

# **Appendices**

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## **Information sheet for participants**

### **Doctoral thesis– Julia Longman EdD6**

## **An auto-ethnographic study of a rural school: an alternative approach to school improvement: how to embed change and gain ownership by whole school community**

### **Reasoning behind this research**

I have been looking at the process of school improvement and the speed with which change takes place for some time. I am also considering the impact speed of change may have on eventual outcomes and whether this affects factors such as the degree to which those involved come to “own” the changes requested of them. I am interested too in the mix of staff in the school e.g. people working full-time or part-time and whether this has any effect on how they view their role in school and the ownership they feel towards different initiatives. At the heart of my research is the attempt to understand how changes become embedded and thus part of the culture and ethos of a school community.

### **What I want to do**

I plan to look closely at our school over a period of one academic year. I want to look at change and at how change/improvement can be embedded and owned by the key people in a school community. I am also interested in the different perceptions of full and part-time staff and whether this affects their understanding of and ownership of the process of change within the school.

I would like to interview teaching staff and governors on three occasions during this current academic year (2009/10). Each person who agrees to take part will be interviewed about their understanding of where the school is at the start of a new academic year, where it needs to go and how to embed the improvements of recent years (if indeed they agree that there have been such improvements). Particular note will be made of any apparent differences between the responses of full-time and part-time staff. I would want to interview you again part way through the year and finally in June/July 2010 as the academic year draws to a close.

There will be a second strand to my research which involves “telling the story” of the school over the past five years. This will be based in existing documentation and my own notes and reflections about those years. Most of the evidence will be drawn from documents already in the public domain such as Ofsted reports. The story will be told from my standpoint as headteacher of the school.

### **Ethical Issues**

I am aware that you may find it difficult to refuse my request to take part in the research. Please be assured that anything you tell me will be in the strictest confidence and that I will do my utmost to ensure that it does not affect our working relationship in any way. However, should you decide not to participate, that too will not be allowed to affect us professionally. Anything asked of you in the course of this research will be additional to and outside of your normal working pattern and as such will remain entirely voluntary.

I want to be certain that you are clear about the purpose of my research and you feel you have been given enough information to be able to offer your informed consent. I will ensure that all participants remain anonymous and that no actual names or features that could identify a participant will be included in my writing. In addition I want you to know that you have the right to a) withhold or ask to have removed any information you are not comfortable with b) withdraw from the research at any point c) be consulted during the writing-up process.

There could also be ethical considerations around the fact that teachers work with children. Particular care will be taken that nothing appears in the assignment that would identify any individual child.

### **Finally**

Thank you for agreeing to help me with my research. If there is anything about which you are not clear, please ask me to explain further. Otherwise I look forward to working together.

Julia Longman

## Participant consent form

I have read the outline of Julia Longman's proposal for her assignment:

**An auto-ethnographic study of a rural school: an alternative approach to school improvement: how to embed change and gain ownership by whole school community**

and agree to take part in this research.

I understand that all references to me and others in the school will be rendered anonymous and that I have the right to:

- a) withhold or ask to have removed any information that I am not comfortable with
- b) withdraw from the research at any point
- c) be consulted during the writing process

I have been told that any information supplied by me will be used for the purposes of this research only. The completed assignment is due for submission by Autumn 2011.

**I willingly give my consent to take part in this research project.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**I give/do not give my consent to the researcher using existing notes e.g. visit notes, records of lesson observations to support the information gathered.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# SWOT ANALYSIS

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_ (optional)

Your role: \_\_\_\_\_

## SWOT analysis – July 2010

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-&gt; Small community atmosphere - everyone knows everyone, adults &amp; children alike</li> <li>-&gt; All ages mix &amp; with each other &amp; work well &amp; cooperatively. Also less tension when moving between classes</li> <li>-&gt; FS/LS1 - larger role in 'fluid' environment &amp; less formal learning allowing children to develop at own pace.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-&gt; Potential clashes of personality % of small community environment</li> <li>-&gt; Increased workload due to small staff numbers</li> <li>-&gt; Large numbers part time staff &amp; struggles with both communication &amp; consistency</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-&gt; % only small staff number, able to advance 'up ladder' more quickly. Also increased focus on each member staff about for quality performance. Management &amp; increased development opportunities</li> <li>-&gt; Children able to play larger role in school &amp; take responsibility</li> <li>-&gt; All voices are heard &amp; permitted to contribute</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-&gt; Danger of 'treading on people's toes' especially with recent staff changes - potentially only % of my current role/position?</li> <li>-&gt; <del>Small school</del> 'Bubble' - do children find it difficult in larger school environments</li> <li>-&gt; Reliance on head teacher in larger school, deputy &amp; SLT would play bigger role</li> <li>-&gt; Nowhere to hide when you need to!!</li> </ul>

Your name:

(optional)

Your role: \_

J Longman July 2010

# Interview Questions/Areas to explore

## Autumn 2009

- Where do you think the school is now? Why?
- Do you think the school has improved in the past 1 year/3 years/ 5 years? How?
- What do you think are the driving factors in any improvement?
- Do you think improvement can be embedded? How?
- Do you agree with the Ofsted/Section 48 Inspection judgements of 2006/2009?
- Do you think the school will/should be in the same/a different place by July 2010?
- What factors do you think will affect this?
- Do you think any/all staff feel 'ownership' of the improvement agenda? What about you?
- What part do you think the School Improvement Partner plays in improving school and embedding improvement?
- What do you know about the new Ofsted framework? What do you think about it?
- Do you think there are things you have done/need to do in your own practice (or role as a governor) to help the school improve?
- How do you feel about your job and role in the staff team (or as a governor)?
- Anything else?

### February 2010

- Do you think the school has moved forward since the beginning of the academic year? Why? What has affected this? Is it where you think it should be?
- Do you feel involved/ feel ownership of the change and improvements? What makes you think this?
- Do you think your colleagues/fellow governors will share your views? Why/why not?
- Do you think you have made any changes to your own practice since the start of the academic year? Have these had any impact on a) the pupils b) school improvement as a whole?
- Have your feelings about your job/role changed since September? How?
- Are you aware of any impact of the SIP, governors or headteacher on the progress of the school since September?
- Anything else?

### July 2010

- How would you describe this academic year in the life of the school? Why? What factors have been at play? Can you summarise the year in a few words?
- Do you think the school has moved forward since a) September b) February? Why? Who has affected this? Is it where you think it should be?
- Do you feel involved/ feel ownership of the change and improvements? What makes you think this? Have your feelings changed at all?
- Do you think your colleagues/governors will share your views? Why/why not? Has this changed – how?
- Do you think you have made any changes to your own practice since September/February? Have these had any impact on a) the pupils b) school improvement as a whole?
- Have your feelings about your job/role changed since September/February? How?
- Are you aware of any impact of the SIP, governors or headteacher on the progress of the school since September/February?
- Anything else?

**Interview transcripts (examples)**

**Interview transcript: Barry**

**July 2010**

- **How would you describe this academic year in the life of the school? Why? What factors have been at play? Can you summarise the year in a few words?**

A successful academic year, building on previous successful years. I don't know that I would pick any particular feature as academic success to point out. What factors have been at play? The...it's a continuation of the factors which were in place in previous years which are continuing to have an effect, such as ownership of improvement, ownership and automatic adoption of the assessment planning cycle which has become the way the school works and the involvement of all staff in the process of improvement.

***Anything else on that one? There doesn't have to be.***

Think that's it, thank you.

- **Do you think the school has moved forward since a) September b) February? Why? Who has affected this? Is it where you think it should be?**

Yes and yes, it has moved forward because it's in a process of moving forward. It hasn't moved forward from stationary – it was moving forward and it's continuing to move forward. From September, and from almost any moment you can say, there is forward movement which doesn't mean it's good solid forward movement in every aspect. Clearly it's faster in some bits than others but as an organisation, as an entity, yes it's moved forward. And the second bit was who has been influential?

***Yes, who's affected it?***

Who's affected that. Well it's primarily you, but as is the nature of management, you've had to do it by remote control. Which you've done by working with the various levers, without an 'a' in, that are available to you, such as the staff, the children, things like the School Council, the governors. And in that sense, the new chairman is making a difference by being different. And there's a good involvement of the deputy, vice I suppose, which wasn't there before.

***Anything else, or anyone else, that you think has affected it? Again, there doesn't have to be.***

No I don't think so. Oh, maybe...it may be appropriate to mention J\_\_\_\_\_ because I get the impression that what she has brought has enabled you to worry less about that aspect of the school. Whilst it's meant work, for you, I get the impression you've felt it's been useful work in that she's then been able to take over and do things and you've been able to give that side of things less 'top of the mind' attention. Or 'front of the mind' attention as one might say.

***Very perceptive of you. It's true. Very true. Is the school, on that journey, where you think it should be at this point in time?***

Well, we've got to define "should be" which I would define by "could be." In other words, if you can be...you should be as good as you can be, and it's no good saying well we'd like to be so and so, if you couldn't actually have got there. So are, is, the school as good as it can be at this point? I think being realistic it probably is. One can always wish and hope for more, but hope isn't quite the same as optimism. You can be optimistic that things will get better or you can just hope they will. So I would say broadly, yes, the school is where it should be on the journey. It would be nice to think it were further along that journey but given the constraints, given where it came from, probably one has to accept that this is about as good as it could be at this point. Which sounds like a recipe for taking the foot off the accelerator, but isn't!

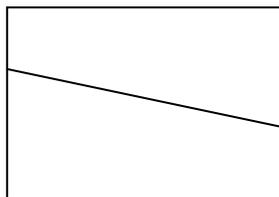
***Okay?***

Yes.

- **Do you feel involved/feel ownership of the change and improvements? What makes you think this? Have your feelings changed at all?**

I don't want it just to become a semantic discussion but it does depend on what we mean by the improvement agenda? **Yes, it does.** In so far as the governors, or the governing body, works with or discusses with primarily you about the way the school might move, the direction, the speed, the resources needed, and I think the governing body genuinely does its best to understand and then support. Then there's involvement in the agenda. Where the agenda starts to become...or where the implementation of the agenda, starts to become more things that are done, then the governing body is less involved and it's more inclined to leave, not leave that in the negligent sense, but to say that is for you and the staff to implement it. It's probably a bit garbled. **Garbled is fine.** Yes, I once did a study of policy versus, not versus, and practice local government and drew it as a rectangle with a diagonal line. One end was policy. The other end was implementation. And this diagonal line never quite reached the points, but at one end it was primarily the politicians with a bit of officer, and as you moved more towards implementation, less and less of the politician and more and more of the officer. It wasn't a vertical line which some people think it is, this is policy, this is execution; that's not the case.

cf: Local Government diagram



So agenda, yes. Implementation of the agenda, not involved in an active sense. Is that alright?

***That feels good. Do you feel you have ownership of it? And you can define ownership if you wish – I'm not going to define it for you!***

I might have to, might have to! I sound like Professor Jones of the brains trust – it all depends what you mean...

Yes, no, I think I can probably do that more simply than I could the other bit. Yes, I do feel that...I suppose another way of expressing it is 'Do I feel I could be held accountable for the agenda?'. And yes, as a governing body I think we can feel that. We don't feel I would think, as a body, and I can't speak for any other individual, that this is your agenda and all we do is let it go through on the shrug. So I think we would be happy to speak for it, whether it's skills based curriculum or not!

***Has your view of your involvement and ownership changed over the year at all?***

This year? ***Umm.*** No, I don't think it has. I think other people's view of my involvement might have changed. ***Do you want to elaborate on that...*** Oh, well, it's an aside question really, but as no longer being the chairman, people might have, I hope people they've been pleasantly surprised at how T\_\_\_\_\_ has moved into the role. I don't necessarily mean what she's done, but the general feel and atmosphere, and it hasn't been that they're still thinking of me as the chairman. I think they don't think of me. When they think, when chairman comes into mind, or governing body matters, they don't think of me. I hoped they wouldn't. I was fairly confident they wouldn't. But maybe some people have been surprised how they haven't!

***Beautifully put! I say no more. I don't necessarily agree but this isn't the moment.***

- **Do you think your colleagues/governors will share your views? Why/why not? Has this changed – how?**

If you take...if you were to take a resultant view of everybody, I would say yes. If you were to approach individuals, I think you would find it varied. Which is why we have fourteen governors and not one.

**Do you think their level of involvement and/or ownership has changed during the year?**

From my own?

**No. Their own, as in, how involved or much ownership they feel?**

Over the year? **Umm.** No, I don't think so, because for the last three, four years, there's been quite a high level of involvement anyway. So I don't know that people would feel that they are more involved than they were. Some individuals might. You've mentioned W\_\_\_\_\_, or I've sort of mentioned W\_\_\_\_\_. Now she is in an active sense probably much more involved than she was, which is good. But, that's not quite the same thing as feeling involved and feeling ownership, etc. as a group.

- **Do you think you have made any changes to your own practice since September/February? Have these had any impact on a) the pupils b) school improvement as a whole?**

No, I don't think I have. **That's fine.** No. **No reason why you should have.** No.

- **Have your feelings about your job/role changed since September/February? How?**

No, don't think they have, either, on either of those dates.

**Do you want to say how you view your role? Nice hard question for you...**

Easy question, it's the answer that's...

**You can just answer 'no, I don't want to say how'!**

Well, it's not a matter of not wanting to say how. If I say 'no' I'm saying no I don't want to. It is just, actually, I find a very difficult question to address. As you know,

and it may be you don't write any of this down, I'm not entirely convinced about the role of a governing body, and I have this view that there's a sort of spurious, democratic feel about it that makes people feel it's a good thing, and I'm not entirely sure that it is.

But within, if we set aside those questions, within the fact that we have got a governing body and it operates, then I think the role is to understand the school, to know and understand the school, as thoroughly as possible and to understand the differences between being a governor and being a member of staff. And to be prepared to discuss, in an equal sense, in other words, offer and listen to proposals for the school...and then to keep out the way.

***Do you find it a satisfying role?***

Umm. What an interesting question. Let me ask myself the same question in another way. If I weren't doing it, would there be something missing? Yes, there would be something small missing, but certainly it's not a role that I do because of any gain for me, in terms of status or feeling of achievement or to make somebody listen. It's just an interesting question. I suppose, again if you take a step back, satisfying means meeting a need. And I'm not sure that I have a need to be a governor.

***An obvious follow-in from that...why do you do it?***

Flattery, first of all, because I was asked. Then habit. I enjoy the atmosphere of the school, that's the school in its broadest sense. Of course that doesn't mean I have to be a governor in order to come in, I could enjoy that atmosphere as a volunteer helper. I've deliberately not talked about governors as volunteer helpers because I think those...the role is quite different. That's governors as distinct from the governing body. And whilst governors, as individuals, may well offer their services, I don't think it's expected nor is it written down anywhere that governors are a pool of assistants to the school.

***Any more on that?***

No, I don't think so.

***You didn't like that one did you? Sorry!***

Is that one of the questions – did you like that question?

***No! But quite a lot of that wasn't part of the question, but that's where it led.***

Oh, right.

***Sorry!***

- **Are you aware of any impact of the SIP, governors or headteacher on the progress of the school since September/February?**

Yes, but it's almost back to where we started that it's all part of the process of continual improvement. The continual journey, or is it continuous? Anyway, the ongoing journey. And, all those people that you mentioned contribute to it. Some in a more direct sense. Some in a more significant sense. Take an extreme, your role is very direct and very significant. You have the vision, you get the support, you pull the levers, and improvement is happening. Whereas the governors' role is, is much more indirect. In between those, is the School Improvement Partner, and a particular part of that's the Performance Management process, which, hopefully, is supportive.

The prime document, I suppose, I was going to say instrument but document, is the School Development Plan because that's the vision, or it contains the vision, and the actions to move the school forward. And everything else should support that. So, budget, discussions at governing body, performance management of your

performance management, and that that you are involved with with other members of staff and under management chain. They're all about the School Development Plan and moving towards, towards that. And I think we've got that structure right now. There's always a danger, if you don't keep your head about you, that the budget drives the plan, or that a list of courses drives the training, rather than the development plan reveals the need for training which causes the list of courses to be consulted, rather than 'that looks interesting'.

- **Anything else?**

***This is your opportunity to say anything that you haven't had the chance to say about this year. I don't want anyone to go away thinking 'Oh, I wish I'd said that and she hasn't asked it'.***

Good to have notice of that. Well, I couldn't have notice of that one because I wouldn't know what the other questions were, would I?

***No! You can always come back to me if you want to.***

No, I am less closely involved, personally, less closely involved than I was. So, I'm probably, well I am less aware of some of the operational matters than I was. So, the ship is continuing in the same direction but I am less aware of the activity going on below decks to keep it that way.

And the other thing, that I mentioned before, which is somewhat scary, is the influence which you can have without knowing you are having it, without intending to have it. And, it could be that with a different chairman, the school is a slightly different organism. Which isn't good or bad. Well, I say that. It might be slightly good because, if, you can get too same-ish, and a change of thinking, particularly as the chairman acts as a bit of a sounding board for you. You get a different discussion with a different chairman, which may or may not affect your thinking. But, even if it doesn't, it probably means you will think again in a different way, and then maybe you come to the same conclusion, maybe you don't. But, I think that's probably broadly to the good.

Fortunately, I've never, I've often, I've always I think been clear about what I as a governor and I as a chairman would need to know about the operation of the school. And I've never had any problem with not knowing about some particular operational aspect. If somebody says 'is school in today?', which in fact somebody did say to me in the post office, it didn't bother me to say 'I don't know'. That's not a governor matter particularly. That's something that is about the way the school operates.

Think that's it.

***That'll do. One last question...***

Oh. Right.

***I know, there's always a little sneaky one isn't there? If I was to ask you to summarise the year in a single word, or a phrase, how would you do it?***

Progress maintained.

***And is there anything you want to say to elaborate on that?***

I was only given a word or a phrase!

***I know, that's quite intentional. There doesn't have to be, you can just leave it at that.***

No, it would only be a repetition of what I said at the beginning actually, that it's the journey, and the journey's continued.

## Interview transcript: Jane

July 2010

- **How would you describe this academic year in the life of the school? Why? What factors have been at play? Can you summarise the year in a few words?**

It has felt very very mixed. For me it has been a personal rollercoaster. Lots of changes of staff again. Keystage 1 has been a big long journey for me, up and down, lots of change, working with lots of different people over the year. It has affected the school because of how you are feeling. It takes energies away from other things when you are putting them into different people. Routines etc. are not up and running. It has affected my performance.

The school has benefitted from the changes, especially in Keystage 1. Lots of major stuff has been done. Hopefully we are now at a point where things will run more smoothly. It will take less energy out of the school.

There have been improvements but it feels slow. Keystage 1 is getting there. ICT is getting there too – and other things. This year has been hard. Next year we should see the benefits from what has been put in. There is a cycle: investment in [something] leads to rewards later on. Hopefully the people taking over Keystage 1 will benefit from what I've put in. Now I need to do it again in Class 2.

I am disappointed the room etc is not ready to go. There is lots to do because of the state it has been left in. But I don't feel the Keystage 1 children are disadvantaged by me not being there – I have set it up, I don't need to be present to see the results. It has good to see the children I've worked with doing well.

I am slightly sad not to have a good starting point again this coming year with the move to Class 2.

I would summarise the year as a rollercoaster with lots of positive outcomes.

- **Do you think the school has moved forward since a) September b) February? Why? Who has affected this? Is it where you think it should be?**

a) definitely

b) .....(thinking).... It feels very Keystage 1 heavy.

Years 5 and 6 naturally have progressed. Keystage 1 has made progress. But the middle part of the school still needs work. There has been progress in ICT.

The curriculum review seemed bigger than it was. Maybe we were good already.

We haven't made much headway with targets. They are still a sticking point. I am not sure they are really benefitting the children. Maybe we are just paying lip service?

The Senior Leadership Team began to improve but it seems to have stood still again. The role of the SLT needs to be established. I am not quite sure what our role is.

Our building is so clean and tidy. An outsider's view would be that this is a good environment. It has improved – both building work and the organisation of the rooms have had an effect. But there is no respect from the children. They often didn't know where stuff went. It needs basic resources and organisation.

With the journey it has had, the school is not in a bad place at all. It has improved no end in the two years since I came. I don't know why – don't know what else we could have done. But there is so much more we could do to improve it. For example the SLT is not always focussing enough on basics (we are good at cross-curricular learning). But maybe it can't be done because of things such as the size of the school, staffing, money. We try to do everything. Sometimes I wonder what we do well.

We need to decide what is important and what isn't. It can hinder people if you try to do too much. You can't do it all well. I worry that we try to do too much and then wonder why the basics are not good enough. Do we need to shift our focus?

- **Do you feel involved/ feel ownership of the change and improvements? What makes you think this? Have your feelings changed at all?**

I feel involved. I feel I have definitely had a part to play. I have ownership of the bits I feel involved in such as ICT and Keystage 1. I am not entirely sure currently because of the imminent changes. We will need to redefine roles.

Being allowed to get on with it by you, the headteacher, - your trust in me to do it – it makes me feel good, that I can do things well. I am less effective when I am not sure what I can do. A green light gives me confidence. If I am worried, I am not sure I will step over the mark: I am nervous, unsure.

There has to be some uniformity but when it comes to your own area .....?? It's a small school, easier for the headteacher to know what's going on. Hard to get away from it. Sometimes I feel stifled. I like to have space and can lose security and confidence because I worry about doing things wrong. Because we are small, it can be very intense – it is hard to change.

My view has changed, especially about Keystage 1. I was slowly able to take my foot off the pedal a bit, especially when Emily arrived. I feel like I have done a good job, now there is someone able to keep it going. I am not needed (that's a positive) so I can be involved somewhere else.

My view has also changed as the SLT has been up and down. Our involvement has been less but I think it naturally drops at the end of the year. It's not an intention on anyone's part. One of those things that happens ..... but not lost. There is absorption in our own little bit, not time to think of other areas.

- **Do you think your colleagues/governors will share your views? Why/why not? Has this changed – how?**

It is difficult to answer for governors but there are probably key governors who feel fully involved.

It is really hard to involve everyone all the time. Not sure you can do it.

#### **What about your colleagues?**

Some may share it. But some people aren't honest and you never get to know anyway. I am definitely speculating.... I think they have the opportunity to be involved. But maybe people who have been here a long time may not feel able to take ownership. Perhaps history hinders. Have they been in one place too long?

- **Do you think you have made any changes to your own practice since September/February? Have these had any impact on a) the pupils b) school improvement as a whole?**

I have made lots of changes. I feel I needed to change. I worry that I have become too worried and that hinders me a lot. I worry about making mistakes.

I always had it in me. I had more confidence that what I was doing was right. It takes a while to adapt. I have been out of my comfort zone since the moment I arrived!

I feel like going back into a 'normal classroom,' what I am used to and feel comfortable with –not team teaching. I will get my confidence back as me!

My focus is shifting – it needs to shift back onto teaching.

- **Have your feelings about your job/role changed since September/February? How?**

My feelings have definitely changed. I think a lot of work has been done – think back to September: no room, outside area not set up

I need an injection of new ideas. A lot of output. You run out of steam.

Since February it has been even more a case of 'right, come on, keep going.' Diane leaving was an opportunity to improve again. I am a bit like that, big bursts of energy then stop for a bit. Could be projects that are big for a while – ICT has been huge. I am not an even keel person but I would like to be more like that. I can't maintain that pace all the time.

- **Are you aware of any impact of the SIP, governors or headteacher on the progress of the school since September/February?**

The SIP? No. Sure she has impacted, I know the headteacher bounces ideas from her. The only thing I know is helping to clarify your thinking.

The governors have an impact but I think things are mainly driven by the headteacher. I don't know what they do.

I can't, off the top of my head, think of things you've done apart from what I've been involved with. Maths and English progression stuff. So much goes on that I don't know. I can't pinpoint it all. Things come up in bits. The headteacher's role is colossal but so hard to define. I can't pull out bits... Things like Ellie's AST and my Leadership Pathways wouldn't happen without the headteacher. You are generally the drive behind everything. Not much happens without the headteacher driving it. I would like to think a lot of the ICT stuff happened without you worrying about it. It doesn't seem right to make decisions without telling the headteacher. Does that sometimes stop people doing things? Is there a time factor too? Sometimes you need to share things (e.g. SATs results) more widely.

- **Anything else?**

I feel bad that I can't come up with better examples. If the headteacher didn't have the vision for the building etc the children would still be stuck in an upstairs classroom with only a balcony for outdoor learning. Now I would send [my daughter] there. The children get a really good deal despite the flaws.

It all massively depends on the staff. I think there is a part-time/full-time issue. Two well matched part-timers should be as good as a full-timer. But the school is vulnerable. If we were all full-time we would only have two or three teachers. At least with part-timers there are more people to share the load.

**Excerpts from the headteacher's (my) reflective journal**

## Headteacher's (my) reflective journal.

5/11/09. A ~~very~~ re-identified week.

A rare opportunity to stop & think! And even now there are canteen staff chatting & drinking coffee in same room.... My constant Btwe is how to find time to consider where we are & then plan & carry out things needed for improvement. I have learnt a) to shut out noise and b) to multitask but it is wearing & sometimes strain really shows....

Even here, I was talking to School office - daily check in - while supervising children. Very hard to make sensible decisions of over thousands of pounds of Sch. budget while on mobile phone in middle of ~~work~~!

It is no wonder HTs go under... and some of us are teaching too!

Even this week, why do I need to be here? Yes, my concerns re' overnight safety but if I had good deputy or senior teacher who was prepared/able to be here then I wouldn't have to be.

Feel totally understaffed yet budget under threat - danger of not balancing next year. Could have to consider redundancy.....?

## Headteachers (my) reflective journal

31st April 2010 - Easterhols.

I think my mood was captured by new UEA password yesterday - new start!

Feeling quite +ve about research & about school. Amazing what a week's good sleep & relaxation can do. Unfortunate thing is that I know will feel overwhelmed again as soon as term starts next week.

Always problem that job can feel (and is?) totally un-do-able. Well meaning friends often suggest that I should prioritise. What they don't understand is that I already have & am dealing only with very urgent!

This seems to have been one of most difficult years since I started at [redacted]. So much to do. I feel it is a mixture of increased/changed govt. expectations combined with staffing issues etc. One of things that has made major difference in improvement process - building works - has taken up so much time. I guess this is part of whole vision & determination thing: there to be prepared to allow aspects to impinge - only in short term when know they are good for long term. Went into school today & was really encouraged by & proud of how good everything looks. First time this year that teachers have really had chance to spend time getting ready for new term. And even this time had to work, build again as were in re. snagging.....

My time seems to have been entirely taken over once again. No possibility of acceptable work/life balance it seems. Really hard to manage workload as soon as I term more than I did a week ago. v. difficult to find time to discuss things with [redacted] & [redacted] -> has it's own knock on effect. [redacted] commented on office staffing as potential area of -ve. impact in her interview this am. Noted issues of communication - not always as smooth as could be & impact of PT staff. Observed effect it must have on me -