided as to appropriate and effective targets set to aid students’ future learning

- The HoF had staff give students a ‘dry-run formative assessment point prior to a summative test which could allow students to surpass their abilities’ (Yr 1)

- Following the experimental nature of the first year and the resistance by colleagues, a draft Faculty policy was drawn up which provided structure and expectations of the strategies that staff should be implementing; this provided assistance because staff said they wanted ‘specific guidelines’. The acting HoF devised a template to produce a perfect lesson plan which incorporated AfL strategies.

- Performance Management targets were used to hold staff to account for their delivery of the strategies in the second year and the Performance Management observations were used to evaluate their success.

There was little culture shift in the faculty and even in the third year colleagues were still questioning the validity of the change and the acting HoF reported that her colleagues were challenging her by saying ‘Who are you to tell us what to do?’ She felt that ‘there has only been embryonic development’. There was very little reference to discussions or debate and no reference to professional development in either of the HoFs’ interviews over the three years. The new HoF commented that most of her colleagues’ perceptions of observations –
especially those undertaken by the AfL consultant - were not seen as developmental training but rather were viewed as collecting evidence to judge staff and justify further imperatives for forcing change. The acting MFL HoF herself commented on the shift of culture within the school and faculty to one of greater accountability when the new Headteacher arrived:

There is far greater accountability as their lessons are being seen...because people know their lessons are going to be scrutinised. And because of all of the observations this year, people know they've got to (implement AfL strategies) and they can beat on their chests and say they don't want to but at the end of the day they have to (Yr 3).

OFSTED and observations have shifted to a greater culture of school accountability. The whole school culture has changed (MFL, Yr 3).

The MFL consultant was consigned to work specifically with the faculty in developing AfL in the third year and endeavoured to provide professional development and training to the faculty. She verified the acting HoF’s frustrations in trying to move the agenda forward; her comments were particularly revealing: ‘Staff are not convinced by AfL – their conceptual understanding is weak. They feel that AfL is being done to them and that they have got to do it this way’. The consultant commented on ‘vociferous and negative’ influences of individual members. Some colleagues were ‘not willing to move on in their practice; were not reflective; were obstructive and not willing to try anything’. She noted, as did the acting HoF herself, that the lack of understanding and the composition of the team itself had a very negative impact on how the team was able to move forward.

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The observations by both the HoFs and the consultant that there was limited change particularly in teachers' values towards the assessment changes but also in some aspects of embracing AfL practice, are supported by LHTL Section A questionnaire teacher responses. However there were some strides made in the implementation of some of the individual AfL strategies. The LHTL outcomes are summarised as follows and elaborated on subsequently:

- the 2004 value score of the Making Learning Explicit section of the LHTL questionnaire was the lowest of all faculties (in 2004 32.2 compared to an average of 34.1 for all faculties) and the second lowest in 2006 (32.5 (33.8 average)). Practice scores were among the lower scores of the faculties in both years

- Promoting Learning Autonomy factor practice and values scores in 2006 were some of the lowest scores of all the faculties

- The Performance Orientation practice and value scores by 2006 were by far the highest of all the faculties and the faculty seemed to have become more driven by external and summative assessment and defined curriculum expectations.

When considering the data averages of individual questions examining the AfL strategies (Appendix 7), staff made significant strides in using self assessment, target-setting and questioning strategies. Self assessment and questioning moved from being judged by staff as being used 'rarely' to being used 'often'. Self assessment made the greatest improvement (0.55) in the two years of any of the AfL strategies across all the faculties. By 2006 target setting showed the highest practice score of all the faculties with MFL staff indicating that
they used targets 'often'. However, given the resistance of staff, recorded by both HoFs and the consultant, and the LHTL overall Making Learning Explicit value scores for MFL which were some of the lowest of all the faculties in both years, it is probable that these improvements were mechanistic applications of procedures, rather than meaningful changes valued by staff. A similar issue, as experienced by Science, arose for question 6 ‘Students are given opportunities to decide their own learning objectives’. The question was attributed a much lower practice score compared to the other objective setting questions (Q11⁴ & Q21⁵) in 2004 with a further decline by 2006 (see Table 4.2 below).

Table 4.2: Itemised MFL scores for individual questions of Objective Setting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>LHTL Section A - Q6</th>
<th>LHTL Section A - Q11</th>
<th>LHTL Section A - Q21</th>
<th>Objectives average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scores: 4=mostly; 3=often; 2=rarely; 1=never

This may also be, like Science, that the nature of the subject does not facilitate the setting of students’ own learning objectives. The fact that the mean item score on Q11 (which is a procedure) improves, whereas that on Q21 (requiring a culture change) declines, could be attributed to the application of the ‘letter’ of AfL rather than the ‘spirit’.

Students however were positive about some of the AfL strategies evident in their teachers’ practice, and cited how the strategies improved their learning. In the 2006 student questionnaire MFL returned some of the highest scores of the four case study subjects (see appendix 11a) for peer and self assessment with 55.6% of KS3 MFL students saying that

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⁴ Students’ learning objectives are discussed with students in ways that they can understand

⁵ Students are helped to understand the learning purposes of each lesson or series of lessons

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their teachers encourage peer assessment; 31.1% felt that teachers encourage self assessment. Yr 11 students in the 2006 interviews noted that peer assessment in MFL listening was useful since it allowed for practising and consolidation of preparatory work done at home; they then ‘knew what was expected’. This was in spite of the fact that teachers in Section A of the LHTL questionnaire in both 2004 and 2006 evaluated their own practice of the question ‘I provide guidance to help students to assess one another’s work’ (Q19) as being performed ‘rarely’. However the question ‘Students are given opportunities to assess one another’s work’ (Q20) had an average evaluation just bordering on ‘often’ in both years (see Table 4.3). Again one interpretation of this is that Q20 might be seen as a measure of procedural practice compared with Q19 which requires a culture change.

**Table 4.3: Itemised MFL scores for individual questions of Peer Assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>LHTL Section A - Q19</th>
<th>LHTL Section A - Q29</th>
<th>Peer Assessment average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scores: 4=mostly; 3=often; 2=rarely; 1=never

MFL was one of the subjects particularly noted in the 2006 student interviews where objective setting was used effectively; in the student questionnaire 60% of KS3 MFL students said that effective objectives were set regularly. The teachers’ assessment of their own objective setting practice (refer back to Table 4.2, above) did however concur with students’ judgement for the questions ‘Students’ learning objectives are discussed with students in ways they understand’ (Q11) and ‘Students are helped to understand the learning purposes of each lesson or series of lessons’ (Q21); both questions were evaluated as being performed ‘often’.

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However in spite of the more affirming student evidence, throughout the course of the three years colleagues indicated to the HoF that although they may be engaging with the AfL strategies it was because they had to, rather than because they valued them. By 2006, the LHTL questionnaire indicates that teachers were being driven by external curriculum and assessment requirements, shown in the hugely increased practice and value Performance Orientation scores (1.5/3.3 points respectively). Both practice and value scores by 2006 were the highest of all the faculties and hence had an impact on the whole school average. In all probability the increased Senior Management scrutiny on the faculty’s examination under-performance meant that staff were entirely focused on tests and exams; however, this undermined the endeavours of the HoF to engage staff in encouraging students to become autonomous learners. Certainly the Promoting Learning Autonomy practice and value scores were some of the lowest of all the faculties by 2006 (the declined value score of 13.2 was 2 points below the faculty average). Staff were not committed to the principles of promoting students’ autonomy in learning and their practice also reflected this. It appeared that colleagues were not secure enough in their knowledge and understanding of AfL to risk deviating from the summative assessment-driven regime of teaching and learning, in spite of the fact that AfL is proven to raise attainment and secure student autonomy in their learning. This is an example of the tension of external summative results shifting teachers’ focus away from improving learning to simply improving results. Also, as already shown in the much lower Building Social Capital factor scores – 2 points lower than other faculties in both the practice and value averages by 2006 - the personalities within the team did not encourage collaborative work or frequent open discussions. As a result ideas were
not tried and tested within the public forum, and knowledge and understanding were not able to be refined.

The implementation of AfL strategies in MFL is not without its challenges and some comfort may be taken from the National project where Black et al. (2003, p. 72) report that ‘we have found that Modern Foreign Languages present the greatest challenges in embedding formative assessment in classroom practice’. However Black et al. could find no reason for this and they assert that MFL should offer many opportunities to implement AfL strategies. However, it is probable in the instance of this particular faculty that the faculty’s localised concerns, most notably team composition and lack of cohesion, had more influence in shaping the stated outcomes and in resisting adopting the changes than the nature of the subject itself.

**Technology faculty case study**

The Technology faculty colleagues were very experienced and all members had been in the school for many years however unlike the MFL faculty there was a culture of collaboration and working together to develop and share resources among colleagues. The faculty had a perceived history of being more open to new pedagogy and it became apparent that some of the AfL strategies to be introduced appeared very similar to the faculty’s current practice of assessment; the provision of targets for improvement, peer and self assessment and providing feedback as learning was underway were particular strategies already in place. The fact that Technology comprises subjects which are predominantly practical and based on coursework seemed to be the reason for the greater ease in making the adaptations. The
faculty had prior evidence of extensive comments providing sign-posting for improvement as the students undertook their project work and it also had evidence of clear assessment criteria against which students could monitor their own progress. There was also copious evidence of peer and self-assessment in the front sheets provided to students when they handed their work in at the end of their projects. These strategies enabled students to reflect on, and take responsibility for, the progress and direction of their own learning and this was shown in the *Promoting Learning Autonomy* factor practice scores which in both 2004 and 2006 were marginally above most of the other faculty scores. This evidence was verified by the consultant who in his feedback observed that in Technology AfL practice observed was judged as being very good, especially in the areas of peer and self-assessment, and effective feedback given to students as their projects were underway. The consultant commented that these strengths are particularly apparent when the subject is practical and where there is a large component of coursework, facilitating feedback along the way. The whole school consultant provided useful CPD and supported the already collaborative culture in Technology. He ran two workshops and did individual work with the faculty and was particularly helpful in answering questions about appropriate target-setting which he thought was providing a challenge to some Technology staff.

The HoF reflected that her colleagues were able to embrace AfL strategies more readily because they did not differ too much from their current practice and her approach to implementing the change was more adaptive at the outset than other HoFs'. There was a culture of learning and collaboration within the department at the outset and CPD was well received by staff. The willingness of staff to embrace the AfL strategies was shown in her
interviews in the first two years: ‘People have understood AfL’s concepts – the initial practice was already there’; ‘Much in the schemes of work reflects AfL principles already – it struck me how much of this we do already’ (Yr1). In year 2 she comments that her team were:

‘pretty receptive, pretty keen if they can do something to make things better and to make things easier’... ‘It (targets and stars) was always there but we’re making more of it. It’s more explicit – we tended to do it anyway. It’s been made more evident...there hasn’t been much resistance – it seems like common sense. It is something we’ve always done...I have an enthusiastic faculty’... ‘People are receptive (to AfL) ... the faculty are keen on things to make things better and easier’ (Yr 2).

Technology used a number of structures to support change:

- Laminated ‘Learning objective’ reminders for teachers to prompt them to highlight the learning objectives at the beginning of the lesson
- the inclusion of learning objectives in practical lessons in students’ project booklets were viewed by staff as helpful in highlighting the learning students were undertaking
- the moderation of projects was a useful structure to monitor the written feedback that teachers were giving to their students
- Book Looks helped support the implementation of AfL written feedback strategies and enabled the HoF to provide support and assistance to improve comments.

After a Book Look in Year 1 the HOF highlighted concerns to her colleagues that had emerged and these concerns were then monitored. In monitoring the feedback given to
students the HoF was able to make the judgement that ‘Staff are doing it quite well’ (Yr 2).

She also commented that:

At Key Stage 3 targets and stars are now just second nature. It’s become practice. I’m quite pleased with the marking.

This judgement was confirmed by the 2006 mean item score (3.5; Appendix 7), the second highest of all faculties. Classroom observations were also a structure used and from them she commented that:

Objectives are on the board, peer and self-assessment is in student booklets...in coursework lessons students set their own objectives (Yr 3).

The whole-school AfL consultant provided further structures through the provision of training for the whole faculty on setting appropriate lesson objectives; the HoF reported that ‘these seem quite helpful’ (Yr 3).

However, while there appeared to be very good progress being made in the adaptation of the AfL strategies at the outset of the pilot, by the final year it appeared that there was less commitment to the implementation of the AfL strategies. This is especially highlighted by the LHTL questionnaire results (Appendices 6a, 6b & 6c) for the factor Making Learning Explicit:

- The values and practice scores of colleagues were the second highest of all faculties in 2004 and supports the HoF’s and consultant’s observations that the strategies were valued and were being implemented.
• However, there was a noticeable change by 2006. Both the value and practice scores were the lowest of all faculties and the value scores showed a very distinct decline of 2.6 points over the two year period.

• Responses to individual questions (appendix 7) evaluating AfL strategies showed that all AfL strategies were practised ‘often’ in 2004, bar peer assessment which averaged a response of ‘rarely’ (which was surprising given the evidence of peer assessment in students’ project work and the consultant’s observations of peer assessment in marking). By 2006 there was little change in the individual item scores, except for questioning which showed a decline to ‘rarely’.

It seemed as though Technology had made little progress in developing and implementing AfL strategies over the three year period and in some instances there was a decline. However there was a high starting base for practice scores in 2004 probably because AfL strategies were already in place as the nature of the subjects facilitated easier change – so that there was possibly less room for improvement by 2006; also other faculties had ‘caught up’ and their practice had improved. The HoF offered an explanation herself and attributed the change in values to a new member of the faculty; unlike in English, the presence of newcomers was not positive. The arrival of the new colleague who had not been part of the initiative from the outset meant that the HoF’s style ‘switched a bit more to bureaucratic because I couldn’t spend a lot of time explaining 3 years of training to him and why we were doing that’. The new colleague resisted changing his practice and he seemed to affect the way the team operated. The HoF noted her frustration in having to embrace an adoptive approach which countered how she would like to lead:

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Previous to this, there was such a stable team; we all felt very similarly, and this will always be a problem because they haven’t been through the training and the process…At times I have been so frustrated with him’ (Yr 3).

The suggested explanations that one Technology colleague skewed the *Making Learning Explicit* values data with a return of very low value scores or, as asserted by the HoF, that the newcomer had a significant impact on the team in just the space of the year affecting value responses in the third year is surprising and not entirely convincing given the large decline in value scores. However this explanation is supported when looking at the *Building Social Capital* factor scores, in Section B of the questionnaire, which evaluates the extent to which teachers learn, work, support and talk to each other. In 2004 both the value and practice scores were some of the highest scores of all the faculties. In year 2 the HoF in her interview stated that there was a culture of close collaboration, sharing of materials and discussion when colleagues were involved together in rewriting the student project booklets to include peer and self-assessment, and to ensure that the lesson objectives were explicit to the students. The HoF felt in the first two years there was also collaborative professional development shown in the heightened discussions about AfL in faculty meetings:

- AfL has come up at most faculty meetings – we’ve constantly revisited concepts (Technology, Yr 1);

- AfL is a standing item in meetings for discussion (Technology, Yr 2).

- People have become more confident in objectives – we used to have a lot of discussion and argument (Technology, Yr 3).
By 2006, both practice and value *Building Social Capital* factor scores were some of the lowest and the practice scores had declined by a large 2.8 points. Colleagues were apparently not operating as closely as a team as they had done. Where over time other faculties seemed to develop a closer culture of support and collaboration, in Technology staff seemed to feel there was less collaboration and the HoF attributed this to the newcomer. However, there were other factors which may have had an influence on the changes in these values and practice scores. Two Technology colleagues who played a pivotal role in the faculty assumed whole school responsibilities at the end of the second year of the pilot and their attentions and energies were no longer concentrated in the Technology faculty; their base was also now on the other side of the school. There could therefore have been erosion in the collegiality of the faculty because these colleagues were no longer central to the cohesion of the faculty. Also in the final year, steps were taken to remove the mandatory taking of Technology as an option choice at GCSE. Technology colleagues were disgruntled by this move as it heralded a decline in their student base, particularly of the brighter students who indicated a greater interest in other alleged more academic subjects rather than the practical Technology subjects. It is not possible to identify precisely how this affected value and practice scores, particularly for *Making Learning Explicit* but it meant a loss of goodwill and this could have possibly affected how committed colleagues were to prioritising school initiatives – most notably AfL. A further anomaly is that the *Promoting Learning Autonomy* practice and value scores did, in contrast to the *Making Learning Explicit* scores, show an improvement over the 2 years (1.1/0.4 respectively). So in spite of valuing and practising the AfL strategies less teachers felt they were promoting student learning autonomy more. Further interviews with individual
Technology staff would have been very helpful to provide a more in-depth explanation of these anomalies and to explore why the reasons why a colleague was both resistant to change and may have had such an effect on the faculty cohesion. It would have also been useful if the HoF had been able in her interview to articulate her reluctance to help the new member of staff to develop his practice and values - although this would probably have highlighted confidential issues which would have breeched the ethics of this research. There are also questions raised about how firmly Afl strategies had been embedded when considering other data as will be discussed next.

There were particular anomalies when considering student data. Technology Students’ judgements of Afl strategies from the student questionnaire (Appendix 11a) were much more varied than other faculties’ when comparing them with teachers’, consultants’ and the HoF’s judgements about practice in Technology. In fact students evaluated their Technology teachers’ implementation of Afl strategies consistently lower than those in the other case study faculties. Certainly when considering students’ perspectives of Technology’s endeavours in the third year the extent of embedded practice in Technology is in question. What is surprising is that students did not readily recognise Afl strategies in the faculty although clear evidence to support the practice was noted by me, the whole-school Afl consultant and the HoF who observed lessons in the faculty. Only 31% of students in the questionnaire at KS3 said that objectives were regularly set in Technology. This is in spite of Technology teachers indicating in the individual LHTL questionnaire Making Learning Explicit scores for objective setting that they were setting objectives ‘often’ in both 2004 and 2006 (3.15 and 3.3, some of the highest faculty scores in each year.
However, in reflecting back to the first couple of years, the HoF had noted the setting of effective objectives was an area requiring professional development for her colleagues: ‘Objectives and outcomes originally caused confusion. There is still uncertainty but people are getting far better’ (Yr 3). The consultant also identified in the first year that an area for development was in understanding what a clear objective is and the making of objectives explicit to students.

Peer assessment was not seen to be undertaken by teachers (noted as ‘rarely’ used by teachers in 2004 & 2006 in the individual questions – Appendix 7) and was only recognised as being used by 4.4% of students. What is very surprising is the very limited recognition by students of the other AfL strategies when there was clear evidence of the strategies successfully in place. Overall only 8.9% of students felt they undertook self-assessment of their work and only 4.4% recognised teachers’ use of targets and stars in their feedback to students. This is surprising given the evidence observed by me, the consultant and the HoF. These data were explored in the interviews with students who indicated that this multi-faceted faculty had varied practice across the four different subject areas within the faculty and this could have led to these variances. A more apt explanation is that that the practice is already routine and students did not clearly see any changes or recognise the strategies as different to their previous experience in Technology.

The similarity of previous practice to the new AfL strategies, because of the nature of the subject, meant that Technology was able to embrace the initiative with relative ease at the
outset of the pilot. However, although Technology colleagues felt, certainly at the outset of the pilot, that they were already implementing the strategies of AfL it may be that they were merely implementing mechanical applications of them, rather than enabling a true transformation of students’ learning. The presence of one new colleague appeared to affect the cohesion and the collaborative culture within the faculty although the changing roles within the team and the changing status of the subject may have also have had an effect on the team and resulted in there being less value placed on, and less practice of, AfL by the third year. Had there been more time available it would have been useful to investigate more closely the individual faculty members’ perspectives on AfL strategies and on their perceptions of the changing dynamics within the team; certainly the discrepancies of student observations in comparison to HoF, consultant and my observations would have been illuminating to explore in greater depth.

**Section 2: Examining change across the faculties and across the organisation**

The case studies above provide detailed insight into how change was implemented in each of the four faculties chosen. The following paragraphs outline the emerging themes from the case studies about:

a) factors shaping the leadership approach chosen

b) the transformation of values and practice through structures and change of culture

Data is also drawn from other faculties in support of the case study findings, where appropriate. Subsequent paragraphs draw on case study data but also examine the impact of
whole school structures and the changing culture in order to bring about change across the organisation as a whole.

a) Factors shaping the leadership approach chosen

Three clear themes emerged from the case studies that influenced the approach used, or which gave insights into why there was a change of approach during the course of the pilot:

i. staff understanding and value of the initiative

ii. team composition

iii. the similarity of previous practice to the change initiative and nature of the subject

i. Staff understanding and value of the initiative

At the end of the first year of the pilot, evidence showed that the HoFs' leadership approach chosen was in the main adoptive with its corresponding authoritative/coercive leadership style. All but the English HoF intimated that their preference of approach was adaptive with its affiliative/democratic style but that in most instances this could not be secured because of the amount of resistance shown by colleagues and the chequered adoption of the agreed strategies of AfL by staff. Two explanations for the resistance and variable adoption emerged clearly at the end of both the first and the second year HoF interviews:

- colleagues did not always understand the initiative

- they did not wish to embrace the initiative because they did not value its principles and it challenged the comfort of their current practice.
Illustrations of these explanations in the first year HoF interviews include an attitude amongst some staff that they were either so experienced or they were not teaching KS3 when AfL was piloted so that they did not need to make any changes; alternatively AfL required a very different way of working compared to how staff had worked before. In other instances (English and Science) staff sometimes appeared to ‘talk the talk’ (English HoF interviews, Yr 1) but often simply weren’t applying the strategies because they hadn’t understood formative/summative assessment requirements. As the research proceeded it became apparent that some HoFs themselves did not feel confident in their understanding of the initiative and it may be that they therefore found it difficult to ‘sell’ or explain to their faculties. As late as the third year of the pilot the Maths HoF stated in an email, following training on the setting of objectives, that she had had ‘an ‘aha’ experience; it’s as though everything has fallen in to place’. In English and Science where the HoFs had a clear understanding of AfL and its principles they felt confident in organising and delivering their own and consultants’ professional development within their faculty meetings. They were also able to encourage colleagues’ collaborative peer assessment of each other’s practice. However, while the Science HoF in the final year of the pilot used the adaptive approach and a more collaborative leadership style as her colleagues’ understanding of AfL grew, the English HoF did not alter her leadership style or approach. It seemed that her adoptive stance is more indicative of her inherent autocratic or coercive leadership style than her response to factors within the faculty. MFL colleagues even in the third year did not value or resisted trying to understand the AfL principles and the HoF retained the adoptive approach throughout the course of the pilot. By the third year Maths...
and Humanities HoFs also changed from an adoptive approach to an adaptive approach in response to their colleagues’ improved value and understanding of AfL.

ii. Team composition

The composition of the team made a significant difference to how case study HoFs were able to move the initiative on and the approach they took and this was replicated in the other faculties as well. In some instances HoFs changed their approach to become adoptive in response to their team members’ negative reactions and in other instances new members were pivotal in changing the culture and shifting attitudes towards the initiative within the team resulting in the leader’s approach becoming adaptive. The advent of just one new member, as in Technology, sometimes provided the necessary critical mass to shape, if not shift, values of the rest of the team. Colleagues’ experience, age, length of time in the team, responsibility in the school, openness to change, personal qualities and attitude were all aspects of team composition which shaped the HoFs’ leadership. The more supportive the team of the changes, the greater the tendency of the HoF to embrace an adaptive approach in implementing change and leading more collaboratively; the converse was also true. This was illustrated in all faculties bar English where the adoptive approach was retained throughout the course of the three years - in spite of her team composition changing significantly, and new colleagues valuing the initiative and showing clear evidence of change of practice. This also indicates that it is her own personal characteristics which governed how she led rather than a response to other factors.
iii. The similarity of previous practice to the change initiative and nature of the subject

The nature of the subjects meant that previous practice, in both Technology and C & EA, had strong similarities to the strategies and expectations of AfL. Technology and C & EA commented that the subjects in their faculties were already employing some of the AfL strategies prior to AfL’s introduction into the school. As a result there was less resistance once AfL was seen to support their current practice and at the outset of the pilot both HoFs used an adaptive approach. Data in the Technology case study were supported by that in the C&EA faculty. For example, in the subject of PE, target and objective setting had been implemented for many years and the HoF commented that ‘we were already setting objectives because they had learning goals...old lesson plans had learning objectives/outcomes but they weren’t being flagged up’; she noted that as a result ‘you haven’t had to force people to do AfL (Yr 3)’. She observed that her faculty comprises practical subjects where she felt ‘it is easier to question effectively’ and that ‘in Art a learning goal which is already typed out for a particular project might be put in front of a piece of work or sketchbook because there are very explicit things that they have got to tick – because of the nature of the subject’ (C & EA, Yr 3). In both faculties objectives were clearly outlined in lessons and at the outset of projects, because students needed guidance as they worked alone on their projects or practical activities which often stretched over extended periods of time. Feedback, pointing to improvements to be made as projects were underway, was given often in both faculties (Appendix 7) and students were involved in self assessment of their projects as their work was undertaken throughout the course of their assignments. Students had always been involved in self assessment as they proceeded.
through their practical and project work. The data however, did show varying perspectives on the practice and values of AfL in both faculties. Student responses in their questionnaire (Appendix 11a) returned some of the lowest scores for almost all of the individual AfL strategies in both faculties. Certainly observations undertaken by the HoF, me and the consultant all showed clear evidence of effective examples particularly of target-setting and self-assessment; objective-setting although always evident in observations did not necessarily effectively support students’ learning. Students may therefore, as already indicated, be not recognising the AfL strategies because they were so embedded in their daily experience of Technology and C & EA. However, the LHTL questionnaire individual item data (Appendix 7) also indicated that colleagues were not as confident about all the strategies (particularly at the outset of the pilot in 2004 in C & EA for peer/self assessment and questioning) as the HoF might have thought – even if they had been previously practised. Queries are raised about whether the existing practice, although it made for supposed easier implementation of AfL and less resistance from colleagues, did assist and ensure the embedding of the new strategies – and whether there was indeed a change of practice. Rather than implementing the strategies as a continuation of what they had previously done, as argued earlier, they could be merely mechanical applications, which had no value or little impact on students’ learning.

Pedder and James (2007) assert that there may be something in the nature of the subjects PE, Creative Arts, English and Modern Foreign languages which makes the adoption of AfL, and thus the promotion of learning autonomy, easier. Conversely AfL practices, and the promotion of learning autonomy, were more difficult in the subjects of Science and
Mathematics. An in-depth statistical comparison between the subject differences in my data and the LHTL data was not made but broad-brush trends are considered in the case study subjects. The subject of English appeared to match the trend, identified in Pedder and James’ (2007) research, of having high Making Learning Explicit, Promoting Learning Autonomy scores and lower Performance Orientation practice scores when compared to the other case study faculties’ scores. (C & EA, also grouped with English in Pedder and James’ research showed a similar trend in 2006.) Science also matched the LHTL trend by 2006 of having low Making Learning Explicit and Promoting Learning Autonomy (the lowest) scores and a high Performance Orientation (the second highest) score of all faculties. This would substantiate the assertion that there is something in the nature of these subjects which respectively supports (English requires discursive and individualist responses) or hinders (Science prioritises the importance of tests) the adoption of AfL strategies. MFL did not match the LHTL findings and had some of the lowest scores of all the faculties in the factors Making Learning Explicit and Promoting Learning Autonomy. It did have, like the LHTL, very high levels of Performance Orientation scores. As already stated this is probably more a reflection of the issues surrounding the faculty’s team composition which would have had a greater effect on the implementation of the AfL strategies than the nature of the subject itself. Technology, which in the LHTL project is characterised by a strong focus on assessment of learning, did not show the same trend in this case study; in fact it had one of the lower Performance Orientation practice scores by 2006 of all the faculties in my research. Also unlike in the LHTL research there was a negligible difference between the Promoting Learning Autonomy practice and value scores and Technology had one of the higher Promoting Learning Autonomy practice scores of all
the faculties by 2006. It may be that this particular Technology faculty had developed some of the AfL strategies in advance of the introduction of AfL into the school because of its initially cohesive team as well as its extensive practical and project work. However, it is uncertain why the practical nature of Technology, with its propensity to encourage student autonomy, did not reflect itself in the data for Technology in the same way in the LHTL research. It may be, as alluded to previously, that this particular faculty did indeed demonstrate the principles of AfL but that these were mechanical applications rather than deep-seated changes.

b) The transformation of values and practice through structures and culture

Data showed that change was embedded (transforming values and practice to a new system of doing things) through structures by means of the adoptive approach, as well as by working within or changing the culture of an organisation, utilising an adaptive approach thus supporting Swaffield and MacBeath’s (2006) assertions of the need for change to embrace both structure and culture. The case studies showed the intertwining and mutually symbiotic nature of the structures and culture but also highlights the complexity of individual variables within the faculties. In the case studies each HoF commented on the structures and the changing culture within their own faculties to secure change. However, these were manifested in different ways in the different faculties – partly because of the variables of staff knowledge/understanding, team composition and nature of the subject - and each had different outcomes. For instance Science made use of the structures of classroom peer observation introduced by the Science consultant which facilitated a very
strong shift towards a more open culture of collaboration between peers and whole faculty discussion. On the other hand the MFL consultant’s classroom observation structures generated a perception of greater accountability and there was little reference to closer collaboration and support generated by paired observations. In English collaborative observation structures enabled a greater culture of openness, discussion and peer support, but the HoF’s leadership style and use of assessment structures to monitor and evaluate effective teaching at the same time created a culture of much greater accountability. Whole school structures were also used to support change and as a result HoFs noted some change in the culture within the organisation as a whole as outlined next.

**Structures used across the whole school**

Whole school structures to support the changes were implemented across the organisation by Senior Management. Whole school structures which were cited by all the HoFs in their interviews included:

- stipulated faculty expectations as to which of the AfL strategies would be focused on for implementation (agreed on within the HoF forum by Senior Management and HoFs in years 1,2 & 3);
- SLT directed Book Looks (years 1 & 2);
- Performance Management observations (years 1,2 & 3);
- drop-in observations (year 3)
- AfL Performance Management targets (years 2 & 3).

It emerged from the case studies that these whole school structures were viewed as fulfilling two linked purposes:
i) as a measure of coercion to enforce and monitor practice

ii) to evaluate the extent of the agreed practice.

There were far more references to structures cited by all HoFs in the final year than in the first and second years which is significant because it reflects the movement of the pilot from being experimental to being mandatory. The structures in the third year underpinned the expectation and imperative that colleagues adopted specific AfL strategies creating a culture of teaching and learning accountability.

It became clear that SLT-initiated monitoring structures had to be driven and constantly revisited and profiled by Senior Leaders - in particular the Book Looks and lesson observations. In the first and second year Book Looks were part of a SLT termly whole-school scrutiny of the marking of students’ books, successfully undertaken within the HoF faculty meeting time with clear guidelines and outcomes. The Book Look reports in November 2004, reviewing the implementation of the agreed faculty strategies of adopting AfL, indicated that the faculty members were by and large implementing the agreed whole-school formative assessment feedback strategies and were experimenting with their own agreed strategies. At the end of the second year, all HoFs cited Book Looks in their interviews as a means for monitoring and evaluating written assessment practice. However, by the third year SLT delegated the responsibility for Book Looks, at appointed times with definite structure and outcomes, to HoFs to oversee and implement. This however was not as successful a means of monitoring or evaluating practice as the clear SLT structured Book Looks of the previous two years. It was not just the case study HoFs (Science and MFL)
who noted that their own monitoring and evaluation through Book Looks had not been systematically undertaken:

'I haven't been very good at that – I have picked up books informally' (Maths);

'Book Looks will be more systematic next year – I will farm out (checking) to subject leaders' (Humanities).

Certainly where Senior Leadership did drive and monitor closely any introduced structural change, there were notable improvements in teachers' AfL practice as evidenced in the SLT drop-in lesson observations. When optional lesson observations in the first two years were agreed by HoFs, as part of the Professional Review Programme to encourage professional dialogue and development, only three HoFs undertook them. This changed in year 3 with the advent of the new Headteacher who instituted clearly defined whole school structures to both monitor and evaluate all teaching and learning. Drop-in lesson observations were made mandatory and lessons were monitored as part of the whole-school SLT strategic plan to improve teaching and learning and to monitor compliance with agreed strategies. Observations were undertaken by SLT members with HoFs and were the most frequently cited structural change noted by HoFs in their final year interviews. HoFs drew on these observations to provide tangible evidence of the extent of AfL practice in their areas but also to monitor practice and ensure greater accountability. Performance Management observations, in place from year 1, as well as generic Performance Management targets for all HoFs' management of the implementation of AfL in years 2 and 3, were also whole school structures used particularly to monitor and evaluate practice and hold people to account. They were effective in that they were measurable and that there was tangible evidence of outcomes. Whole school structures also demonstrated Senior Management's
support for the initiative and were viewed as part of ‘SLT’s vision and drive to support HoFs’ (C &EA, Yr 3). One HoF felt that drop-in lesson observations had been a supportive structure, as well as generic Performance Management targets:

I think the links into Performance Management has been a big issue. Prior to that Performance Management was this thing that was added on and didn’t necessarily link into whole school issues – or didn’t have to (C &EA, Yr 3).

In most instances the whole school structures were welcomed by HoFs as they provided them with Senior Management support for the AfL agenda in their own areas; it also provided a defined focus for what they were to do. Structures also had an influencing effect on the culture of the organisation as is considered next.

**Culture change: a culture of accountability, a culture of discussing**

Structures introduced had an impact on the accountability culture of the whole organisation as well as within the individual case study faculties. In particular in the third year one of the other HoFs also observed how the new Headteacher had brought in accountability structures:

I think just the constant nagging and returning back...the fact that Senior Management have continued through with the learning agenda and assessment...there’s no way of getting out of it – they (colleagues) can see that it’s been followed up and that it’s being done (C & EA, Yr 3).

One particular thing that has worked for me is that it has been part of a whole school process and that it’s had to happen. That’s very different to trying to move something forward which doesn’t have to happen (C & EA, Yr 3).
Whole school structures – drop-in lesson observations, new policies, new observation grid expectations - provided a clear focus and expectations were monitored closely. These whole school structures were not necessarily seen in a negative light (apart from by MFL staff), but rather as potentially liberating in assisting the Middle Leadership to encourage at least a change of practice – if not values – in their own areas. The C & EA HoF’s insights are particularly illuminating and support Swaffield and MacBeath’s (2006) assertion that structures initially may lead to initial antagonism but through persuasion, demonstration and intervention people may come to embrace the new ways - and indeed a new culture may emerge:

As long as ‘bulldozing’ is done with support...I don’t think even if they might complain it’s a lot of work, that there hasn’t been a supportive environment...And then on top of that because we’ve had to do it, they’ve also seen it actually working in their own classrooms’ (C & EA, Yr 3).

On the other hand, whole school as well as faculty discussions and lively debate about assessment were also seen as part of the cultural change within the school – both within and between faculties. HoFs’ interviews in the other faculties over each of the three years provided insights into the increasingly extensive and useful discussion within their faculties:

Discussion in meeting time was used to assess the progress of agreed AfL strategies (Maths, Yr 1).

There is more discussion – staff are more interested in initiatives (C & EA, Yr 2).
(there was a) raised level of debate in the summer faculty meetings and an improvement on the dialogue (Humanities, Yr 2).

This sharpened the focus on teaching and learning in the whole school which was a significant cultural shift. It emerged from HoF interviews that these discussions were important in addressing the change agenda for a number of reasons:

- they were used as a means to debate how the AfL strategies could or should be incorporated
- they provided a forum for colleagues to articulate their concerns
- they allowed HoFs to gauge their colleagues' understanding – or lack – of AfL strategies
- they allowed for monitoring colleagues’ application of AfL strategies

It must be noted that there is a decline over time in the scores at the whole-school level from the LHTL questionnaire, Section B (Professional Learning) factor, *Building Social Capital* data, which evaluates the extent that colleagues collaborate through learning, supporting, and talking to each other. The value/practice scores are the third/second highest scores respectively of all the factors in 2004. By 2006, however, while the value scores increased by 2.5 points, the practice scores declined by 2.3 points. This can be explained by some colleagues in 2006 not answering the practice questions in the Section B: Teacher Professional Learning which affected the factor averages, particularly in Technology and Maths. On investigating, HoFs reported that some new colleagues in 2006 did not feel able to or comfortable about commenting on their colleagues’ practice in these questions/areas.

This anomaly stands in contrast to the HoF evidence, already cited in the case studies (bar

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MFL), as to how AfL brought colleagues at all levels together in animated and reflective discussion. The whole-school AfL consultant also verified the role of whole school discussions in refining ideas and practice. Having delivered an after-school INSET which was attended voluntarily by almost two-thirds of all staff he commented that ‘the quality of conversation was a couple of notches above other schools. All were asking how can I get better rather than why should I do this’ (Yr2).

HoFs also commented that discussion led to the development of a culture of greater purposefulness and unity in the teaching and learning focus of the school. This agreement about the clarity of direction can be best demonstrated in the large increase of 5.6 points in the 2006 LHTL questionnaire on the 2004 whole school practice scores in the Section C (Management) Developing a Sense of Where We are Going (see Appendix 6c). The large increase in the practice score reflects the new Headteacher’s much clearer vision, tighter structures and firmer expectations, articulated in a school development plan and in communication, all of which had been absent under the previous incumbent when the 2004 questionnaire was administered. Thus structures, as shown, were a useful means for HoFs to monitor and evaluate the implementation of change but they were also an important contributing factor in securing culture change of both greater accountability and greater collaboration about teaching and learning both within the organisation as a whole and in individual faculty areas.

Management of change: transformation of values & practice through CPD
CPD straddles both structural and cultural organisational change and was an essential tool for Senior and Middle Management to assist in embedding AfL across the school. CPD was

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imperative for securing change in both teachers' values and practice. The school leadership's management of CPD was evaluated by the LHTL questionnaire, Section C (School Management Practices and Systems) factor, *Supporting Professional Development*. The whole school practice scores for this factor verify that colleagues have seen an improvement in the support received for professional development since 2004 as practice scores rose by over 5 points (from 59.1 to 64.2) – although this is not necessarily related just to CPD in AfL. This increase matches almost identically the improvement reflected in the national LHTL data (5.0 point improvement from 59.5 to 65), matching the LHTL sample average (see Table 4.4 below).

**Table 4.4**

**School and LHTL Research Questionnaire responses in 2006 (and 2004): Section C (Management) scaled factor scores**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>School scores</th>
<th>LHTL scores</th>
<th>School scores</th>
<th>LHTL scores</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deciding and acting</td>
<td>47.0 (47.0)</td>
<td>62.49 (57.60)</td>
<td>65.00 (59.92)</td>
<td>64.2 (59.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>together (Practice)</td>
<td>/28</td>
<td>/28</td>
<td>/28</td>
<td>/28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deciding and acting</td>
<td>78.1 (72.9)</td>
<td>80.9 (79.9)</td>
<td>77.2 (73.9)</td>
<td>80.6 (81.44)</td>
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<tr>
<td>together (Values) /28</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing a</td>
<td>62.4 (56.8)</td>
<td>71.54 (69.57)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sense of where we are</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>going (Practice) /28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing a</td>
<td>77.7 (74.8)</td>
<td>81.73 (82.12)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>sense of where we are</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>going (Values) /28</td>
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There was also a 3.3 point increase in the school data in how teachers valued CPD support provided by managers. Whole staff training, consultant support and collaborative CPD
were all strategies cited in the HoF interviews which were used to support colleagues’ CPD and are considered in the following paragraphs.

**Whole-school staff training**

Since there is a significant relationship between organisational conditions and the successful promotion of learning how to learn (Pedder, 2006), a great responsibility rests with the leadership of the organisation to support teacher learning and understanding of any change initiative. Senior Management profiled AfL as the teaching and learning focus and prioritised AfL in whole staff training over the course of the three years. Staff recognised this and the whole school improvements already cited in practice scores for Section C’s factor *Supporting Professional Development* (5.0) and *Developing Sense of Where We Are Going* (5.6) hint at a pleasing improvement in the supportive organisational conditions which sustain learning how to learn. HoF comments also recognised both the SLT drive and the whole school INSET opportunities provided to support teacher development as being effective supports for driving change: e.g. ‘SLT’s vision and drive to support HoFs, and reinforcement through good quality INSET’ (C & EA HoF, Yr3). The external speakers and county consultants’ input at these INSET opportunities were viewed very positively by staff as reported by HoF in their interviews:

What it has done is made me avoid closed questions which seem now ‘out of the ark’. This has come as a direct result out of AfL discussions and attendance at consultants’ sessions/input. We came away from the consultants’ sessions very impressed (Humanities, Yr 3).

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The combination of the whole school pilot fuelled by ideas from the Black Box and the staff INSET day on AFL...triggered staff cooperation because they could see it was such a sensible and logical set of strategies (C & EA, Yr3).

Collaborative CPD and consultant support

The EPPI Review (Cordingley et al., 2003) findings indicate in particular that collaboration and coaching – through in-classroom observation – generate positive effects for both staff and students. My school’s LHTL questionnaire responses returned similar results to that of the LHTL research which concludes that while there was commitment of staff to collaborative exchanges with their colleagues outside of the classroom context, classroom-based collaborative teacher learning practices were less enthusiastically embraced. By 2006 there are high practice/value scores in the two teacher professional collaborative activities which take place outside the classroom for the factors Building Social Capital (76.5/77.1), and Valuing Learning (89.9/90.6). The Inquiry factor, which is particularly linked to the promotion of student learning autonomy, however returned lower school practice/value scores of 57.7/61 respectively. This trend of much higher scores for outside classroom based collaborative teacher learning practices rather than in-classroom learning practices are replicated in the LHTL national research outcomes, too (see Table 4.5 below).
Table 4.5

School and LHTL Questionnaire responses: Section B (Teacher Learning) scaled factor scores

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<tr>
<td>LHTL scores 2004 (2002)</td>
<td>57.5 (55.9)</td>
<td>61.6 (61.1)</td>
<td>76.5 (78.8)</td>
<td>77.1 (74.6)</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LHTL scores 2004 (2002)</td>
<td>65.40 (58.67)</td>
<td>67.69 (66.56)</td>
<td>81.34 (79.94)</td>
<td>80.34 (80.91)</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LHTL scores 2004 (2002)</td>
<td>76.0 (72.6)</td>
<td>76.7 (72.8)</td>
<td>89.9 (87.1)</td>
<td>90.6 (86.0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were, however, encouraging Critical and Responsive Learning factor improvements (3.4 practice and 3.9 value scores) which can in part be attributed to the management structures and support provided by a whole school AfL consultant and AfL subject consultants. These consultant visits were arranged by Senior Management and included the introduction of paired observations and coaching in the faculty of Science - outlined in the Science case study. These consultant observations undertaken in Science with a teacher were shared among the HoF forum. The three-way coaching was emulated by the English faculty and facilitated reflection, self-evaluation and aided experimentation; as a result there were as already cited, certainly in English, notable corresponding practice improvements for the factors Making Learning Explicit, Inquiry and Critical and Responsive Learning. Three-way coaching seemed to have a positive impact on changing the culture of learning in these two faculties; however coaching was not adopted in the other faculties even though it appeared to have positive benefits. These structures, in particular consultants working alongside colleagues in their classrooms and paired lesson
observations, were a significant culture shift in the school where previously a teacher’s classroom was his/her sanctuary. Much more work will need to be done to encourage a wide-spread acceptance of classroom observation and coaching as a constructive and non-threatening means to refine and improve practice. Also as in the LHTL national project, teachers did not attribute high value to research nor did they use research as a source of learning. Although progress has been made in collaborative learning, there is still much work to be done in changing the culture of teacher learning as inquiry, in particular through joint research activity as a way of improving AfL practice. Senior and Middle Leaders need to ensure that organisational structures and conditions support the development of in-classroom collaboration by securing time and resources. They must also recognise that the changes will not be instant and that ‘it is a long term commitment rather than a short term initiative’ (Pedder, 2006, p198).

Nonetheless, the consultants had an extremely important role as a mirror for Middle and Senior Leaders to reflect back to them the effectiveness of their strategies in securing progress of the AfL initiative and its outcomes. The AfL whole-school consultant who worked with each of the HoFs commented that mostly there had been notable progress made in teacher values as well as teacher practice although there were variations from faculty to faculty. Overall the whole-school consultant’s comments about staff progress in embracing and applying AfL supports and triangulates staff responses in the LHTL questionnaire. On all the HoFs he noted that ‘you have a lot of HoF who are up with teaching and learning…I have seen in every single case that HoF are wanting to lead in learning and want to get better in teaching and learning. They lead by example in that way.

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They don’t see themselves solely as managers’. This in particular is testimony to the progress made in securing change through the HoFs’ leadership.

The success of Middle Managers’ management strategies at a whole school level

Whatever the complexities of the change movement of particular faculties, the school’s progress in securing change needs to be considered as a totality, particularly in order to relate the whole organisational change to an external benchmark (LHTL schools). Over the course of the three year pilot, Middle Leaders’ endeavours led to an encouraging shift in teachers’ assessment values and practice of AfL strategies when viewed across the organisation as a whole and the next paragraphs examine the evidence for this. Individual shifts in faculty scores were considered in detail in the individual faculty case studies.

Whole school change was demonstrated by:

- improvements in the practice and value factor scores for assessment shown in Section A of the LHTL questionnaire
- students’, consultants’ and OFSTED’s observations of changes gleaned from questionnaires, interviews and reports

A useful benchmark for evaluating the changes in my organisation is to compare them to the results of the LHTL questionnaire. The following table 4.6 considers the scores of my school (in 2004/2006) against those of the national LHTL project (in 2002/2004) for Section A of the questionnaire which examined assessment values and practices. It is interesting to note that my school’s factor scores are in most cases very similar to the LHTL.
national first year sample scores; in many instance the change in scores over the two year period is also very similar.

**Table 4.6**

School and LHTL Project Research LHTL Questionnaire responses in 2006 (and 2004):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School scores</th>
<th>MLE (Practice)</th>
<th>MLE (Values)</th>
<th>PLA (Practice)</th>
<th>PLA (Values)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006 (2004)</td>
<td>80.2 (76.5)</td>
<td>79.4 (80.3)</td>
<td>65.1 (57.8)</td>
<td>67.9 (63.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 (2002)</td>
<td>82.53 (80.91)</td>
<td>84.26 (84.71)</td>
<td>62.16 (58.23)</td>
<td>70.96 (69.64)</td>
</tr>
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The following paragraphs outline first a summary and then an elaboration of the outcomes along with data from students and others.

1. *Making Learning Explicit* practice and value scores were some of the highest of the whole LHTL questionnaire for both my school and the national sample. There was a +3.7 point practice improvement (compared to 1.7 points in the LHTL project) but a small negative change (-0.8 points) in the value teachers placed on these strategies (a similar negative -0.45 point change in the LHTL project value scores).

As might be expected when considering the lower starting point on *Making Learning Explicit* practice results, my school makes slightly more progress over the 2 years than in the national LHTL sample. These results reflect the primary focus of the work at a whole school level (certainly in the first two years) of the HoFs’ endeavours to change colleagues’ practice through the introduction of structures and culture change. Often it was the assessment strategies associated with *Making Learning Explicit* that were emphasised in...
training and lesson observations, in particular the setting of appropriate targets on students’ marked work. It is not surprising therefore to note that these improvements in colleagues’ practice and that the *Making Learning Explicit* practice scores are the highest outcomes of the LHTL questionnaire.

Students’ interview comments and questionnaire responses triangulated the school’s LHTL questionnaire outcomes of the *Making Learning Explicit* factor and provided further evidence of Leaders’ efforts to secure change. From year 1 they had noted a change in the way their teachers were marking and praised their improved practice:

Teachers use little reminders this year more. They didn’t do it last year…(Teachers) just gave marks and ticks last year. Ticks weren’t very helpful because you know where you’ve got it right but you want to know improvements’. (Student 1 - 2004)

Last year they just looked at your work and put a tick on it. This year most teachers actually take in the books and mark them and I feel they are looking at the work more than going around the class and ticking it every month. (Student 3 - 2004)

Some teachers have given me targets and I’ve taken them seriously and I’ve really, really tried and I’ve completed the target (Student 2, 2004).

While on the whole motivating, students in the first year outlined that targets could also be demotivating when used improperly - including not recognising target improvements, lack of discussion of targets with students, and targets which were lacking precise detail to enable students to make their own improvements:

She makes comments about the length of my work…I do how much I think but then they ask for a little bit more (Student 1).
Teachers don’t talk to you and don’t explain what should be done, they just give a target. I had it in Geography a lot. I understand (the target) but I don’t know how to do it. For example, how do I put more detail into my work – where or what detail? (Student 2).

Last year I got the same target to improve my presentation and I tried but I just got the same target again (Student 3).

Instead students suggested that targets should signpost suggested improvements against assessment criteria and needed to be explained properly with sufficient detail to respond to (Yr 8 – 2006). Specific teacher action following the giving of targets for improvement had a mixed response in the student questionnaire undertaken in 2006 (Appendix 11b) and, given the profile afforded them in the school over the 3 years, this was disappointing. 40% of all students looked back to the targets and endeavoured to incorporate them in the next piece of work; 30% recorded them in their homework diary and looked at them when doing subsequent work and 20% kept them in a file for future reference. 22% of students do not refer to the targets again at all. The questionnaire’s ambivalent results seem to show that in some instances teachers may have been giving targets but that their usefulness was in question. This hints at teachers fulfilling their obligations to provide comments to students indicating areas for improvement, as stipulated by whole school expectations, but that their practice did not always capture the essence of AfL; the provision of targets did not always provide enabling pointers for students to move their learning forward. Students recommended in the 2006 interviews that for targets to be truly successful targets had to be revisited:

You must practise your target and take time to think about the target and use it wisely (Yr 8 student).

Targets must be returned to and you must look back at the targets (Yr 12 student).
You really have to transfer the target to the next piece of work (Yr 10 student).

These problems reflect the point already illustrated in the case studies, where colleagues may have been mechanistic in their use of strategies (following the letter of AfL), rather than a deeper change in practices (the spirit of AfL). This latter change is of course necessary for student autonomy, considered below. Nonetheless the OFSTED report in 2006 (‘Teaching and Learning’ section; OFSTED, 2006, p4) judged that the detailed and accurate assessment provided very good information to improve, and that ‘Teachers often use questions well to test students' knowledge and provide them with good opportunities to express their views’. Inspectors in an interview with me also commented that teachers have a good command of AfL and that it was well integrated into the teaching in the school. Further work however needed to be undertaken to give students enough time to collect their thoughts and to plan their answers so that their answers are able to present a true reflection of their knowledge and abilities.

Students had noted evidence of objectives being set in most of the faculties - again confirming HoFs’ assertions about progress being made in the setting of objectives. The third year student questionnaire responses (Appendix 11a & 11b; see Appendix 10b for the questions) in question 3 predominantly indicated that learning objectives were helpful in guiding students as to what their teachers were expecting them to do and learn in the lesson (67% of respondents). The majority of the students interviewed in the final year, 2006, confirmed what the questionnaires revealed. They felt that the setting of objectives ‘can be really useful’ (Yr 10); ‘they really help – our friends think that, too’ (Yr 8) because ‘you
know what you’ve got to do and you can refer back to the objectives in the lessons (Yr 8) and also you ‘know exactly what you should know at the end of the lesson’ (Yr 11).

**ii. Promoting Learning Autonomy** practice returned the greatest improvement of my school’s entire questionnaire (7.3 points – see Table 4.6 above), larger than the national LHTL sample score (3.93). Staff also had come to value *Promoting Learning Autonomy* much more, too (+4.0 points). Nonetheless, when comparing the second questionnaire practice scores in my school (2006) with the LHTL project (2004), the *Promoting Learning Autonomy* scores showed exactly the same trend and were very much lower (65.1/62.16 points respectively) than the *Making Learning Explicit* scores (80.2/82.53 points).

Although there was an encouraging improvement in *Promoting Learning Autonomy* practice and value questionnaire scores, overall the scores were also still at the lower end of all the LHTL questionnaire factors. These results indicate that there is still work to be done in the school on developing this area; this is corroborated by the whole-school AfL consultant. He commented that staff need to now ‘get students to set their own objectives and that there needs to be a focus on the learning rather than the task’. It is also supported by OFSTED recommendations that teachers need to encourage greater student involvement; students need to be assessing themselves more and taking greater responsibility for their own learning since AfL is often ‘done to students’ and students know what to do simply because the teachers tell them. They observed that some teachers needed to allow students to be more precise in answering, and that students needed sufficient time to plan their answers. The implementation of peer assessment is a prime
example of Marshall and Drummond's (2006) application of AfL strategies in 'letter' rather than 'spirit'. This was indicated in the questionnaire where 34% of students felt that 'Friends don’t want to offend so peer assessment isn’t always helpful'. The response to peer assessment in the interviews was unanimous across all year groups – students didn’t like it! They didn’t fully understand what it entailed, and were unsure as to its purpose: ‘We don’t understand why we’re doing it’ (Yr 7); ‘We struggled with it’ (Yr 12); ‘Lots of students didn’t get it or know what it is – the phrase wasn’t understood’ (Yr 11 & Yr 12).

One student thought that it was a ploy by teachers to ensure that students didn’t cheat (!); another felt it was not working across the board. In some instances they felt threatened by its use. All students noted that they did not feel comfortable about being completely honest in their assessment of others’ work:

It’s difficult to know what targets to write...You don’t want to be nasty to your friends and even more to those you don’t know. (Yr 8)

Students don’t like being as critical as teachers. (Yr 10)

You won’t want to be honest because they’ll say ‘Why did you give me bad mark?’ (Yr 11)

I didn’t want to write negative things and I didn’t want to make corrections that were wrong. I don’t want to offend. (Yr 12)

This replicates staff’s ambivalence towards the practice for similar reasons - shown in anecdotal evidence in the development work; staff felt that weaker students found it both difficult and threatening, especially if paired with a more able partner. It would appear from students’ comments that peer assessment was indeed happening in the classroom, but it did not reflect the essence of good AfL practice which promotes students’ learning autonomy.
In particular it seemed from students’ own comments that teachers had not always shared the assessment criteria adequately – or at all – with students. While the predominant experience of peer assessment was ambivalent, students were also unanimous about how peer assessment could be used more effectively and each student was able to cite at least one subject where it had been well employed. In the questionnaire, students noted that when peer assessment is helpful it allows them to learn from someone else’s good answer (57%); enables comparison to secure improvement (53%), and makes students more aware of their mistakes (44%). All students noted in the interviews that they needed precise instructions as to what and how to assess. Cited examples of good practice included:

- the provision of a standardised worksheet which students corrected as a group - before going on to assess their peers’ own work by using the worksheet as a guideline for the correct answers (Yr 12)
- the provision of a worksheet to guide their peer assessment (Yr 10)
- a grading sheet which told them what needed to be included for a particular grade was useful, especially when it could then ‘add up to an overall grade’ (Yr 11).

Self assessment is similarly important to student autonomy and only 5% of students in the questionnaire felt that self-assessment didn’t help them. In particular they felt that self-assessment shows students where they have gone wrong and provides better ideas for answers (55%); it shows areas that need to be improved on (46%); and helps to see if ‘wrong answers are done by accident or if you don’t understand’ (37%). In the interviews self-assessment was viewed favourably because it didn’t expose students’ work to others’ scrutiny and it also allowed students to see themselves where they were going wrong. Self-
assessment, like peer assessment, was also seen as requiring very specific guidance and input from the teacher, and students felt they would benefit from regular practice of self-assessment.

iii. Performance Orientation practice scores declined over the course of the two years in my school by 2 points and in the LHTL sample by 6.01. The value scores show a slight increase (+0.5) but, as already noted, this was in part caused by the increase in Performance Orientation value scores of 3.3 points in the MFL faculty, which was driven by summative assessment outcomes and expectations. The slight decline in Performance Orientation practice scores indicates that teachers were only somewhat less driven by external assessment and curriculum demands in practice, even after extensive CPD, training and coaching. Practice scores still outstripped value scores by over 4 points. The value scores for Performance Orientation in both 2004 and 2006 were the lowest scores of all the factors in all the sections of the questionnaire, showing that teachers do not hugely value the external assessment constraints. However it appears that while summative assessment remains the tool to measure student achievement and teacher performance, external assessment and curriculum expectations will continue to drive teaching and students' learning; gains in measured performance will be prioritised over improved quality of learning. Teachers will continue to ensure students' dependency on them and prescribed programmes, instead of nurturing them as independent, resilient and flexible learners who are equipped to generalize and adapt learning creatively to new situations and challenges.
across contexts and throughout life (Dweck, 2000). This paradox remains and is an explanation as to why teachers are not promoting student learning autonomy.

As in the LHTL sample, since practice scores for *Performance Orientation* were noticeably higher than their value scores, teachers need to find ways of resolving tensions between external constraint and their professional beliefs in a way that does not compromise their educational values. The effective incorporation of AfL into routine classroom practice involves a closing of the values-practice gap across an important range of practices that teachers regard as important or crucial for improving the quality of students’ learning. Teachers need to be supported in closing the gap both through sustained professional learning and through systems of support for this learning by schools. While there was overall encouraging change evident across the whole school, the individual case studies reveal that progress and change was not uniform.
Conclusions; Changes and limitations; Contribution to the field and knowledge, and Recommendations

Emerging similarities and differences in Middle Leaders’ management to secure change

While there were some emerging trends as to how change was managed by both the case study and other faculty Middle Leaders, there was no uniform over-riding pattern across all of the faculties as to how change was managed. Rather the leadership approach, adoptive or adaptive, chosen by Middle Leaders to secure change was affected by an interplay of the three emerging variables - colleagues’ knowledge and understanding of the initiative; the nature of the subject, and the composition of the team. Middle Leaders varied their leadership approach at different points of the pilot in response to these three variables. At the outset Middle Leaders, bar English, used a combination of both leadership approaches in introducing the AfL assessment changes to their colleagues. While most HoFs (bar English and MFL considered later) initially preferred to introduce the initiative using an adaptive approach with a democratic collaborative leadership style to encourage their colleagues into embracing the changes, it emerged that where colleagues’ knowledge and understanding of the initiative was unclear or it didn’t make sense often the changes were threatening to long-standing practice and there was resistance to change. This led to HoFs switching to an adoptive approach with a more coercive or authoritative style of leadership. They insisted that colleagues adopt the AfL practices and implemented structures to ensure that they did. Across the board in all faculties the more resistant colleagues were to the change initiative because of a lack of knowledge and understanding, the more reliant the
Middle Leader became on the adoptive approach and structures, particularly externally imposed structures, to secure change. Conversely the more open to and confident of the initiative colleagues were, the more likely it was that the HoF embraced the adaptive approach.

The provision of ongoing professional development, evaluated further on, was therefore extremely important in developing colleagues' knowledge and understanding as it led to values shifting and strategies being more readily accepted and beginning to be embedded in practice. All faculties, bar MFL, were open to the training received and the consultants in particular commented on the receptiveness of the colleagues in the school to professional development to further their knowledge and understanding of AfL. MFL provided a notable exception because their team as a whole was so resistant to change. Team composition was thus another variable critical to how successful or unsuccessful a Middle Leader was in implementing change. All HoFs revealed that just one colleague in the team could shape the change initiative's direction in either a positive or negative way at any stage. Individuals had influence particularly in discussions and as a result Middle Leaders needed to manage discussions, debates, faculty meetings and smaller interactions carefully. The changing composition of the team through the course of the pilot also meant that the leadership approach used by Middle Leaders changed in response to the resistance or support received from colleagues.

The case studies show that the ease of implementation of AfL differed across the faculties and it appeared that in some faculties the nature of the subject leant itself to the new

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strategies and the adaptations were more readily implemented and there was less faculty resistance. There was evidence that the more practical subjects - viz Technology and PE of the C & EA faculty - found AfL easier to implement because the changes more closely approximated previous practice and the HoFs embraced an adaptive style as a result. However there was inconclusive evidence as to whether practice had *securely* embedded for these practical subjects; students in particular did not recognise the evidence of the AfL strategies and were ambivalent about the impact of these strategies on their learning effectiveness in these subjects. In the instance of English, colleagues’ knowledge and understanding was quick to develop and there was unity of purpose within the team in addressing the changes needed. It seemed that, as in the LHTL research project, this was because the nature of the subject leant itself more readily to the new strategies and as a result staff were more receptive to changing their values and practice. In spite of this greater apparent ease of adaptation, unlike in other faculties, this did not lead to this HoF altering her approach once colleagues’ resistance to change abated.

Thus while both the adoptive and adaptive strategies were used by managers in their undertakings to shift their colleagues’ values and practice, the interrelationship that the three variables have on leadership style and approach is immensely complex and in the case studies one variable did not appear to have greater bearing on the style and approach chosen by the Middle Leader than another. Add to this the dynamic of individuals with their own idiosyncrasies and educational histories, and subjects that lend themselves more or less to a change initiative, it is surprising that any change across an organisation is effected at all!

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Two faculties, MFL and English, require separate evaluation since there were factors which dominated above the complex and weaving inter-relationship of the variables apparent in the other faculties. The Head of English had a very particular style which appeared to be impervious to the three variables. While the colleagues in her faculty made excellent progress in their understanding and practice of AfL (because the nature of the subject as already cited) her style and approach did not alter over the three years, and she remained firmly committed to pursuing the adoptive approach and using an authoritative and at times coercive style. This persisted even when there was a shifting culture within the faculty of increased discussion, debate, shared practice and more collaborative activities such as peer observation and coaching - alongside the culture of greater accountability. This was because it was her natural and preferred style of leading even when change was apparent; she seemed unable or unwilling to accommodate a different leadership approach or style even when it may have been helpful to do so. In MFL the personalities of the team members seemed to drive the response to the change initiative in a very negative manner. The colleagues were collectively and consistently inflexible and resistant to any change; they remained impervious to the professional development provided and were united in their resistance to the support provided by the consultant. As a result there was little that the HoFs could do to secure change particularly in values and understanding of the initiative, but also in embedded practice which reflected the spirit of AfL.

There was also a close and complex interplay of structures and culture to secure change and this was apparent at both an organisational and faculty level. HoFs asserted that a change

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initiative had greater chance for successful implementation if it became part of whole-school development planning and culture, was lead by a Senior Leader enthusiast, and was underpinned by whole-school CPD; whole-school structural procedures to support their endeavours were also helpful to ensure the delivery of agreed classroom practice. When confronting resistance, the provision of clear whole-school structures along with the use of an adoptive approach was initially the only way some HoFs could secure practice change. These whole-school structures introduced by Senior Leaders seemed to accelerate the change of practice within both faculties and the school as a whole. Structures linked to the Performance Management cycle, such as the standardised Performance Management targets, were a particularly powerful means for profiling the required changes and for ensuring the accountability outcomes required to measure the changes desired. Similarly the drop-in observations, while viewed initially as invasive and unpopular, were an effective means to evaluate day-to-day classroom practice and to monitor implementation of the strategies. HoFs themselves also devised and introduced other structures specific to their individual subjects and faculties and these were important to give them ownership of the implementation process so they were not just monitoring and implementing Senior Leaders' structures and directives. All these structures to secure change brought a greater culture of accountability within the school and faculty areas, and staff felt their work was under closer scrutiny and that expectations were more defined.

However, paradoxically alongside this whole school culture of accountability also emerged a culture of increased discussion, debate and dialogue about teaching and learning which was not previously apparent and this was equally important. Prior to AfL faculties had

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operated discretely and independently, and the AfL whole-school focus encouraged animated HoF discussions and inter-faculty sharing of ideas and perspectives. Whole staff professional development opportunities also encouraged wider cross-faculty discussion and debate about the change and its implementation in the different faculty areas. In some instances, in Science and PE in particular but also in Technology and Humanities, this open culture was a conduit for and a precursor of change, and the addition of whole school and/or faculty structures further supported moves for change; a faculty culture of discussion and the refinement of ideas led to values changing first with practice following afterwards. In other instances, in English, MFL and Maths, where there was not the openness of culture and trust, structures ensured the initial coercive implementation of practice. As a result some staff became convinced of the worth of AfL and their values changed often leading to great discussion, collaboration and refinement of ideas. However the interaction between values and practice in this pilot is complicated and as in the LHTL research there were few ‘neat correspondences’ (Marshall and Drummond, 2006, p144) between teachers’ values and their practice. In Humanities for instance there was much openness to the initiative and much debate and discussion, but corresponding change in practice was slow. In Technology there was openness and discussion at the outset but colleagues valued and practised the initiative less over the course of the two years. MFL when judged on the overall outcomes of the LHTL questionnaire made little progress over the two years in spite of, or perhaps because of, the coercive implementation of practice. Thus relating what practice occurs in lessons to the teachers’ values about learning is complicated and at times perplexing. Since teacher values and understandings are also particularly difficult to assess and quantify, the task of the leader trying to induct a large group of colleagues into new

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ways remains very difficult for those managing the change. Nonetheless, when considering the school overall there is evidence to indicate that there has been significant cultural change over the three year period in the teaching and learning within the school. Colleagues talk more about teaching and learning, there is a greater focus on teaching and learning in meetings, and increasingly teachers are collaborating in the classroom and are encouraging self-evaluation and reflection. At the same time structures introduced to monitor and evaluate have led to clearer and higher expectations and sharpened practice.

The importance of effective continuing professional development is an essential tool for furthering staff knowledge and understanding to secure and embed both practice and belief changes. Whole staff presentations and workshops were necessary to lay the foundations and induct staff into the change initiative. However, whole staff training was not sufficient to secure either lasting value or practice shifts as inspiring presentations and workshops didn’t guarantee practice changes in the classroom. The most effective follow-through CPD was in-classroom development; peer and consultant observation and support was particularly successful in Science and English because it facilitated reflection and discussion about classroom practice with other colleagues. Faculties (most notably English and Science) which had extensive one-to-one work with consultants, including team-teaching and joint reviews, and which provided regular coaching opportunities for colleagues made most significant progress in embedding a change of culture within the faculty. This was helpful in beginning shifts in both teachers’ practice and values, and in promoting student autonomy. This progress was verified by students, their own colleagues and external agents and some LHTL questionnaire results. However, on the other hand the
consultant support provided to MFL was not at all well received and was viewed as invasive and unhelpful, largely because the team was resistant to change and was not receptive to any consultant input at all. In-classroom CPD was not widespread across all faculties and there is still significant work to be done to develop staff inquiry and research; this includes using and responding to different sources of evidence and carrying out joint research and evaluation with colleagues. Should this be successful, there should be further improvements to the encouraging progress already made in promoting student autonomy and in the longer-term should have a significant impact on students’ learning.

Evidence of Impact

Some comment must be made in conclusion about the evidence of impact noted by students and staff as the AfL outcomes achieved are a measure of the success of HoFs’ management strategies. Over the course of the three year pilot progress was made in the implementation of the AfL strategies although some strategies were more readily embraced than others. Comments showing targets and stars instead of grades and marks were adopted across all faculties and this was written into the newly devised whole-school assessment policy. Students had noticed the change in their teachers’ marking and found the comments helpful in sign-posting what they needed to do to improve. They were able to take some ownership for their learning in responding to their teachers’ comments pointing to things they needed to improve. Clearly stating objectives at the start of the lesson had become whole school practice, monitored in all lesson observations, although at times HoF and consultant reports of the practice indicate that the practice was more mechanical than providing useful signposting for students’ independent learning. Students also generally found stating
objectives useful in guiding and focusing their learning, and they were particularly helpful in directing their coursework projects. Peer assessment was viewed sceptically by a number of faculties and by the students. Students found peer assessment both threatening – as they were reticent to judge others’ work – and unhelpful largely it seemed because the implementation was misunderstood or was poorly executed by their teachers. Often there was insufficient explanation provided by teachers for students as to why or how they should undertake peer assessment effectively to encourage the promotion of autonomous student learning. In particular students were reluctant to be completely honest with peers. Self-assessment practices were viewed more positively by students as they felt more comfortable making critical and reflective judgements about their own work and as a result they were able to take greater command of their next steps in learning. Students did not evaluate their teachers’ use of questioning but staff and HoFs felt that questioning was an area for continued development. Colleagues often accepted the principles, but found it difficult to implement the questioning strategies and fell back into old habits.

Multiple source data indicates that there was encouraging progress being made in the implementation of most of the AfL strategies and that they were having an impact on students taking more responsibility for their own learning even where there was merely mechanical implementation of the AfL strategies. Students were being provided with guidance as to what they needed to do and they were more reflective about their own learning. Promoting student autonomy is a central tenant of successful implementation of AfL (James et al., 2007) and, although the evidence above gives indication of progress being made, the Promoting Learning Autonomy factor scores were very much lower than
the other LHTL questionnaire scores. There is clearly further work to be done to embed securely all the AfL strategies to ensure truly autonomous and independent learners.

**Changes and limitations**

While overall there were noteworthy changes in practice, this research was not able to distinguish whether implemented strategies reflected deep embedded changes in practice reflecting the essence or spirit of AfL, or whether the changes were merely by the ‘letter’ or mechanical changes. To determine this would have required more extensive lesson observations, something that proved demanding even for the LHTL project (Marshall and Drummond, 2006). Further more detailed classroom observations were not possible largely because of the limitation of time, and the extensiveness of the research brief, but also because the Middle Leaders who were responsible for inducting staff, and implementing and evaluating the AfL strategies were themselves learning the AfL strategies. They could not be expected to make the fine distinctions when observing lessons, certainly at the outset of the project. Had there been a longer stretch of time, more extensive expertise to observe and evaluate lessons closely for this distinction, and opportunities to interview a range of staff on the delivery of their lessons, the extent of the success of deep-seated change of ‘spirit’ practice could have been determined and perhaps more securely established. Thus if this research were to be extended, closer attention would need to be paid to the distinction of ‘spirit’ vs. ‘letter’ through lessons observed. This would give a much clearer understanding of whether colleagues are embracing the AfL initiative with profound changing of pedagogical values and practice and a knowledge of what helps and hinders their students’ learning, rather than ‘by-the-letter’ mechanical alteration of practice. Further
observations would also enable a deeper understanding of the nature of practice and how it might relate to subject/faculty needs and conditions. More extensive student interviews with larger samples would also have been helpful to acquire a more robust and widespread view of students’ perspectives of teachers’ classroom practice and the impact on their learning.

As stated earlier in the methodology chapter, this case study was not able to attribute any improvements in students’ attainment directly to AfL. Since successful AfL implementation is founded on ‘the bold claim that implementing formative assessment in classrooms raises standards significantly’ (Pedder and James, 2006, p102) it would be pertinent and interesting to evaluate in lessons that reflect the spirit of AfL whether there is improved attainment of these students by examining their results. It would also be useful to compare these teachers’ results with those whose practice shows just the mechanical manifestations of AfL. Having said this however, this would not be an easy task. There would of course be ethical considerations, as well as technical issues of attribution; teachers would need to be identified in order to link lesson observations to their LHTL questionnaire responses and their exam results. The LHTL project was faced with difficulty in making valid interpretations and in being able to make casual links with AfL changes and attainment scores (James et al., 2007, pp. 232-233). Also, cognisance needs to be taken of the warning that James et al (2007) provide that it is the autonomous learning that is liberating and that summative assessments are not everything. For teachers sometimes AfL:

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... can be perceived as yet another initiative, adding to the burden of current central prescription, to be 'monitored' by OFSTED and evaluated as effective only if test and examination scores rise. This is not helpful. If learning how to learn is to be effective, it should not be judged either by checklists or by school performance at the end of a Key Stage but by the extent to which learners are equipped to thrive and flourish in their lives beyond the Key Stage and beyond the school (p225).

In the LHTL questionnaire, Section C’s outcomes give rise to some ambiguity partly because it is difficult to comment on management practices without defining which group of managers is being ‘assessed’, particularly for Developing a Sense of Where We are Going and Deciding and Acting Together. It is uncertain whether colleagues’ responses reflected staff reaction to all managers or just senior management as a whole - even though the questionnaire instructions state that the questions applied to ‘any level of management’ in the school. The revision of the questionnaire to make it specific to either Senior or Middle Leadership level would have provided a refinement for this research in assessing perceptions of staff of the impact of either/both levels of management, particularly for a secondary school. Interviewing a sample of staff would have been beneficial to explore this anomaly as well as to triangulate HoFs’ perspectives on the AfL change in their faculties; it would also have been useful to ascertain staff’s reactions to the data results in the LHTL questionnaire. Interviewing individual members of staff would have provided a more systematic attempt to focus on teacher ‘understanding’ of their own practice as well as staff perspectives on student values/attitudes. Group interviews would have been a possible means of circumventing the intensity of one-to-one interviews with individuals.
A final consideration is the longevity of the embedding of an initiative. Once the Senior Management driven focus on AfL is no longer central to the school development plan, and is no longer profiled in the manner it has been, it would be interesting to see whether the initiative is deeply embedded and remains evident in teachers’ practice, integral to their values about teaching and at the forefront of the debate and discussions within faculty areas. A more long-term investigation (i.e. longer than three years) into the sustainability of the AfL initiative, and indeed any initiative, would provide much needed insights into whether the many initiatives that schools embark on are just a ‘flash in the pan’ or whether they have longevity beyond the initial years of leadership and management thrust. However this is very expensive and may well not be practicable. An alternative is to think about researching schools’ practice some time after they have started an initiative and make a study from 4-6 years, with some attempt at back-filling in what happened in the initial years.

**Implications for Senior and Middle Leaders**

A number of outcomes of considerable interest arise from this research particularly for Senior and Middle Leader leaders looking to implement a large change initiative across an organisation. As noted in the above paragraphs, identifying and implementing appropriate structures and culture within the organisation as a whole and within faculties is a pivotal role for Senior and Middle Leaders in securing change. They need to have the vision, sensitivity and tenacity to provide the *structures* and to shape the *culture* to support their colleagues in securing change through providing ongoing CPD and developing communities of learning. It is evident that both structures and culture are important to enable leaders to secure change.
Middle Leaders felt strongly that for effective change to occur across an organisation it is imperative that a Senior Leader drives and leads relentlessly the AfL change and that it is the focus of the school development plan. As the Senior Leader responsible for the initiative I found it essential to confer regularly, both individually and with the HoF group as a whole, to identify emerging areas of concern about the work in progress. Regular meetings also helped to clarify Middle Leaders’ knowledge and understanding as they implemented the initiative. Often we learned and refined our understanding of the initiative together as we debated and discussed both with each other and within the HoF forum team meetings. Senior Leaders also need to provide professional development opportunities and training throughout the course of the implementation of the change to support colleagues’ developing understanding of the initiative. Senior Leaders’ provision of whole-school structures to both support and to monitor and evaluate the change is essential. These structures need to be sustained over a lengthy period of time since both literature and the evidence shown in this research indicates that change takes years, rather than months - as considered next.

The introduction of an extensive initiative, especially one which is different from previous practice, will require significant Senior and Middle Management effort and time to shift colleagues’ values, especially if practice in the spirit is to be secured. AfL concepts which were introduced right at the beginning of the development needed constant revisiting and in some instances it was only in the third and final year that some colleagues came to an understanding of what specific strategies were, why they were important and how they

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were best to be implemented. Even then, and with extensive CPD opportunities provided, there were colleagues who were resistant to change and who would not shift their values to embrace the new initiative or threatened by change. The time period of three years in the instance of this research saw the embedding of some change, but there is yet work to be done and three years is viewed as a minimum period. Too often in schools the next initiative is introduced before the previous one has had time to be fully understood or properly implemented and it is critical for Senior and Middle Leaders to recognise how long change takes and how difficult it is to secure.

In introducing a whole school initiative Senior Leaders need to be aware that Middle Leaders will encounter different problems in their different subjects/faculty areas in embracing a change initiative depending on the composition of the team; the team members’ knowledge and understanding of the change; and on the nature and demands of their subjects. It is seldom that one size will fit all. It is helpful to allow Middle Leaders some flexibility to introduce the AfL strategies to address their subjects’ needs and at their chosen pace. However, Middle Leaders need to customise the change initiative and the implementation pace to the subject needs and their team; at the same time they need to be mindful of both Senior Leaders’ desire for some uniformity of delivery as well as student entitlement for the best possible learning opportunities. In this research there were marked differences in how the various faculties were embracing the AfL strategies, both in their values and their practice and this variation was noted in student interviews and in the LHTL questionnaire outcomes. Senior and Middle Leaders need to acknowledge that there will be a wide variety of take-up of an initiative both across an organisation and within individual

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faculty areas; also the depth of the embedding of an initiative is difficult to ascertain. In some instances there was long-standing resistance and truculence from individual members of staff about any initiative, regardless of the faculty. Senior and Middle leaders need to recognise that there will be pockets of people for whom AfL – or possibly any change that challenges existing practice - will never have relevance. In the instance of Technology it appeared that the change initiative was similar to previous practice; however it emerged that embedded practice was in question. For Middle Leaders there is a warning that where old practice is similar to the new practice, assumptions should not be made that the new ways are immediately or correctly embedded. All implementation of change should be monitored and triangulated by Middle Leaders with all stakeholders and participating parties.

Consultant support, depending on the consultant, can be extremely helpful in moving practice and understanding forward. The consultants in this case study were able to provide objective perspectives on the implementation of the initiative and encouraged focused and guided classroom observations. These were very helpful in providing in-house support and in changing the culture in some faculties to one of more collaboration and discussion. However, their support and input was sporadic and was not sustained over the length of time required to secure embedded change. To counteract this Middle Leaders need to develop in-classroom coaching and support amongst colleagues so that there is continual development of AfL practice through self-evaluation of and reflection on teaching. Senior Leaders need to support Middle Leaders by building these opportunities into the whole-school CPD programme and the daily life of the school whilst being mindful of the
resource and time costs. If the development of new practices such as AfL are to be possible and sustained for all schools, then building up *internal* capacity for continual development is essential.

The structures introduced by Senior Leaders which monitored and evaluated staff performance, most notably Performance Management targets and drop-in observations, were particularly effective because they showed clear progress and accountability measures. Other structures, such as policies and frameworks for planning, were also useful in that they stipulated clearly rationales and expectations. The effectiveness of the adoptive approach which entailed using extensive structures to secure change was a surprise since much of the literature asserts that collaboration and a culture of openness leads to the most effective embedding of practice. Structures introduced a culture of accountability and sharpened practice and raised expectations of what was and was not acceptable. While structures may in some instances have secured a change of practice which was mechanical, it did at least shift patterns of teaching - evident particularly in MFL in spite of the MFL colleagues’ strong resistance to the initiative. In the current climate of extreme accountability (especially on delivering data-driven results) leaders at any level do not have the luxury of adopting a collaborative style in the hopes that their followers will deliver – eventually or perhaps. The Middle Leader’s role is becoming increasingly responsible and they are being held more and more to account for the delivery of results by which their faculty and school will be judged (viz. Performance Management regulations introduced in 2007). *All* leaders in schools have an obligation to ensure that the students in their care have the best possible teaching to secure their potential - for these students pass their way but

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once. Senior and Middle Leaders need to ensure and if necessary enforce initiatives and practice that will lead to the delivery of results but more importantly to better student learning autonomy. It may be that, certainly initially, Middle Leaders need to try to secure a measure of consistency in the implementation of the strategies even where the results are mechanical implementations rather than those which embody the true spirit of AfL - and even if the changes are not be valued by staff. Certainly in the early stages of a change when Middle Leaders are trying to counteract the complexities of the three stated variables it is understandable why they may need to embrace an adoptive approach and a more authoritative leadership style to ensure some evidence of change. I would argue that leaders cannot take the risk of not enforcing what AfL research has proven is good practice if it means at least the possibility that teaching practice and values are amended and improved, to ensure that students’ autonomy of learning and life chances are not compromised.

**Contribution to the field and knowledge, and recommendations for other schools**

This case study has clearly revealed that school change is not a monolith and has identified in ways that other research has not the complexities of how change is played out in individual faculties. In this particular case study the Middle Leaders were a particularly strong team of leaders and embracing the initiative all at once encouraged powerful debate within the HoF forum and across the school; also whole school CPD was easier to manage with all faculties taking part in the pilot at the same time. Other schools with a less strong Middle Leadership team who are wishing to implement AfL for the first time may wish to take a more gradual approach and pilot the initiative with their strongest Middle Leaders.
and faculties first. It would mean that they could pave the way, make mistakes and provide pointers for other Middle Leaders. Certainly the leadership provided by Science and C & EA meant that good practice was regularly shared and other HoFs were able to emulate their good ideas.

There is no doubt that the implementation of whole school structures were very powerful in moving the change initiative forward. The drop-in lesson observations in particular, while unpopular, did provide a clearer picture of classroom practice without the detailed preparation of Performance Management observations. Schools wishing to implement AfL would be wise to consider the introduction of clear structures at the outset of the project so that expectations are clearly defined and so there are clear accountability measures to monitor progress. The whole school Performance Management AfL targets were also a very effective means to outline expectations and provided a tool to monitor progress and would be strongly recommended. A school wishing to commit wholeheartedly to the pilot over a number of years could identify progressive separate Performance Management AfL targets for Middle Leaders and teachers across the whole school over a number of years. Policies need to be consolidated as soon as decisions are made and should highlight clearly the expectations of assessment and how these will be monitored.

The role of the Middle Leader is both under-researched and it would appear under-valued; the field of change tends to focus on leadership as a generic entity (viz. the comment in ‘Changes and Limitations’ about the LHTL Section C question), or on Senior Leaders. Middle Leaders undertake an immensely complex task. They have to be attentive to both

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Senior Leaders as well as their faculty colleagues; they have to play the dual role of often being compatriots with Senior Leaders while on other occasions they are the conduits of imperatives from these same senior colleagues. They are expected to both lead their teams assertively while also cultivating a collegiate team spirit. They need to attend sensitively to individual teachers' needs while concurrently safeguarding the learning experiences of the students in their care. It is timely therefore that the NCSL has developed a programme, Leadership Pathways, for the continued development of experienced Middle Leaders as previously there was a gap in the provision. The management of change is one of the most pressing and difficult tasks that Middle Leaders have to undertake and there is much that this research has yielded which gives insight into the complexity of this task which adds to the field and body of knowledge.

Further research into the role of Middle Leaders - by the NCSL, the General Teaching Council, other bodies, but particularly practitioners in schools - is to be encouraged to expand the knowledge into the complexity of the Middle Leader's role. The longer-term embedding of this initiative is still uncertain. If the changes are to be sustained five years and beyond, the initiative needs to be profiled by Senior and Middle Leaders well beyond the initial stages of implementation. Structures need to be securely embedded within the organisation to support the on-going initiative's practices and to keep alive colleagues' beliefs in the benefits. Culture change is almost certain as a result.

How Middle Leaders undertake leading change is dependent on a myriad of factors but in this research individual colleagues' knowledge and understanding of the initiative and the

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composition of the team were particularly salient concerns. Leadership styles and approaches did not remain static and throughout the course of the initiative’s implementation leaders had to read the climate of their team and individual members’ responses as well as determine their subjects’ needs; they had to adjust their styles and approaches accordingly. There was no pattern as to how styles and approaches changed, but rather Middle Leaders made the adjustments intuitively in response to individual’s reactions. It is important for Senior Leaders to recognise how difficult this process is, and they should also be conscious of resistors within teams, since individuals and composition of teams make a critical difference to how change is embraced. The potential for organisational change is great if Middle Leaders, these unsung heroes, are provided with the time, resources, understanding and support in undertaking their complex task of leading their teams.
References


Association of Teachers and Lecturers (1996) *Doing our Level Best in Assessment Reform*


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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: NCSL assessment of Head of Faculty team performance questionnaire: administered to the HoF team, November 2003

*Italics indicates the areas which require development*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category assessed</th>
<th>Ranking of score</th>
<th>Average Team score</th>
<th>Comment about the team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team Potential</td>
<td>Top score (101-120) of 4 divisions</td>
<td>103.37</td>
<td>‘The team is either already achieving required targets &amp; standards or is well on the way to doing so. On-going monitoring is needed to ensure that processes develop as the team progresses’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity &amp; commitment to team objectives</td>
<td>High scale score &gt; 3.4</td>
<td>4.1 (out of 5 max score)</td>
<td>‘The team has a clear, shared, attainable vision/ set of objectives which is valued by all team members.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision-making and communication</td>
<td>Mid score (&gt;3&lt;4.4)</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td><em>Lack of time</em> was deemed by HoF members as the barrier to effective communication.*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on Quality</td>
<td>High scale score &gt; 3.8</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>‘The team is fully committed to achieving the highest performance possible. Team members critically appraise their work. Help in developing new ideas is readily available.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for innovation within the team</td>
<td>&gt;3.2&lt;4.4</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>No comment provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team member satisfaction</td>
<td>&gt;49&lt;64</td>
<td>Middle score</td>
<td>Evaluated work satisfaction, supportive social climate (both high ave. scores – 22/25) and personal growth &amp; development (mid score). <em>Personal growth and development is the less strong area (19/25 ave. score) – just bringing the average down from the high score category by 1 point</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Appendix 2: Time-scale of Data Collection

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<td>1. HoF semi-structured interviews</td>
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<td>2. Questionnaire leading to HoF faculty assessment guidelines</td>
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<td>3. On-going Book Looks (from Nov 04 - Dec 06) - now calendared.</td>
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<td>4. LHTL questionnaire</td>
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<td>5. Semi-structured interviews with students</td>
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<th>Appendix 6a</th>
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<th>November July 06</th>
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<td>6. HoF semi-structured interviews</td>
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<td><strong>Primary data</strong></td>
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<td>7. Discussions with AfL consultant (field notes) following lesson observations and 1-2-1 work with HoF</td>
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<td><strong>Primary data</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Review of OFSTED &amp; Consultant observations – (field notes) triangulated with HoF perspectives</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Student Council initial questionnaire</td>
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<td><strong>Primary data</strong></td>
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<td>10. Student questionnaire to a sample of 15 students in years 7-12</td>
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<td>11. HoF semi-structured interview</td>
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<td><strong>Primary data</strong></td>
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<td>12. Second LHTL Questionnaire administration</td>
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<td><strong>Primary data</strong></td>
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<td>13. Interview of students on the student council</td>
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<th>Appendix 3c</th>
<th>Appendix 6b</th>
<th>Appendix 9</th>
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Appendix 3a: July 2004 interview with HoF reviewing end of Year 1 pilot (2003-4)

1. What aspects of Assessment for Learning have you applied in your faculty area?

2. Why did you select these aspects and how did you arrive at selecting these strategies to implement?

3. What leadership/management strategies have you employed to encourage staff to understand these strategies and apply them through the year?

4. How effectively have these been adapted by staff in your team? What evidence do you have of the effectiveness of application?

5. What difficulties did you experience? What will you do differently?

6. i. How do you plan extend the pilot in Year 2?
   ii. How will you monitor its implementation?

Appendix 3b: July 2005 Interview with HoF reviewing end of Year 2 pilot (2004-5)

1. a) What have been the success of AfL this year – measured against faculty expectations stated at the beginning of the year
   b) What evidence is there of any changes or improvement made in the course of the year?

2. How have you monitored the implementation of the AfL in year 2?

3. Has your leadership of the initiative changed from year 1 as your staff have gained understanding of the initiative? E.g. have you moved from being more bureaucratic to being democratic?

4. What would you change in the way you have managed the change process this year?

5. What are the professional development/coaching/training needs of your faculty to embed AfL in your faculty?

6. The practice/values graphs of the learning to learn questionnaire yield quantifiable data to show your faculty’s attitudes and practice variations. What do you note of significance in your faculty area? How will this affect what you do with your faculty next year?

7. What suggestions do you have for me as the manager of the initiative?

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Appendix 3c: July 2006 interview with HoF reviewing end of Year 3 pilot (2005-6)

1. What different leadership approaches to change have you used?
   a) At what points have you adopted one or the other approach in your faculty?
   b) Why that particular approach (what conditions triggered off that approach)

2. What structures have you used to secure change?

3. Has there been a change in culture in any way within your faculty since introducing AfL?

4. What evidence do you have that people’s beliefs have changed?

5. What evidence do you have that people’s practices have changed?
   Marking/Questioning/Peer assessment/Self-assessment

6. What strategy has been most effective in moving staff understanding and practice on?

7. What professional development have you used to develop understanding and practice?
Appendix 4: Questionnaire reviewing Year 1 and planning Year 2: Sept 2004

INSET Day 2nd Sept 2004: Review of Year 1 and Planning of Stage 2 of the AfL pilot

1. Give a very brief review of the AfL strategies applied by your faculty/subject area, highlighting any difficulties experienced.

2. Outline precisely a) which AfL strategies will be applied in Year 2
   b) How (if) they will be applied
   c) Which year groups they will be applied to

   Consider:
   - Stipulation of lesson objectives at the beginning of a module
   - *(Stars) and T (targets) (no marks)*
   - Peer assessment
   - Self-assessment
   - Questioning

3. How will teachers record student targets so that student progress can be tracked (so that records can monitored by HoF/HoS)

4. How regularly do you expect targets to be set and records kept of formative assessment? (Staff/HoF may wish to mark more than these agreed points...but the aim is to cut workload. Remember, there needs to be sufficient accountability to parents that children’s work is being looked at – BUT less regular effective marking is more desirable than ‘tick and flick’ frequent marking.)

5. How will you as a HoF (or faculty) monitor implementation of agreed strategies?

6. How will you judge/measure whether there is an improvement in children’s achievement/motivation following the implementation of these AfL strategies?

7. Will you inform students of your strategies/expectations – If so, how/when?

8. What training/coaching/discussion opportunities will you instate as a faculty/subject?

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Appendix 5: Book review of Assessment for Learning

Use the faculty Assessment guidelines devised and agreed with your faculty in September 2004 to evaluate the AfL practice evident in the children's books in your faculty.

1. Practice which met your expectations against the Sept '04 faculty guidelines.

Other commendable practice

2. Concerns

Summary report of your subject/faculty's assessment pilot 2004
Appendix 6a: 1st *Learning How To Learn* questionnaire Faculty results 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Maths</th>
<th>Science</th>
<th>MFL</th>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>C &amp; E Arts</th>
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*Assessing the Changes: An investigation into the Middle Leader leading change – the implementation of formative assessment*
### Explanation of the LHTL questionnaire spreadsheet information (Appendix 6a,b,c)

- Factors are shown in the white boxes for each of the three sections, A (Assessment); B (Professional Learning) & C (Management). The total possible score for each factor is also shown in the white box e.g. /24. The number of staff in each faculty is shown at the top of each column.
- Value and practice scores are shown for each factor.
- The green ‘overall’ column shows the average score for each factor across all faculties.
- The yellow ‘percentage’ column shows the average scores as a percentage to allow for comparison.
- The final column which is ‘scaled score’ is an adjusted score to accommodate the different total scores for each of the factors to allow for more accurate comparison of the different factors with the national LHTL questionnaire sample.

### Experience of staff for each of the seven faculties shown in number of years in 2004 and 2006

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## Appendix 6b: 2nd Learning How to Learn questionnaire Faculty results 2006

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Assessing the Changes: An investigation into the Middle Leader leading change – the implementation of formative assessment
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Assessing the Changes: An investigation into the Middle Leader leading change – the implementation of formative assessment
## Appendix 6c: Change in LHTL q’naire scores in 2006 from 2004

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*Assessing the Changes: An investigation into the Middle Leader leading change – the implementation of formative assessment*
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Assessing the Changes: An investigation into the Middle Leader leading change – the implementation of formative assessment
Appendix 7: Making Learning Explicit faculty ‘practice’ averages for AFL strategies
(drawn from individual questions in Section A of the LHTL questionnaire: 2004 and 2006)

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Key:
Practice scores
Mostly 4
Often 3
Rarely 2
never true 1

Section A LHTL Questions
Objectives 6,11,21
PA 19,29
SA 13,24
Targets 1,10,14
Questioning 7,18

Assessing the Changes: An investigation into the Middle Leader leading change – the implementation of formative assessment

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Appendix 8: Student Interview on Teacher Feedback, Dec 2004

Written Feedback
1. Marking work takes up a lot of your teachers' time. Why do you think a teacher should mark your homework/classwork?

2. What type of feedback on your written work is the most motivating and useful to you in helping you learn?

3. Have you ever had feedback on written work which has been demotivating and which leaves you feeling that you won't bother or makes you want to give up learning?
   Give an example:

4. Have you had feedback on written work you have done which has been very motivating and which makes you want to learn more?
   Give an example:

Other types of feedback
5. Give some examples of teacher feedback you have received that is not written but which has shown you how to progress and which has been motivating.
   (e.g.: teacher has told or demonstrated to you how to do something better)

6. Have you noticed any difference in your teachers' assessment this year compared to last year?

7. If you could give your teachers some advice of things to do to make assessment more meaningful for you, what would it be?

EGM/Doctorate/Semi-structured Interview questions reviewing Assessment for Learning Pilot (2003-
Appendix 9: Student interview on teachers' use of AfL, Dec. 2006

1. How helpful do students find objectives being written on the board at the beginning of a lesson?

2. Explain student response to peer and self assessment.

3. Do students find the target and star feedback assists their learning? How does it work most effectively? What could be improved?

4. What advice can you give to your teachers about giving the most effective feedback?
Appendix 10a: Student Council Questionnaire on Assessment Practices – Feb 2006

Student Council Assessment and Assessment for Learning evaluation 3rd February 2006

Questionnaire for the Student Council Assessment Group

1a. Which subjects regularly set objectives?
1b. Which subjects never set objectives?
2a Which subjects regularly use peer assessment?
2b. Which subjects regularly use self-assessment?
3. In which subjects do targets help improvement?

4. Do learning objectives help? If so, learning objectives help learning by…

5. Does marking a friend’s work help? If so it helps me by…

6. Does marking my own work help? Marking my own work helps me by…

7. What I do with the targets once they have been read

8. Do you have any further comments you wish to make about assessment?
Appendix 10b: Refined student body questionnaire

(Possible responses for the student questionnaire were drawn from the student council’s initial responses in the questionnaire in Appendix 10a)

March 2006

Teachers, the Student Council and I are working together to evaluate and improve the assessment practices in the school. We’d be grateful if you could answer this questionnaire as thoroughly as possible.

1. Which subjects regularly tell you the learning objectives (or WALT/WILF or learning outcomes)? Circle all that apply:
   - English
   - Maths
   - Science
   - French/German
   - Technology
   - Music/Art/P.E.
   - History/Geography/R.E./Latin


Sixth Form subjects: refer to your own subjects

2. Are there subjects which never tell you the learning objectives?

3. How do learning objectives help your learning? Circle all that apply.
   a. Helps me know what my teacher is expecting me to do / learn in the lesson
   b. Helps place what I learn in the lesson into context with my courses
   c. Makes me feel more organised and easier to stay on track
   d. Helps me make sure that I have met that learning objective
   e. Sets goals for learning
   f. Tells me what is important that has to be remembered
   g. I know at the end of the lesson what I should have learned.
   h. During the lesson I can look up at the board and see if I have done it - if not I can work towards it.
   i. They don't make a great deal of difference
   j. Other........................................................................................................

4. a) Which subjects encourage you to mark a friend’s work (peer assessment)?

4b How does marking a friend’s work help you? Circle all that apply
   a. Can learn from someone else’s good answer
   b. Highlight the things that I shouldn’t do

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c. Can compare my own work with friends and see how to improve

d. Makes me more aware of mistakes.

e. Builds learning confidence - I know something well enough to comment on it.

f. It enables me to see the level I am working at within the class

g. Friends don't want to offend so peer assessment isn't always helpful

h. I don't really think that it helps me learn.

i. Other

5a) Which subjects encourage you to mark your own work (self-assessment)?

5b) How does marking your own work help you? Circle all that apply

a. Shows me what I have missed out

b. Can see where I went wrong and I am given better ideas for answers

c. Helps to become self-critical

d. Teaches you to be self-critical / more aware of mistakes

e. Helps to see if wrong answers are done by accident or if you don't understand

f. Tells you what you can improve on

g. I don't feel embarrassed if I don't get any answers right

h. It doesn't help me

i. Other

6. In which subjects do the targets (Ts or improvements) help you improve?

7. What do you do with your targets once you've read them? Circle all that apply

a. Keep them in my file for future reference

b. Record them in my organiser & look at them when doing work

c. Write them at the top of exams to remind me what to do

d. I look back to them and the next time I do a piece of work I try to incorporate them

e. I don't refer to them again

f. Write them on post-it notes which then move through my book

g. Other
### Appendix 11a: Faculty outcomes of student questionnaire Qs 1,4a,5,6

**Faculties which set objectives regularly**

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**Subjects which encourage peer assessment**

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**Subjects which encourage self assessment**

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**Targets used successfully**

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Appendix 11b: Outcomes of student q’naire for Qs 3,4b,5b,7 which evaluate the impact of AfL strategies

Responses for questions 3, 4b, 5b and 7. The top 3 scores are provided in red. Unbracketed numbers are the total response returned of the 90 respondents. The bracketed numbers show the percentage.

3. How do learning objectives help your learning?

a. Helps me know what my teacher is expecting me to do/learn in the lesson 60 (67%)
   a. Helps place what I learn in the lesson into context with my courses 11 (12%)
   b. Makes me feel more organised and easier to stay on track 31 (34%)
   c. Helps me make sure that I have met that learning objective 34 (38%)
   d. Sets goals for learning 31 (34%)
   e. Tells me what is important that has to be remembered 21 (34%)
   f. I know at the end of the lesson what I should have learned. 40 (44%)
   g. During the lesson I can look up at the board and see if I have done it - if not I can work towards it. 22 (24%)
   h. They don’t make a great deal of difference 19 (21%)
   i. Other ..................................................................................................(2) (1%)

4b How does marking a friend’s work help you?

a. Can learn from someone else’s good answer 51 (57%)
   b. Highlight the things that I shouldn’t do 22 (24%)
   c. Can compare my own work with friends and see how to improve 48 (53%)
   d. Makes me more aware of mistakes. 41 (46%)
   e. Builds learning confidence - I know something well enough to comment on it. 15 (17%)
   f. It enables me to see the level I am working at within the class 18 (20%)
   g. Friends don’t want to offend so peer assessment isn’t always helpful 31 (34%)
   h. I don’t really think that it helps me learn. 15 (17%)
   i. Other ..................................................................................................

5b) How does marking your own work help you?

a. Shows me what I have missed out 43 (48%)
   b. Can see where I went wrong and I am given better ideas for answers 50 (56%)
   c. Helps to become self-critical 25 (28%)
   d. Teaches you to be self-critical/more aware of mistakes 29 (32%)
   e. Helps to see if wrong answers are done by accident or if you don’t understand 33 (37%)
   f. Tells you what you can improve on 41 (46%)
   g. I don’t feel embarrassed if I don’t get many answers right 32 (36%)
   h. It doesn’t help me 5 (6%)

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7. What do you do with your targets once you've read them?

a. Keep them in my file for future reference 18 (20%)
b. Record them in my organiser & look at them when doing work 27 (30%)
c. Write them at the top of exams to remind me what to do 10 (11%)
d. I look back to them and the next time I do a piece of work I try to incorporate them 36 (40%)
e. I don't refer to them again 20 (22%)
f. Write them on post-it notes which then move through my book 1 (1%)
g. Other..........................................................
Appendix 12 Customised Learning How to Learn questionnaire
## Appendix 12: Customised Learning How to Learn questionnaire

**Scale X**

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**Section A**

**Assessment practices**

1. Assessment provides me with useful evidence of my students' understandings which I use to plan subsequent lessons.

2. The next lesson I teach is determined more by the prescribed curriculum than by how well my students did in the last lesson.

3. The main emphasis in my assessments is on whether my students know, understand or can do prescribed elements of the curriculum.

4. The feedback that my students receive helps them improve.

5. Students are told how well they have done in relation to others in the class.

6. Students are given opportunities to decide their own learning objectives.

**Scale Y**

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*Assessing the Changes: An investigation into the Middle Leader leading change – the implementation of formative assessment*
7. I use questions mainly to elicit factual knowledge from my students.

8. I consider the most worthwhile assessment to be assessment which is undertaken by me.

9. My assessment practices help students to learn independently.

10. Students are told how well they have done in relation to their own previous performance.

11. Students' learning objectives are discussed with students in ways they understand.

12. Assessment of students' work consists primarily of marks and grades.

13. I provide guidance to help my students assess their own work.

14. I identify students' strengths and advise them on how to develop them further.

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15. Students are helped to find ways of addressing problems they have in their learning.

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<tr>
<th>Scale X</th>
<th>Your assessment practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(About You)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never true</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 16. Students are encouraged to view mistakes as valuable learning opportunities. | Scale Y | How important are assessment practices for creating opportunities for students to learn? |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
|                               | (About your values)         |
|                               | Not at all important | Of limited importance | Important | Crucial | Bad practice! |

| 17. Students are helped to think about how they learn best. |

| 18. I use questions mainly to elicit reasons and explanations from my students. |

| 19. I provide guidance to help students to assess one another's work. |

| 20. Students' errors are valued for the insights they reveal about how students are thinking. |

| 21. Students are helped to understand the learning purposes of each lesson or series of lessons. |

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22. Assessment of students' work is mainly in the form of comments.

23. Students' learning objectives are determined mainly by the prescribed curriculum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale X</th>
<th>Scale Y</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your assessment practices (About you)</td>
<td>Section A continued Assessment practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How important are assessment practices for creating opportunities for students to learn? (About your values)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never true</td>
<td>Rarely true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. I provide guidance to help students assess their own learning.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>25. The main emphasis in my assessment is on what students know, understand and can do.</td>
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<tr>
<td>26. Students are helped to plan the next steps in their learning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Pupil effort is seen as important when assessing their learning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Assessment criteria are discussed with students in ways that they understand.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Students are given opportunities to assess one another's work.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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30. I regularly discuss with students ways of improving learning how to learn.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Section B</th>
<th>Scale Y</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This school now</td>
<td>Professional learning practices and beliefs of colleagues</td>
<td>How important are these practices and beliefs for creating opportunities for students to learn?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(About your colleagues)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(About your values)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>True of True of True of True of Don’t Not at all Of limited Important Crucial Bad practice!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True of no staff</td>
<td>True of few staff</td>
<td>True of some staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Staff as well as students learn in this school. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

2. Staff draw on good practice from other schools as a means to further their own professional development. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

3. Staff read research reports as one source of useful ideas for improving their practice. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

4. Staff use the web as one source of useful ideas for improving their practice. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

5. Students are consulted about how they learn most effectively. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

6. Staff relate what works in their own practice to research findings. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

7. Staff are able to see how practices that work in one context might be adapted to other contexts. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

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8. Staff use insights from their professional learning to feed into school policy development.

<table>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>How important are these practices and beliefs for creating opportunities for students to learn?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(About your colleagues)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(About your values)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True of no staff</td>
<td>True of few staff</td>
<td>True of some staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Staff reflect on their practice as a way of identifying professional learning needs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Staff experiment with their practice as a conscious strategy for improving classroom teaching and learning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Staff modify their practice in the light of feedback from their students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Staff modify their practice in the light of published research evidence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Staff modify their practice in the light of evidence from self-evaluations of their classroom practice.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Staff modify their practice in the light of evidence from evaluations of their classroom practice by managers or other colleagues.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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### Scale X

**This school now**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(About your colleagues)</th>
<th>True of no staff</th>
<th>True of few staff</th>
<th>True of some staff</th>
<th>True of most staff</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Section B continued

**Professional learning practices and beliefs of colleagues**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How important are these practices and beliefs for creating opportunities for students to learn?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(About your values)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all important</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>True of no staff</th>
<th>True of few staff</th>
<th>True of some staff</th>
<th>True of most staff</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
<th>Not at all important</th>
<th>Of limited importance</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Crucial</th>
<th>Bad Practice!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15. Staff carry out joint research/evaluation with one or more colleagues as a way of improving their practice.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. Staff regularly collaborate to plan their teaching.</td>
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<tr>
<td>17. Staff regularly observe each other in the classroom and give each other feedback.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. Staff engage in team teaching as a way of improving practice.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. If staff have a problem with their teaching they usually turn to colleagues for help.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. Teachers suggest ideas or approaches for colleagues to try in class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. Teachers make collective agreements to test out new ideas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(About your colleagues)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(About your values)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True of no staff</td>
<td>True of few staff</td>
<td>True of some staff</td>
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</table>

22. Teachers discuss openly with colleagues what and how they are learning. 
23. Staff frequently use informal opportunities to discuss how children learn. 
24. Staff offer one another reassurance and support. 
25. Staff believe that all students are capable of learning. 
26. Students in this school enjoy learning. 
27. Pupil success is regularly celebrated. 
28. Staff discuss with colleagues how students might be helped to learn how to learn.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale X</th>
<th>Section C</th>
<th>Scale Y</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This school now</td>
<td>School management and systems</td>
<td>How important are these aspects of management for creating opportunities for students to learn?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never true</td>
<td>Rarely true</td>
<td>Often true</td>
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<td>□</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1. Senior management communicates a clear vision of where the school is going.

2. Staff have a commitment to the whole school as well as to their department, key stage and/or year group.

3. Senior management promotes commitment among staff to the whole school as well as to the department, key stage and or year group.

4. There is effective communication between senior management and teachers.

5. There are processes for involving all staff in decision-making.

6. Teachers' professional know-how is used in the formulation of school policy and goals.

7. Teachers' professional know-how is used in the formulation of school policy, even where this leads to a questioning of established rules, procedures and practices.

8. Opportunities are provided for teachers to critically evaluate school policy.

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<th>Scale Y</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never true</td>
<td>Rarely true</td>
<td>Often true</td>
<td>Mostly true</td>
<td>9. Staff are actively involved in evaluating school policy.</td>
</tr>
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<td>□</td>
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<td>□</td>
<td>10. Staff participate in important decision-making.</td>
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<td>□</td>
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<td>□</td>
<td>11. There are processes for involving students in decision-making.</td>
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<td>□</td>
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<td>□</td>
<td>12. Staff have a good working knowledge of the School Development Plan.</td>
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<td>□</td>
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<td>□</td>
<td>13. Staff see the School Development Plan as relevant and useful to learning and teaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□</td>
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<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>14. Staff development time is used effectively to realise School Development Plan priorities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□</td>
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<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>15. Staff development time is used effectively in the school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□</td>
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<td>□</td>
<td>16. The school provides cover to allow staff joint planning time.</td>
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<td>□</td>
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<td>□</td>
<td>17. Teachers are encouraged to experiment with new ideas as a way of promoting professional growth.</td>
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<td>□</td>
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<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>18. Formal training provides opportunities for teachers to develop professionally.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<td>Never true</td>
<td>Rarely true</td>
<td>Often true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Teachers are helped to develop skills to assess students' work in ways that move their students on in their learning.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Teachers are helped to develop skills to observe learning as it happens in the classroom.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Management supports teachers in sharing practice with other schools through networking.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Information is collected from teachers on those aspects of their work that they themselves think they do effectively.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Information is collected from teachers on effective ways they promote learning to learn skills and knowledge among their students.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>24. Information is collected from teachers on informal teacher networking in which they play an active role.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25. Teacher-initiated networking is an integral element of staff development.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Learning how to learn is an issue discussed in staff development time.</td>
<td></td>
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