



Context

This former NPQSL participant works as a **senior teacher** and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (**SENCO**) in a **small rural primary school**. The school has 124 children on roll. The participant has worked there on a full-time basis for six years.

Career progression was the participant's main **motivation** for enrolling on the NPQSL programme. Having taught for a number of years in a variety of contexts, she realised that she needed to **develop skills of leadership and management**. NPQSL modules closing the gap, succeeding in senior leadership, school self-evaluation and improving the quality of teaching attracted the participant to the programme because she felt they could help her to address her professional development needs.

Learning about leadership

The participant names **discussions with other professionals** and the **reading materials** as aspects of the programme that she enjoyed and found particularly beneficial.

"You've got to read. It underpins everything so you're not just talking the talk. It means you can be truly outstanding by pinning your leadership on something concrete. I particularly enjoyed all the up-to-date information that the programme gave."

She was **coached** by her Headteacher and suggests she would have struggled without this because she felt she had **someone with the experience to help her when she got stuck**.

The participant feels that the **assessment tasks** related to her 'day job' but the writing up process presented particular issues. Despite careful planning of her school work so that she gave herself time to draft and re-draft,

"... it was all a bit last minute. The competencies were hard to write up. It was a case of fishing out in my head how doing the work fitted which competency."

The participant would encourage others to **make notes as you go along** to avoid back tracking. She didn't keep a reflective learning journal but wishes she has done.

Impact and influence

The participant feels that the NPQSL programme has impacted on her personally and professionally, as well as on her teams and her school;

"It has given me the confidence to know what I am talking about."

She describes working with a new team with three younger members of staff and her **credibility as a leader**. Her self-knowledge and self-belief are enabling her to influence further improvements within the school and develop partnership working with external organisations.

What next?

The participant has completed the gateway assessment for the National Professional Qualification for Headship (**NPQH**);

"I want to be a Head! I have always wanted to be a Head. I enjoy education and I love the leadership and management of it."