A Multi-perspective Study of School Business Management in England

Paul Wilfred Armstrong

A thesis submitted to The University of Manchester for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

In the Faculty of Humanities

2014

School of Education
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ABSTRACT

The pace and intensity of educational reform over the past quarter of a century has seen wholesale changes to the nature and organisation of schooling and mounting demands placed on school leaders (Chapman and Gunter, 2009) with increasingly burdensome workloads blamed for problems relating to the recruitment and retention of headteachers (Whitaker, 2003).

Since 2002, and largely in response to these concerns, successive governments have invested in national programmes to strengthen the potential of a previously fragmented section of the school workforce whose skills and knowledge are particularly well-placed to improve capacity and reduce the workload of headteachers in the areas of administration and finance: the School Business Manager (SBM). A decade on there is thought to be approximately 13,000 SBM posts across the country (Summerson, 2009) forming an integral part of the school workforce. So how has the role developed in that time? What influence are SBMs having in the schools in which they operate? What kind of work does the SBM role encompass in a modern day educational setting?

This thesis focuses on the emergence of SBMs in English schools, specifically drawing upon the composition of the role; the areas of school in which they are impacting and; the facilitators and barriers to the development of successful models of school business management. The research strategy employs a multi-perspective, case study design to explore the sphere of activity of the SBM in a range of schools of different types and phases. A mixed-methods approach was adopted to collect documentary, survey and interview evidence from a number of sources and school stakeholders.

The findings identify significant diversity in terms of the responsibilities undertaken by SBMs, the areas of educational provision the role can incorporate and the type of impact they are able to make within, between and beyond schools. The evidence also highlights the varying degrees of leadership and management being exercised by SBMs in different settings while underlining the cultural and contextual factors that can facilitate and inhibit the success of school business management models. What emerges is a role that can be of meaningful, tangible and sustainable benefit to schools but one that is still to be fully accepted, appreciated and understood in some quarters of the school system. To conclude, a heuristic of different approaches to school business management is presented to provide a speculative consideration of some of the key characteristics of school business management models across different school types. This working model is put forward as a means of stimulating further reflection on the implications of the findings.
DECLARATION

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am eternally grateful to my supervisor, Chris Chapman, for the invaluable support, guidance and encouragement he has provided me over the last four years. Thanks also to my co-supervisor, Charlotte Woods, for all her help and constructive commentary on various drafts of this work; to Daniel Muijs for his academic stewardship and advice, particularly during the initial stages of the thesis; and to all the research participants who kindly spared me their precious time and insights. I must also mention Alison Wilson who was instrumental in my decision to embark on a PhD.

Finally, and most importantly, I would like to say an enormous ‘thank you’ to Fi, for so many, many reasons, but essentially her unwavering patience, understanding and reassurance without which I would never have written this thesis.
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<td>Advanced School Business Manager</td>
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<td>Office for Standards in Education</td>
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The education sector, so often at the epicentre of political reform (Harris, 2009), has undergone unprecedented levels of state-mandated change over the last 20 years (Gibton, 2004) with far reaching consequences both within and beyond the school community (Gunter and Butt, 2005; Chapman and Gunter, 2009).

Increasing demands have been made on school leaders by trends such as the devolution of management to individual schools (Caldwell, 2008); the growing quantity, sophistication and use of pupil data (Bradley et al, 2000); substantial increases in the numbers of support staff (Blatchford et al, 2009) and the growing assumption that schools will work with other agencies to provide services beyond basic education and outside traditional school hours (DfES, 2003). After teaching, school leadership has been found to play a key role in student learning (Printy 2010; Leithwood et al, 2006; MacBeath, 1998) school effectiveness (Reynolds, 1991; Sammons et al, 1995; Hallinger and Heck, 1999) and school improvement (Copland, 2003; Heck and Hallinger, 2010) and yet increased workload and complexity associated with school leadership are believed, in part at least, to be responsible for present difficulties internationally in recruiting and retaining suitable headteachers (Whitaker, 2003; Anderson 2011; MacBeath, 2011).

In 2001, a government commissioned report highlighted increasingly burdensome workloads for headteachers as a significant factor in their declining numbers and a crisis in recruitment while underscoring the potential of suitably qualified School Business Managers (SBMs) to take over some of the diversity of administrative and financial tasks from educational leaders (PriceWaterhouseCoopers, 2001). The government in England responded by announcing a large-scale development programme aimed at ‘professionalising’ this previously ‘disparate and fragmented section of the education workforce.
involved in school finance and administration’ (Woods et al, 2012, p.142). In 2002, a suite of training programmes for SBMs was launched by the National College for School Leadership \(^1\) (NCSL), thereby providing a previously unavailable means of recruitment, development and accreditation for incumbents of the role and providing a clear career pathway for the ‘profession’.

The number of SBMs in England has risen, year on year, since 2002 (Education Executive, 2008), there are currently thought to be over 10,000 SBM posts nationwide (Summerson, 2009). But what are the implications of this sharp increase in the numbers of a role that, prior to 2002, had very few members? Certainly, their emergence has been met with apprehension, even resistance, from certain quarters of the educational workforce (Coulbeck, 2006). Equally, the progress and development of this emergent profession has been facilitated by the support and encouragement of many school stakeholders (University of Manchester, 2010). Yet despite their forming an increasingly integral part of the English school system, there has been very little academic research conducted with SBMs (Woods, 2009; Mertkan, 2011).

In 2008, motivated by this paucity of research, I embarked upon this doctoral research project with the aim of exploring the role and impact of the SBM in England. My own interest in this specific area had developed while working on a large-scale evaluation of a national initiative to promote innovative approaches to shared school business management solutions\(^2\) (University of Manchester, 2010). As a researcher on this project, I was fortunate to be able to visit a number of schools across the country to interview school leaders, SBMs and other educational stakeholders in a range of contexts and who were employing a variety of approaches to school business management in their settings. During

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1 The National College for School Leadership (NCSL) was established by the then New Labour Government in 2000 to deliver leadership programmes, support research and stimulate innovation and debate whilst raising the profile of school leadership and putting in place the world’s largest leadership development programme by 2004 (NCSL, 2001). Today the NCSL develops leaders of schools and early years’ settings via a range of leadership development and training programmes tailored to leaders at all levels whilst also funding leadership research (NCSL, 2012).

2 This research, entitled the School Business Management Demonstration Project Programme, was funded by the NCSL and conducted by a team, of which I was a member, at the University of Manchester’s School of Education from 2007-10. A more detailed account of this project and its links to this thesis can be found in Chapter 3.
this time it became apparent that while SBMs appeared to be playing an increasingly significant role in the operation of their schools, their presence in the system and how their role was perceived had, to a certain extent, polarised opinion. I found this intriguing and, considering the rapidly increasing volume of SBMs within the school system in England, felt this might be an area worthy of deeper exploration. After a series of reconnaissance conversations with participating SBMs and school leaders from this original project and academic colleagues at the University of Manchester, the idea for a doctoral research project based around SBMs was developed.

1.2 Focus of thesis

This thesis focuses on SBMs in English schools, specifically drawing upon their working practice; the composition of the role; the areas of school in which they can make an impact; and the facilitators and barriers to their effectiveness.

The study involves three strands of data collection and analysis. The first strand uses documentary evidence to establish the contextual background of the schools and participants involved in the study. The second strand utilises a survey instrument to examine participant perspectives on the role of the SBM. The third, and largest, strand investigates the key areas of focus via a series of interviews with SBMs, headteachers and other school stakeholders conducted over sequential data collection phases throughout the study.

The overarching aim of this thesis is to explore the emerging practice of SBMs in England. In addressing this aim the thesis is guided by the following research questions:

\textbf{RQ1: What roles and responsibilities are SBMs undertaking within, between and beyond schools?}

\textbf{RQ2: How do school business managers exercise leadership and management within, between and beyond schools?}
**RQ3:** What types of impact are SBMs having within, between and beyond schools?

**RQ4:** What are the facilitators and barriers associated with the development of successful models of school business management?

To comprehensively explore these questions the study draws upon data from 33 interviews with SBMs, headteachers and other school stakeholders working at six distinct case study sites across England that employ a model of school business management across a single schools or group of schools. Survey and background data, also collected at each site, supplements the interview data.

### 1.3 Structure of thesis

The thesis comprises eight chapters. Following this introduction, the second chapter examines the literature surrounding school business management and other key concepts relating to change, culture, leadership and management within which the thesis is situated.

Chapter 3 discusses the origins of the thesis and the background research that informed its development. It also outlines the philosophical assumptions underpinning the thesis, the steps taken in, and the rationale behind, the construction of the research design and chosen methods of data collection.

Chapter 4 describes the research design and methods, the sample selection, the development of the research instruments and piloting process, the three strands of data collection and data analysis procedure. This section also discusses the steps taken to establish trustworthiness in the data and considers some of the limitations of the research design.

The next two chapters report the findings from the study. Chapter 5 comprises four accounts that cover each of the individual case study sites while Chapter 6 comprises a cross-case analysis drawing together the key themes that have emerged from the data.
Chapter 7 provides a deeper discussion of the key themes that have emerged from the findings in relation to the concepts discussed in the literature review and the research questions guiding the thesis. A conceptual framework of school business management is then presented as a heuristic to stimulate further reflections around the implications of the study. The final section of this chapter returns to the research questions guiding this thesis to assess how far they have been addressed by the findings and to outline the ways in which the thesis has made an original contribution to the existing knowledge base. Suggestions for further research are also put forward.

The eighth and final chapter offers a reflection on the research process whilst considering the on-going and substantial transformation of the educational landscape in England since and the potential implications this has for School Business Management and further research in this area.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEWING THE LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

We live in times of constant and rapid change. For organisations to adapt to and flourish in such conditions requires strong leadership and management (Kotter, 1996; Bass, 2000; Rowe, 2001; Herald et al, 2008). The education sector in England has faced as much, if not more, turbulence as other sectors over the past two decades with widespread reforms significantly altering the ways in which schools are structured and operate (Chitty, 2004). Consequently, demands on schools and school leaders have increased as education has been restructured to adopt more commercial traits (Whitty, 2008). This has generated significant challenges for the headteacher whose role has expanded in both capacity and diversity with a range of pressures that have become impossible to deal with independently (Bottery, 2007). Yet this dismantling and rebuilding of the school system has also created new spaces that have been populated by non-teaching professionals, with different skill sets, to ease the pressure on headteachers and facilitate the expanding multiplicity of services schools are expected to provide (Edmond and Price, 2009; Gunter and Butt, 2005). Against this backdrop, the role of the SBM has emerged, evolved and developed from a position primarily associated with school finances and administration to an organisational management role with a much wider range of responsibility (Southworth, 2010).

The purpose of this chapter is to contextualise the thesis by positioning it within a framework of academic literature from the areas outlined above. Following this introduction, the chapter is structured as follows:

- The first section is organised into three sub-sections. The first covers organisational change and the importance of organisational culture. The second discusses educational change and school culture. The third takes a closer look at leadership, as a central function in the initiation, direction and coordination of organisational change, before considering this
concept within the context of education. This sub-section also includes a discussion of the interconnected yet distinctive notion of management and its role in schools;

- The second section discusses the public sector reforms in England over the last quarter of a century to consider how they have impacted upon education and the national school system and created the conditions for the emergence of SBMs. This section also explores the increased emphasis on inter-school collaboration, brought about by educational reform, the dynamics of which have also created spaces for SBMs to operate in;

- The third and final section provides a sharper and more specific focus on SBMs taking a historical perspective to examine the origins and evolution of the role in English state schools.

2.2 Change, culture and leadership

2.2.1 Organisational change

The means by which organisations rearrange, reorganise, restructure and resist in response to outside environmental influence has produced a substantial body of research literature and theory generation. The following sub-section discusses some of the more established and widely documented ideas and theories of organisational change to provide a baseline from which to develop and contextualise the other sections of the chapter.

Amongst the first to study organisational development scientifically was Kurt Lewin who believed that for organisational change to be successful it was necessary to discard old behaviours, structures, processes and culture before adopting new ones. He devised a three-step model of change beginning by unfreezing the existing mentality of the organisation where inactivity is overcome, the previous mind-set dismantled and defence mechanisms bypassed. The second step is the movement to the new level. This is the stage when the change is happening, a period of crisis and confusion where old orthodoxies are being confronted by unfamiliar new ones. The third and final step is freezing this
new level when the organisation begins to settle in to the new systems and processes and life returns to relative normality (Lewin, 1947). According to Hendry (1996), Lewin’s planned approach to organisational change forms the basis of much of the theory in this area whereby one may ‘scratch any account of creating and managing change and the idea that change is a three-stage process which necessarily begins with a process of unfreezing will not be far below the surface’ (p. 624). Responding to criticisms of being too broad, writers and theorists have expanded on Lewin’s model increasing the number of steps or stages to seven (Lippitt et al, 1958) and eight (Cummings and Huse, 1989). Further still, Bullock and Batten (1985), based on a review of over 30 planned approach models, developed a four step integrated model of planned change to take account of both the change phases (i.e. the states the organisation moves through as it changes) and the change processes (i.e. the methods utilised to move through these states) giving it broad applicability to a wider range of change situations. Such step-by-step change theories are commonly known as ‘planned approaches’ within the change literature.

However, the planned approach, though long established and highly influential, has come under criticism for a number of reasons neatly summarised by Burnes (1996). Firstly, the focus is on small-scale processes and does not account for faster paced change on a larger, more transformational scale. Secondly, planned approaches do not allow for crisis situations that may require a more directive approach to change. Thirdly, such models assume all stakeholders within an organisation are willing and complicit in implementing the change and give little insight into the resolution of internal politics and resistance which are all too common in change situations. These approaches also presume that organisations function under stable conditions and do not account for the increasingly unpredictable and chaotic modern day environment. Wilson (1992) suggests that planning the change process with predetermined aims and methods places too much responsibility on senior managers who may not have a full appreciation of the consequences of their actions.
In an attempt to address these shortcomings an alternative approach to organisational change was developed. Known as the emergent model, this approach views change as driven from the bottom up rather than top down with a rapid and unpredictable nature that makes it unfeasible for senior managers to effectively plan and respond to (Kanter et al, 1992). As such, responsibility for implementing change is progressively delegated and distributed so that the role of the leader is to create the conditions within the organisation that facilitate change (i.e. risk taking, experimentation) and to cultivate a workforce capable of both identifying where change is required and of initiating it. It is also the responsibility of the leader to develop a shared vision or common goal that dictates the direction the organisation should take and gauges the suitability of the change process (Burnes, 1996). This model views change as a continual and fluid process requiring adaptation and malleability to constantly shifting situations and circumstances. It is seen as a learning rather than procedural process and has also been labelled organisational learning (Burnes, 1996; Dunphy and Stace, 1993).

Criticisms levelled at this approach are that it is incoherent and made up of a distinct group of models united more in their doubts about the planned approach to organisational change rather than in agreement of the alternative (Bamford and Forrester, 2003). In an attempt to identify key differences and similarities between some of the more established emergent models of change Todnem By (2005) compared Kanter et al’s Ten Commandments for Executing Change (1992) with Kotter’s Eight-Stage Process for Successful Organizational Transformation (1996) and Luecke’s Seven Steps (2003). Whilst each approach is distinct there are some common agreements of what successful organisational change constitutes. Most notable are the requirement for a clearly identified and strong leadership role or guiding coalition, the development of a shared vision and strategy and that new systems and processes are embedded and institutionalised within the culture of the organisation. Essentially, all these authors agree that leadership and culture play a key role in organisational change.
2.2.2 Organisational culture

The notion of organisational culture is rooted in anthropology and the work of authors such as Clifford Geertz whose seminal book *The Interpretations of Cultures*, first published in 1973, proved highly influential to organisational culture theorists as the concept gathered pace during the late 1970s. He describes culture as ‘the fabric of meaning in terms of which human beings interpret their experience and guide their action’ (Geertz, 1993, p. 145) and defined it as ‘an ordered system of meaning and of symbols, in terms of which interaction takes place’ (p. 144). This symbolic description based around language and communication gained popularity with the theorists of organisational culture who began to view and analyse organisations as communities, with their own individual cultures. Pettigrew (1979) describes how:

\[ ... purpose, commitment, and order are generated in an organization both through the feelings and actions of its founder and through the amalgam of beliefs, ideology, language, ritual, and myth we collapse into the label of organizational culture. \]

(Pettigrew, 1979, p. 572)

Others such as Jelinek *et al* (1983) suggest ‘redirecting attention away from some of the commonly accepted “important things” (such as structure or technology) and toward the (until now) less-frequently examined elements raised to importance by the new metaphor (such as shared understandings, norms, or values)’ (p. 331). Similarly, Louis (1983) describes the organisation as being ‘more than a collection of roles positioned on an organisational chart. It has a personality of sorts, often referred to as organisational culture’ (p. 232).

Interest in organisational culture was in many ways catalysed by economic activity in the 1970s, when international competition had increased substantially, leading to the United States being flooded by international industries of which many, particularly the Japanese, outperformed their American rivals (Kotter and Heskett, 1992). This generated interest as to whether they held a distinct
corporate culture that was facilitating higher performance (Tharp, 2009). What followed was an explosion of literature on organisational effectiveness arguing that culture could not only be managed but manipulated and that the cultivation of a strong culture within a business was a central driver to success and change (Ouchi, 1981; Peters and Waterman, 1982; Deal and Kennedy, 1982).

2.2.2.1 Defining the concept
The study of organisational culture has produced a substantial body of literature yet has also proved problematic for writers to define. For instance, a comprehensive review by Verbeke et al (1998) unearthed 54 different definitions of the concept proposed between 1960 and 1993.

One of the earliest and perhaps most quoted definitions of organisational culture is ‘the way we do things around here’ credited to Bower (1966, p. 22) but later popularised by Deal and Kennedy (1982). Whilst Bower’s widely accepted description captures the essence of the concept, definitions became more sophisticated as the notion of organisational culture gained more scholarly attention. Kilman (1985) likened the culture of an organisation to the personality of the individual, a sort of subconscious entity, which drives and shapes the elements of the organisation we can see. His description is aligned with that of Louis (1983, highlighted above) and is also consistent with Lindahl (2006) who conducted a comprehensive review of the concept and suggests the biggest issue surrounding our understanding of organisational culture is whether it defines the organisation (i.e. what the organisation is) or is simply one aspect of the organisation (i.e. something it has). He concludes that ‘the preponderance of opinion seems to fall on the side of culture being something that most organisations have’ (p.3). Indeed, according to Douglas (1986) individual members can be understood as representations of the collective culture of the organisation to which they belong. In this sense, their actions and behaviours therefore reflect the needs, preferences and priorities of the organisation.

So culture, like an individual personality, is something organisations possess but what does it constitute? Deal and Kennedy (1982) identify four key dimensions
they believe encapsulate organisational culture; the values - beliefs held by members which lie at the very centre of the organisation, the heroes - those who represent the values, rites and rituals - the routines and interaction of everyday life and the culture network - the underlying chain of command whereby everyone knows their position. Connors and Lake (1988) suggest rites and rituals, stories and symbols, and language are all key constituents to an organisations culture while Douglas (1986) suggests such shared cognitions, that serve to inform and shape the thoughts and perceptions of organisational members, are taught to new members during the initial process of socialisation. For Owens and Steinhoff (1989) the many definitions of organisational culture are dominated by two key components: norms and assumptions. Norms are the unwritten rules and shared beliefs by which members of the organisation operate and which dictate behaviour as acceptable and appropriate. Assumptions are more deeply embedded within an organisation and can be understood as the foundations on which the behavioural norms are constructed:

>Cultural assumptions are tacit instead, unconsciously taken for granted ... the cultural norms in the organisation - informal, unwritten, but highly explicit and powerful in influencing behaviour - arise directly from the underlying assumptions.

(Owens and Steinhoff, 1989, p. 11)

The idea that there are different levels of culture conscious and unconscious, observable and tacit is one that pervades much of the literature (e.g. Rousseau, 1990; Wilkins and Patterson, 1985; Schein, 1985, 1992, 2004). Schein’s definition of organisational culture comprises many familiar ideas of shared assumptions and acceptable group behaviour. However, a defining element of his theory is the change perspective whereby ‘learning, development, and planned change cannot be understood without considering culture as the primary source of resistance to change’ (Schein, 1992, p. 14). He describes organisational culture as:

A patter of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration that
has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.

(Schein, 2004, p. 17)

To illustrate his ideas and aid understanding about what organisational culture constitutes Schein developed the following model (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Three Levels of Culture**

![Figure 1: Three Levels of Culture](image)

Visible organisational structures and processes

Strategies, goals, philosophies (espoused justifications)

Unconscious, taken-for-granted beliefs, perceptions, thoughts and feelings (ultimate source of values and action)

(Schein, 1992)

At the surface level are the *Artifacts* comprising the physical and observable elements of the organisation from the architecture of the building to the way members dress (e.g. uniform). They also include things like formal descriptions of organisational arrangements (e.g. leadership, management and staffing structures). Whilst artifacts are easy to observe and describe and undoubtedly influence how members behave one should be cautious in trying to infer too much from them alone:

*Symbols alone are ambiguous, and one can only test one’s insight into what something may mean if one has also experienced the culture at the deeper levels of values and assumptions*

(Schein, 2004, p.27)
For Schein, the next level of culture is the *Espoused Beliefs*. These describe the conscious strategies, goals and philosophies of the organisation (e.g. mission statement, aims and objectives) and are created as solutions to problems or as ways for the group to move forward in response to outside influences. Such solutions are often the product of an individual perspective (typically the leader) as to what action ought to be taken and which, if proven correct and reinforced over time, will eventually come to be seen as normal in a process described as ‘social validation’ where:

> ... certain values are confirmed only by the shared social experience of a group ... In these realms the group learns that certain values, as initially promulgated by founders and leaders, “work”... And, as they continue to work, they gradually become transformed into non-discussible assumptions supported by articulated sets of beliefs, norms, and operational rules.

(Schein, 2004, p. 29)

The espoused beliefs are conscious and predict the behaviour at the artifacts level, to a point, yet they cannot fully explain an organisation’s culture. For this, one requires a deeper understanding, which brings us to the third level of culture.

The *Underlying Assumptions* represent the very essence of organisational culture. They are the result of organisational members becoming so accustomed to certain beliefs and values that to behave in any other way would be inconceivable. Unlike the espoused beliefs they operate largely at an unconscious level and tend to be undisputable:

> Culture as a set of basic assumptions defines for us what to pay attention to, what things mean, how to react emotionally to what is going on, and what actions to take in various kinds of situations.

(Schein, 2004, p. 32)
Furthermore the human need for cognitive stability means any attempt to try and alter these assumptions will often be met with anxiety and rigorous defence from group members. This then is the challenge for leaders who need to be aware of the underlying assumptions, should they be required to confront them in order to remain in control of their organisation and move it in their preferred direction.

For Schein organisational culture and leadership are closely related and both largely dependent on and influenced by one another. He views them as:

... two sides of the same coin in that leaders first create cultures when they create groups and organisations ... but if cultures become dysfunctional it is the unique function of leadership to perceive the functional and dysfunctional elements of the existing culture and to manage cultural evolution in such a way that the group can survive.

(Schein, 1992, p.15)

There are elements of Schein’s theory that have proved problematic for some authors. For instance, Lakomski (2001) questions the idea that the leader can be both a component of the culture of an organisation yet able to remove him or herself from it if necessary (i.e. when the culture has become dysfunctional). This suggests that the leader is somehow intellectually superior to the rest of the group ‘yet leaders, as we know, are neither omniscient nor infallible, their interpretations of the situation may be wrong’ (p. 71). She also highlights the absence of an explanation of how group members actually learn the values, beliefs and assumptions as well as a lack of consideration of environmental factors on the culture of an organisation. Nevertheless, Schein’s theory proves a useful vehicle for understanding the mechanics of culture in organisations.

The previous sub-sections have discussed the inter-related concepts of organisational change and organisational culture whilst underscoring the integral role of leadership in initiating and managing change and influencing culture. In the context of this thesis, such notions are helpful when thinking
about the ways in which schools, as organisations, have developed and grown in recent years into larger, more multi-faceted operations than previously with a wider remit of non-educational responsibility. These changes have facilitated an increased requirement for SBMs to support headteachers with the effective organisational leadership and management of their schools. Yet such changes, and the considerable influx and increase of senior staff members who are not trained educators, has implications for the organisational culture of schools and the norms, attitudes and behaviours of the individuals who work within them. With this in mind, the following sub-sections will place the concepts of organisational change and organisational culture within the school context to describe and discuss the inter-related notions of educational change and school culture.

2.2.3 Educational change

According to Sahlberg (2003), the history of large-scale educational change in Western countries can be broadly summarised into four phases. The first occurred during the 1960s when educational reforms were based around external directives focused on transforming teaching and curriculums. The second phase, in the 1970s, was a time of discontent with state schooling whereby public funding for educational change initiatives decreased significantly. The 1980s brought a third phase of increased autonomy and decision making for schools and education systems at the local level. Subsequently, schools and their authorities became more accountable for initiating change. In the 1990s a fourth phase emerged that focused more on organisational learning, system reform and a return to change initiatives on a grander scale. As with theories of organisational change, the early educational models assumed a linear structure whereby change could be planned and dealt with rationally. However, as the complexity of education and school systems became more apparent so the theories of change in this sector have had to evolve to account for the unforeseen and unpredictable circumstances, multiple and conflicting demands, the shifting political landscape and increased expectations faced by schools and those who work within them (Hargreaves et al, 1998).
One of the foremost commentators on change in education is Michael Fullan who, throughout his career, has written and theorised extensively on this area of the field. Central to his work are his two books *The Meaning of Educational Change* (Fullan, 1982) and *The New Meaning of Educational Change* (Fullan and Stigelbauer, 1991) in which he presents a theory of educational change incorporating three stages. The first stage is *initiation*, which includes all the processes preceding the decision to initiate an educational change strategy or innovation. Such initiatives might be implemented on schools and teachers by superior forces (i.e. policy makers, school leaders); the school or teacher may choose to undertake such change; or they may initiate the change process independently (Fullan, 1982). The second phase is *implementation*, where the change strategy is put into practice. There are three major factors affecting this stage: characteristics of the change (i.e. needs of the change, clarity of aims and purpose, complexity or how much change is required by various stakeholders, and the practicality of the strategy); local factors (i.e. local government, local community, school leader, teachers); and external factors (i.e. government, outside organisations). The third phase is *continuation*, whether or not the strategy is retained, based on how well it is received. This phase depends on three things: Has the change been incorporated into the school system (via timetable, budget, policy)? Has the change generated a critical mass of committed school stakeholders? Are there clear procedures for continued support for the change strategy? Fullan emphasises that this model is non-linear whereby the stages overlap and are multi-directional thereby accounting for the complexities of implementing a change initiative in schools (Fullan and Stigelbauer, 1991) He also points out that sustainable change strategies are slow to implement and take between three and five years to become embedded (Fullan, 1999).

In later editions of his seminal text, Fullan gives more consideration to the role of school culture in the educational change process. Specifically he discusses the importance of schools functioning as organisational learning communities, sharing ideas (based on failures and successes) with other schools for the benefit of all pupils. He talks about the need to address existing relationships and values
in schools before reform can be successful. He also highlights the significance of transforming the underlying knowledge, beliefs and behaviours in schools into explicit knowledge (Fullan, 2001).

While Fullan's work has been central to the development of the educational change literature, many other scholars have also made meaningful contributions to this area. In a comprehensive review of the school change literature Griffiths and O’Neill (2000) highlight five key and inter-connected areas of focus around which many educational change theories converge:

Firstly, change in education is a complex and unpredictable process, a fact that has led to many large-scale reform failures Hargreaves et al (1998). As such, there is no universal theory of educational change that can be meaningfully applied to every school, rather effective change initiatives must be flexible and context specific (Miles, 1998; Fullan and Stigelbauer, 1991).

Second, successful change requires ownership and collaboration at the school level. Teachers and school leaders need to be actively and collectively involved and have, at least some, decision-making capacity within the initiative rather than feeling as if they are acting out centrally imposed instructions (Wallace and Wildy, 1994; Cherednichenko et al, 1999; Angus and Louden, 1998).

Third, for change to be effective it must account for the central role of culture within the school. School change involves understanding, infiltrating and altering the behaviour of teachers and leaders and is essentially viewed as a process of cultural change (Lieberman, 1998).

Fourth, the political, social and economic conditions at both the local and national level must be considered and understood. Centrally imposed change initiatives that do not account for these complex contextual factors are doomed to fail (Lee, 2001).

Fifth, the role of leadership is key within any educational change initiative.
However, rather than a traditional, hierarchical leadership structure, a more dispersed model of leadership is advocated whereby teachers and other stakeholders take collective ownership of initiatives to foster a collaborative culture.

James (2009a) uses system psychodynamics theory to explore the cognitive effects of educational change for those individuals involved. From this perspective, change is strongly linked to the feelings of organisational members; feelings that can both facilitate and inhibit the change process and which centre on a number of key concepts including *social defences* (protective behaviours assumed by organisational members in response to undesirable feelings that threaten their identity and values); the influence of *unconscious mental activity* on the behaviour of organisational members; *boundaries* (cut-off points within and between an individual's external social world and internal conscious that can be influenced significantly by change processes); *the primary task of work groups* (or the type of work organisational members feel they ought to be engaged in); *basic assumption tendencies* (relating to organisational members prioritising their unconscious needs over the task at hand) and; *affective containment* (or creating an environment where organizational members reveal, rather than hide, their feelings and emotions). Schools are places of uncertainty and unpredictability yet they have a central purpose within society that imbues those who work within them a heavy burden of responsibility. As such, schools have a high level of affective intensity that can complicate and impede the change process (James, 2009b)

### 2.2.4 School culture

Much of the literature on school culture derives from that on organisational culture whereby schools are viewed as organisations with their own values, norms, assumptions and rituals that are tacit yet drive the behaviour of staff and students alike. As Peterson and Deal (1998) attest:

*This set of informal expectations and values shapes how people think, feel, and act in schools. This highly enduring web of influence binds the*
School culture, like organisational culture, is not a concrete concept. It is constantly reconstructed and reshaped by the interactions between school stakeholders and their own reflections on their school and the wider world (Finnian, 2000). Culture can both assist and hinder the operation of the school as a whole. For example, a school with a positive culture has an atmosphere of encouragement and support and is one where staff and students want to be (Hansen and Childs, 1998). Such schools are places where staff members have a shared sense of purpose and commitment to the educational experience of the pupils. Collegiality, improvement and a strong work ethic are the norm while student achievement; staff innovation; and parental commitment are celebrated. Alternatively, schools with negative cultures are characterised by pessimism amongst staff members who are fragmented and fatigued. Feelings of hopelessness abound and the common goal of serving the pupils has been lost. New ideas are criticised and change is discouraged in favour of the methods that have always been applied (Peterson and Deal, 1998). Hargreaves (1995) draws on Marxist and Durkheimian theories to highlight the tension between social cohesion and social control in schools whereby positive school cultures are those which find balance and harmony between these two factions. Furthermore, he calls for a closer examination of the relationship between school culture and school improvement. It would therefore seem that culture of a school is worthy of due attention when embarking on any kind of change initiative.

As with organisational culture, the central role of the school leader in shaping and influencing the culture of their school is widely recognised within the literature (Peterson and Deal, 1998; Schein, 2004; Sashkin and Wahlberg, 1993). Yet rather than sole agents of cultural change, school leaders are viewed as ‘initiators’ who work collaboratively with their staff and other school leaders—principals, teachers, and often parents—to help identify, shape, and maintain strong, positive, student-focused cultures. Without these supportive cultures, reforms will wither, and student learning will slip.
stakeholders to support innovation, and to monitor and reinforce the change process (Fullan and Stiegelbauer, 1991). According to Barth (2002) the most difficult, and in many ways important, task of a school leader is to change the existing culture of a school:

One cannot, of course, change a school culture alone. But one can provide forms of leadership that invite others to join as observers of the old and architects of the new. The effect must be to transform what we did last September into what we would like to do next September.

(p. 6)

The recurring themes within the literatures discussed thus far in this chapter are that for organisations to survive, move forward and flourish in times of change requires adaptation, not just of systems and processes but also of the (often deeply entrenched) behavioural norms and values enacted by its members (the organisational culture). Yet, organisational change, cultural or otherwise, ultimately depends on the capability and capacity of members, particularly the leader whose role in instigating and facilitating change is fundamental. As with the organisational leadership, the literatures suggest the leader of the school plays a central role in the process of educational change and the maintenance and manipulation of school culture. Considering its significance to these concepts and to this study, the following sub-section now takes a closer look at leadership and the closely related yet distinctive notion of management both generally and in the context of schools.

2.2.5 Leadership

For the purposes of this study an exhaustive account of the seemingly endless interpretations of this concept is neither possible nor necessary. Consequently, what follows is a brief outline of what leadership is generally agreed to constitute before shifting the focus specifically on to school leadership.

The link between leadership and organisational change has been the topic of much debate over the past quarter of a century and though there remains much
research to be done in this area (Feng Jing and Avery, 2008) there appears a
general consensus in the literature as to the role of the leader in implementing
change in organisations where, in a vast body of competing and contrasting
theories, leadership appears almost universally as a driver to organisational
change (see Kanter et al, 1992; Kotter, 1996; Rowe, 2001; Luecke, 2003; Zhu et al,
2005). In fact, by definition, organisational change requires the creation and
implementation of a new system, the responsibility for which typically falls to
the leader or leaders (Kotter, 1995) leaving one with the sense that it is almost
impossible to imagine any kind of organisational change occurring without a
significant level of leadership.

So how is leadership defined? According to Yukl (2006), leadership is the
‘process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be
done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective
efforts to accomplish shared objectives’ (p. 8). Likewise, Louis et al (2009)
describe leadership as essentially comprising two core functions: providing
direction and exerting influence, though they acknowledge that leaders perform
these functions in a plethora of ways. For Gill (2012) leadership constitutes
‘envisioning a desired future, promoting a clear purpose or mission, supportive
values, intelligent strategies, and empowering and engaging all those concerned’
(p. 1) while Leithwood and Riehl (2003) view leadership as a function rather
than a role, one that can be performed and shared by many individuals within an
organisation. Similarly, Glatter (2004) views leadership as an interactive and
social process that is ‘embedded in relationships, context and task performance’
but one that often requires ‘operating in conditions of complexity and ambiguity’
(p. 215). This corresponds with the work of Hazy, Goldstein and Lichtenstein
(2007) who suggest leadership takes places during interactions between
individuals that lead to changes ‘in a perceived purpose, strategy or objective, or
to changes in perceived norms as to acceptable choices, behaviors and
communication’ (p. 7). This perspective draws strong links between leadership
and the ‘norms’ and ‘behaviors’ associated with organisational culture.
Another commonly held assumption is that leadership is driven by moral purpose whereby the values and beliefs held by leaders provide them with a key source of motivation and inform their style of and approach to leadership (Sergiovanni, 1992; Greenfield, 2004). Following a comprehensive review of the leadership literature, Bush and Glover (2003) concluded that effective leaders possess an ability to affirm, through staff members, their influence, values and vision for the benefit of the organisation.

There are certain recurring elements within these and the many other definitions and understandings of leadership, namely that it involves influence and interaction; values and vision; it is a complex and multi-faceted function; and it can be performed by and shared between any number of individuals within an organisation. In the context of this thesis, it is helpful to underscore these central components of leadership and keep them in mind when considering the leadership responsibilities of the SBMs in this study.

### 2.2.5.1 Models of leadership

It was during the mid-1990s that the concept of leadership became popularised in the English school context with the introduction in 1997 of the first formal leadership qualification for school principals, the National Professional Qualification in Headship (NPQH), representing the government’s first genuine commitment to educational leadership (Bush, 2008). This also reflected changes in the role and responsibilities of the headteacher as a result of the earlier 1988 Educational Reform Act whereby ‘professional leadership’ was now seen as a key component of the role (Lodge, 1998; Bolam, 1997). The field of educational leadership has subsequently grown exponentially over the last two decades with an accompanying and substantial body of published literature that both supports the concept (see Gronn, 2003; Leithwood et al, 2006; Harris 2008) and also questions its authenticity (see Gunter, 2001; Thomson, 2009) in relation to education and the work of headteachers.

Within the research literature, organisational (and particularly educational) leadership is often stratified according to the style in which individuals choose to
lead their followers. Such styles tend not to be distinct; rather they overlap and are adopted concurrently by leaders according to situational and contextual factors. Nevertheless, they provide a useful means of understanding the different dimensions of the concept. This section briefly outlines those leadership styles or models that have been more widely acknowledged within the academic literature.

Transactional leadership assumes a hierarchical structure where organisational members operate under supervision, act on the instruction of the leader and are motivated by rewards and punishment (Burns, 1978). Also labelled as managerial leadership it assumes formal procedures and positions based on power, status and the rational behaviour of organisational members (Leithwood et al, 1999). Often viewed as the traditional model of leadership it dominated school leadership theory until the early 1980s and provided a foundation from which countless typologies of leadership that came afterwards could be developed. Some writers have suggested that managerial leadership or managerialism still forms a significant part of leadership practice today with school leaders merely implementing government policy decisions (Bush and Glover, 2003) in a process of ‘system maintenance’ (Gunter, 2008). The concept of managerialism will be revisited later in this chapter.

Conversely, transformational leadership is characterised by a more interactive relationship between leaders and followers. Transformational leaders challenge the norm and encourage creativity and intellectual development in their organisational members with whom they have an open dialogue. They have a clear vision, which they articulate to inspire and motivate their staff members who, in turn, develop trust in and respect for their leader whom they view as a role model (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978). Drawing on data from a multi-perspective study of successful school principals, Day et al (2001) found that successful school principals displayed and combined elements of both transactional leadership (e.g. by maintaining systems and setting targets) and transformational leadership (e.g. via developing and encouraging esteem, competence and autonomy) in their practice.
Moral leadership assumes the focus of leadership to be the morals, values and ethical stance of the leader. In many ways, this approach is aligned to transformational leadership as leaders are concerned with conveying their core beliefs to their followers and embedding them into the systems and structures of their organisation (Sergiovanni, 1991). Evidence from schools suggests that successful principals translate their values and beliefs through their leadership practice via on-going dialogue with their staff members and through their own actions (Gold et al, 2002). According to Gini (1997) ‘All leadership is value laden. All leadership, whether good or bad, is moral leadership’ (p. 325). Evidence from this thesis suggests SBMs are exercising leadership in a number of ways, one of which is through the enactment of their values which, in turn, drive their actions and the means by which they challenge existing systems and processes.

Instructional leadership is a style more closely attached to the work of school leaders as it focuses on their role in managing; monitoring and developing the school curriculum and classroom instruction (Hallinger and Murphy, 1985). The roots of this particular style of leadership can be traced back 30 years to empirical research conducted in schools situated in challenging urban contexts where students succeeding against the odds. These schools were found to have strong instructional leaders; positive climates built around learning; high expectations of their students; and clear school-wide systems of monitoring and assessment (Bossert et al, 1982). Early studies of instructional leadership considered it to be the solitary endeavour of the principal though later research brought to prominence the notion of shared instructional leadership that accounted for teachers, in collaboration with the principal and their peers, assuming a level of responsibility for instructional improvement and their own professional development (Blase and Blase, 1999). Marks and Printy (2003) suggest that effective school leaders integrate both transformational and shared instructional leadership by combining school-wide reform initiatives and collaborative work with teachers on curriculum, instruction and assessment. Within the literature, instructional leadership tends to be discussed largely within a North American context. In England the term ‘leadership for learning’ is
more commonly used (Hallinger, 2011). Whilst this approach remains relevant due to its concern with the fundamentals of teaching and learning, it is also limited in the sense that it does not account for the wider aspects of the school outside of the classroom such as pupil welfare, self-esteem and socialisation (Bush and Glover, 2003).

Distributed leadership shifts the focus away from individual traits and ability to conceptualise leadership as a practice that is dispersed between leaders, organisational members and the situations they operate in (Spillane et al, 2004). Within the context of schools, ‘distributed leadership implies the involvement of the many rather than the few in leadership tasks and is premised on a collective approach to capacity building in schools’ (Harris, 2005, p. 7). In this sense, distributed leadership shares many of the components of transformational and shared instructional leadership in that it concerns empowering individuals for the purpose of organisational improvement (Spillane, 2001). Distributed leadership became part of the dominant discourse around school leadership around the turn of the millennium when evidence began to suggest that the notion of the single, or ‘heroic’, headteacher was becoming untenable due to the increasing volume and diversity of leadership required at school level as implied by the growing complexity of schools as organisations (Spillane, 2001; Hall, 2012). A number of empirical research studies and large-scale reviews of the academic literature have since identified distributed leadership as a central practice undertaken by successful school leaders (Day et al, 2009; Harris, 2009; Leithwood et al, 2006).

Critics of distributed leadership argue that it is merely a front for government driven managerialism under the guise of empowerment. Hatcher (2005) argues that ‘the evidence demonstrates the subordination of transformational and distributed leadership to government-driven managerialism’ (p.261) while Hartley (2010) suggests distributed leadership is chiefly concerned with organisational development and ‘accomplishing the organizational goals which comprise the instrumental tasks and targets set by officialdom’ (p. 281).
Despite misgivings concerning the authenticity of distributed leadership, it is clear that the nature of school leadership has altered significantly to accommodate the changes to the ways in which schools are organised and the services they provide. This has led to a flattening of the organisational hierarchy in schools with leadership responsibilities shared amongst a greater number of staff members in different areas of the school (Leithwood et al, 2006). Elements of this responsibility have inevitably fed down to SBMs, some of whom have been elevated to high-ranking positions on their school leadership teams (Mertkan, 2011).

System leadership describes the concept of leaders operating across more than one interrelated organisation in order to bring about change and improvement at systemic level. This type of leadership has come to be applied to the educational context in England in recent years as schools are increasingly working in partnership with other schools in formal collaborative arrangements (such as federations or chains) where high performing schools partner lower performing schools with a view to initiating sustained improvement (e.g. through sharing effective instructional, curriculum and assessment practice). Such arrangements tend to have share an individual in an overarching leadership capacity, an executive headteacher, who has responsibility for all the schools within the arrangement. Such individuals referred to as system leaders (Hopkins and Higham, 2007; Hopkins, 2009). Hopkins (2008) suggests that system leaders are driven by a moral purpose concerned with improving teaching and learning practice beyond their own settings and ‘developing their schools as personal and professional learning communities’ whilst ‘striving for equity and inclusion though acting on context and culture’ (p. 23). Two of the participants in this study occupy system leadership roles as executive headteachers leading across more than one school.

2.2.6 Management

Where leadership implies change, management is more concerned with notions of maintenance though the two concepts are intrinsically linked and often described, compared and contrasted concurrently in the literature (Cuban, 1988;
Bush and Glover, 2003). For example, Fidler (1997) argues ‘management is assigned to a more supportive role. This support involves planning and systematic procedures to ensure that activities resulting from leadership activities actually happen’ (p.26). Similarly, McKay (2006) believes that:

\[
\text{Whilst management focuses on controlling complex processes, leadership is about challenging the existing ways of doing things and setting new directions for the organisation. In other words, management is about doing things right; leadership is about doing the right things. (p. 1)}
\]

More generally, Grint (2005) considers management to be ‘concerned with routines and the predictable’ while leadership is ‘concerned with its opposite – the novel and the unpredictable’ (p. 1). This is aligned with the views of Kotter (2013), one of the foremost commentators on both concepts, who describes management as:

\[
\text{... a set of well-known processes, like planning, budgeting, structuring jobs, staffing jobs, measuring performance and problem-solving, which help an organization to predictably do what it knows how to do well ... In organizations of any size and complexity, this is an enormously difficult task ... So, management is crucial — but it’s not leadership. (p. 1)}
\]

He goes on to distinguish leadership from management in terms of vision, empowerment and the facilitation of change whereby ‘leadership is not about attributes, it’s about behaviour’ (p. 1).

Rost (1998) offers an alternative and more meticulous undertaking of the specifics of and differences between leadership and management. Because of the close association between these two concepts he believes it is confusing to generate definitions based on the actions of individuals who occupy positions of
leadership and management. Rather, he discusses leadership and management in terms of relationships, intentions and purposes. For instance, where leadership implies influence, management implies authority with the key differences between the two concerning coercion and directionality. Leaders influence people without the use of coercion (at least not regularly) whereas managers utilise authority to coerce on a more regular basis. Furthermore, influence in a leadership relationship is multidirectional (i.e. leaders influence, and are influenced by, other leaders and followers in their organisation) whereas authority in a management relationship is unidirectional (i.e. managers instruct subordinates who respond as directed). In this sense, the relationship is, generally speaking, top-down. Where leaders have followers, managers have subordinates. According to Rost (1998), an individual in a position of authority must be considered a manager ‘because that is the definition of a manager: a person who holds a position of authority.’ However, ‘being a manager must not be equated with being a leader’ (p. 112). Furthermore, leadership concerns an intention to create (meaningful and significant) change reflected in the mutual purpose of both leaders and followers whereas management concerns the (coordinated) production of services and does not require mutual purpose or intention to create change:

Leaders and followers are constantly in the process of developing mutual purposes, and their commitment to that development makes the leadership relationship different from the management relationship.

(Rost, 1998, p. 113)

In the context of this study these definitions of management provide helpful indicators to a number of key themes that emerge in the findings chapters. Notably, the nature of the working relationships the SBMs have with their superiors, subordinates and peers and the means by which these relationships are forged, maintained and tested; the level of management and leadership responsibility the SBM role encompasses; and the subsequent status and influence of the SBM within the school(s) in which they operate.
According to Bush (2008), the concept of management in schools became much more prominent following the educational reforms of the late 1980s which handed schools considerably more responsibility for their own operations such that ‘common functions, including financial management, human resource management and relationships with the community, became much more significant’ (p. 275). In the period since these reforms, the managerial responsibility of school leaders has grown enormously as schools have developed into multi-faceted operations of which education is just one (albeit the core) aspect. For Bush (2008) this is a problematic development for schools and the individuals charged with leading them who ought to be ‘focused on classroom learning rather than being obsessed by budgets and HR practice’ (p. 285). This argument is particularly relevant to this study as it underscores the central motive behind the growth and development of SBMs as a crucial means of alleviating headteachers of this increasing organisational management burden. The inter-connected issues of educational reform, management in schools and the evolution of school business management are discussed in greater depth in the next two sections of this chapter.

The first section of this chapter has covered the interrelated concepts of organisational change and organisational culture; educational change and school culture and; leadership and management (both generally and in the context of education). The next section discusses the wider public sector reforms over the last two decades and how these have filtered down to education and the school system creating conditions for the emergence of SBMs.

2.3 Reform and education

2.3.1 Public sector reform
For many commentators, the economic and social policies of nation states over the past 30 years have been driven by the principles of neo-liberalism (Chomsky, 1999; Harvey, 2005; Hall, 2011) with significant associated implications for the public sector and the services it provides (Clark, 2002). The neo-liberalist ideology advocates a free market driven economy where the role of the state (to
provide social services and public expenditure) is stripped back via deregulation and privatisation essentially replacing the concept of ‘community’ with ‘individual responsibility’ (Martinez and Garcia, 2000). Hargreaves (2003) refers to this as *market fundamentalism* whereby governments base policy decisions on the assumption that the public interest is ‘best served by the accumulated effects of freeing people to pursue their private needs’. In this sense, creating competition between the public and private sector and within the public sector is viewed as ‘the best means to improve quality and raise standards’ (p. 73).

In the UK, the consequences of the neo-liberal or market fundamentalist agenda are evidenced by the significant reforms within the public service sector over the past 30 years. This began with a drastic reduction in public expenditure during the early years of the Thatcher government and an emphasis on evaluation of efficiency and performance of public services throughout the mid 1980s before an extensive programme of cultural reform in public services was implemented during the late 1980s (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2000). Central to these reforms was a decentralisation of services (i.e. the emergence of local governance systems); the introduction of market-style systems (i.e. the purchaser-provider division in the National Health Service (NHS) and public-private partnerships through the 1992 Private Financial Initiative); and a move toward consumerism via the Citizen’s Charter (Cabinet Office, 1991) established to evaluate service standards and offer individual choice. When the New Labour government came to power in 1997 the central elements of the previous government’s reforms were either maintained or expanded further (Clark, 2002). Evidence of similar reforms, to the management, accountability and control of public services, over the same time period can be found in many other OECD countries (see Clark, 2002; Hood, 1991; Olson et al, 1998).

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3 The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is a group of 34 countries founded in 1961 to stimulate economic growth and world trade. The organization is committed to democracy and the market economy and provides a medium through which member states can coordinate and compare policies and identify good practice. It is predominantly made up of developed countries with high-income economies from within the European Union though other states such as Mexico and South Korea have become members in recent years (OECD, 2013).
The NHS provides a particularly compelling example of a public sector reform having undergone an extraordinary level of restructuring particularly since the late 1980s in which successive governments have implemented continual change at a rapid pace. This began with the White Paper *Working for Patients* (DoH, 1989) which led to the establishment of an internal market within the organisation with hospitals as ‘providers’ competing to sell their services to District Health Authorities as ‘purchasers’ at which point most hospitals became trusts with their own boards and budgets. According to Pollitt (2007) the last twenty years have seen providers going through a ‘continuing process of merger and consolidation’ whilst ‘serial re-organizations have transformed the purchaser side of the internal market’ (p. 530). Parallel to these changes the level of regulation increased to include performance indicating scores and league tables for hospitals freely available on the Internet for the general public to scrutinise. Furthermore, during this period a succession of bodies was set up nationally to monitor cost-effectiveness (e.g. of particular treatments) and quality (e.g. reviews of individual hospital management). For Pollitt, the reasons for this serial reorganisation point to a combination of ‘British exceptionalism’ due to the ‘the relatively unfettered ability of one party executives in a ‘law-lite’ majoritarian system to implement organizational change’ and the ‘existence of a growing community of managerially minded professionals’ which ‘encourages and channels the political desire for rapid ‘action’ (p. 529). He also concludes that:

*Whilst the NHS story is perhaps one of the most intense and repetitive, it is by no means unique. During the past fifteen to twenty years repeated re-structurings have also been experienced in the schools sector, by local authority social services departments, and in many operational tasks of central government.*

(p. 532)

Gunter (2008) agrees, citing the significant organisational reform in the schools sector over the past 25 years and highlighting managerialism as the primary means by which reform has been implemented:
Successive governments have drawn on managerialism to create new identities, work, and cultures in order to do this, and have been helped to do this through the engagement of a range of field members from within and outside of government ... Ideas and people have travelled across government boundaries, delivering and disseminating neo-liberal ideas.

(p. 254)

According to Ball (2008), these widespread public sector reforms are part of a ‘generic policy ensemble’ built upon a set of ‘policy technologies’ the key elements of which are the market, management and performativity. This is revealed in an OECD report from 1995 which outlines a vision for a new model of management for public services recommending focus is shifted to results through efficiency and effectiveness; governmental organisational structures are de-centralised so that management and decision-making can occur at a local level; the relaxation of regulation so that the private sector may offer alternative provision to that offered by the public sector; the introduction of target setting and a more competitive milieu both within and between public sector organisations to stimulate efficiency and; an increase in strategic control at central government (OECD, 1995). For Ball (2008) this shift represented a ‘new architecture of regulation’ where government becomes governance in a new model of state control:

A controlled decontrol, the use of contracts, targets and performance monitoring to ‘steer’ from a distance, rather than the use of traditional bureaucracies and administrative systems to deliver or micro-manage policy systems, such as education or health or social services.

(p. 41)

The implementation of this new model of public management and its associated policy technologies has been realised throughout the whole of the UK public sector in a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach creating new languages,
incentives/regulations, roles and identities whilst altering what is ‘important, valuable and necessary’ (Ball, 2008). Nowhere is this reform more evident than in education which has undergone unprecedented levels of state-mandated change over the last 20 years (Gibton, 2004) with far reaching consequences both within and beyond the school community (Gunter and Butt, 2005; Chapman and Gunter, 2009) giving rise to academic debate surrounding the professional identity of those working in the teaching profession (Evans 2008; Day and Smethem 2009; Swann et al, 2010).

The next section will focus on these issues whilst discussing the ways in which the education sector has been re-organised, re-structured and re-imagined in the wake of widespread reform.

2.3.2 Educational reform

So pivotal is education’s role in society that, more often than not, change in this sector is at the centre of political reform:

*Schools sit at the intersection of the community, family and wider society. They are the heartland of social change and provide politicians with a potentially powerful platform to redress the issues of inequality, diversity and disadvantage … Each successive government sees education as an arena for change.*

(Harris, 2009, p.63)

Consequently, large-scale societal changes are often mirrored by significant changes in the education system. To affirm this point, Ball (2008) classifies policy history into four time periods each divided by such societal changes or what he terms political and economic ‘shifts’. These shifts are then reflected in ‘ruptures’ within the education system that correspond to wider alterations in the way the state is organised and operates (see Table 1). This section will focus on changes to the education system during the third and fourth time periods in the table, when conditions within the schools system facilitated the emergence of the SBM.
As discussed earlier, the past 30 years have been a period of considerable upheaval for public services, particularly the education sector in what Robertson (2007) describes as a ‘tectonic shift’ which has ‘transformed how we talk about education, teachers and learners, unions, parents’ groups and professional associations’ (p. 2). The sheer volume of change in education during this time is highlighted by Chitty (2004) who points out that between 1944 and 1976 there were just three Education Acts passed in parliament compared to over 30 separate Education Acts, and similarly large numbers of regulations, overseen by successive governments between 1979 and 2000.

Table 1: Societal shifts, educational ruptures and the state

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Societal shift</th>
<th>Educational rupture</th>
<th>State classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1870-1944</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues surrounding management of urban working class migration and industrial development</td>
<td>Development of state education and welfare</td>
<td>Modern/interventionist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1944-76</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-war economic growth and growth of the middle classes</td>
<td>Universal state education - locally administered national system</td>
<td>Welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1976-97</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic crisis, widespread unemployment and emerging deindustrialisation</td>
<td>Move away from comprehensive national system and the eradication of professional autonomy for teachers and schools</td>
<td>Neoliberal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1997-2007</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmation of the knowledge economy and new modes of work</td>
<td>Abolition of locally administered national system</td>
<td>Managerialist/competitive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Adapted from Ball, 2008, p. 57)

The most far-reaching and radical of these reforms and the fulcrum around which they were centred was the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) (HMSO, 1988). Breaking from the principles which had underpinned the education system since the end of the Second World War this Act ‘sought to erect (or reinforce) a hierarchical system of schooling subject both to market forces and to greater control from the centre’ and, in attempting such a fundamental restructuring, ‘attracted more bitter and widespread professional opposition than any piece of legislation since the introduction of the NHS [in the 1940s]’
The key elements of the 1988 ERA are summarised as follows:

- the creation of a national curriculum with core and foundation subjects and three key stages each with attainment targets
- the introduction of a system of national testing for pupils at each of the key stages
- the introduction of choice where parents were given the option to specify their preferred school for their child linked to:
- the introduction of league tables with published examination results of every state school
- the launch of grant-maintained schools (GMS) giving schools the chance to remove themselves from Local Education Authority (LEA) control with funding from central government
- the launch of City Technology Colleges (CTC) which would have full financial autonomy (from the LEA) and be partially funded by the private sector (though only a small number of CTCs were ever established they are widely regarded as the forerunner to the Academies Programme implemented by the New Labour government in the early part of this century)
- the establishment of Local Management of Schools (LMS) devolving budgetary control from LEAs to schools thereby expanding the roles and responsibilities of the headteacher and governing body

(Adapted from Gillard, 2007)

For many the 1988 ERA represented the first real steps towards the marketisation of the school system, not only through the standardised testing and league tables that facilitated public scrutiny and parental choice of schools, but also through the LMS initiative which was ‘from the point of view of creating a new education system, the most significant provision in the 1988 legislation’ (Chitty, 2004, p. 52). Under LMS the LEAs had to allocate most of the budget (over 85%) to individual schools. Funds were allocated mainly according to pupil numbers. With schools required to maximise their pupil capacity this meant that the school budget largely depended on the number of pupils they could attract.
Essentially, schools were now in competition with each other for pupils and were therefore forced to market themselves to parents accordingly in order to attract their custom (Barber, 1997).

The pace of educational reform continued throughout the 1990s with six Education Acts and five Secretaries of State for Education between 1989 and 1997. By the late 1990s the system of national tests (SATs) for pupils at ages 7, 11, 14 and 16 along with an accompanying assessment structure enabling teachers to monitor pupil progress was well established, national performance tables were being published and a new, independent body - the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) - had been set up to inspect schools (and other children's services). When the New Labour government came to power in a landslide victory in 1997, they did so citing education as their number one priority and continued the culture of reform established under previous Conservative governments. Most notable were the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies (DfEE, 1998; 1999) for primary schools aimed at improving standards whilst increasing the centralisation of the curriculum. Yet, at the turn of the new century another cultural shift was on the horizon. In 2001 the Labour government were re-elected with an educational agenda calling for more freedom, malleability and innovation at the school level. However, the strain of successive initiatives appeared to be taking its toll on the teaching profession whose numbers were dwindling due to a decline in recruitment and many leaving the profession (through early retirement or career changes) (Yarker, 2005). A large-scale government commissioned report found that teachers and school leaders were being overworked and overburdened with administrative, clerical and other duties not directly related to teaching and learning distracting them from their fundamental purpose (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2001). A resulting phase of re-structuring within the school workforce ensued with a huge influx of support staff such as teaching assistants (TAs), clerical staff, technicians and finance and/or business managers into schools. Teachers were also given limits on the amount of administrative work they should routinely do (in the form of a list of 25 'restricted' tasks); allowed more time for both a healthier work/life balance and (in the case of
school leaders) to focus on leadership duties and responsibilities at a whole school level (Collarbone, 2005).

In addition to these overhauls to the school curriculum and school workforce there followed significant changes to the function of the school as implied by the Every Child Matters agenda (DfES, 2003) and the subsequent Children’s Plan (DCSF, 2007) which emphasised the requirement for greater collaboration between schools (e.g. through school to school partnerships such as federations\(^4\), trusts\(^5\) and chains\(^6\)) and among schools and outside agencies (e.g. social and health services) to provide integrated educational and child welfare services. Such changes had implications for school funding with budgets increasing significantly as schools began to grow into larger, more complex organisations whilst the advent of the academies programme further altered how schools were financed. Established by the Labour government in 2002, academies could attract up to up to £2 million of their capital funding in private sponsorship (though this financial requirement and the need for a sponsor was later removed) whilst enjoying the freedom of self-governance and the ability to dictate their own curriculum (outside the core subjects), ethos and employment terms (effectively removing themselves from local government control). Together with receiving £25,000 towards conversion costs, academies could top up their budgets by as much as 10% as, in addition to regular per-pupil funding allocated by the government, they also received money that would previously have been held by the Local Authority (LA) to provide services that they were now able to source themselves (sometimes more competitively thereby saving the money for other resources) (BBC, 2012a). In May 2010, as one of his first acts as Secretary of State for Education for the incoming Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition

\(^4\) A federation is a formal collaborative arrangement between two or more schools. Such arrangements can range from joint committees and meetings to shared governing bodies, staff (including the headteacher) and resources (DfE, 2012a). ‘Soft’ federations refer to informal or non-statutory collaborations where schools retain their own governing bodies whereas ‘hard’ federations are formal, statutory collaborations where schools share a single governing body (Teaching Expertise, 2010).

\(^5\) A Trust is a state-funded school (or group of schools) that receives support from a charitable trust of partners working in collaboration for the school(s) (DfE, 2012b).

\(^6\) Chains is a term that usually refers to academies (see below) operating in partnership with one another to provide mutual support and raise standards of education throughout the schools in the partnership. They vary in size, composition and the nature of their relationship with some sharing staff, resources and curricula models across large geographical areas (often under an overarching sponsor) while others have less formal arrangements such as sharing good practice with neighbouring academies (DfE, 2013b).
government, Michael Gove invited all state schools to apply for academy status in a clear show of support for this initiative (Gunter, 2011; Chapman, 2013). Three years on and there are now over 3000 open academies in England with many more applications in the system (DfE, 2013a). Indeed, Chapman (2013) highlights the proliferation of federations, academy chains and teaching schools in England (see 2.3.3) as symptomatic of a school system where ‘diversity of provision is rapidly becoming the only constant’ (p. 334).

2.3.3 Inter-school collaboration

As highlighted above, a key shift within the English school system, particularly since the turn of the millennium, has been an increase in the number of schools working together in both formal and informal arrangements. Over the past decade, successive and cross-party governments have invested heavily in large-scale national initiatives such as Education Action Zones (EAZs), Excellence in Cities (EiC), Leadership Incentive Grants (LIG) and Network Learning Communities (NLCs), significant elements of which have been designed to encourage and foster the development and strengthening of partnerships between schools (Muijs et al, 2011). Since their emergence in 2002, federations have become a common mechanism for inter-school collaboration in the English school system with many now morphing into chains of academies. Furthermore, evidence suggests that such arrangements can provide a viable and alternative means of collaborative school improvement (Chapman and Muijs, 2013; Chapman, 2014).

Similarly, the current coalition government's drive to create a self-improving school system is weighted heavily on the premise that clusters of schools will work with, learn from and support one another to develop localised solutions to the challenges they might face and context specific strategies for improvement while distributing professional knowledge more willingly and sharing resources more efficiently than they might previously have done (Hargreaves, 2010; 2012). Against this backdrop the government has overseen the expansion of the academies programme (see 2.2.3) and the simultaneous freeing up of the school system from local government control symptomised by the dismantling of the LA,
the middle tier of government that previously acted as a key support mechanism and service provider for schools. While those schools that have converted to academy status have more freedom and autonomy over their own operations, many are members of chains or trusts operating under varying degrees of collaboration (see 3 and 4). Those schools that are not part of such arrangements, that have converted in isolation, are encouraged to work with other schools in their locality and, depending on how well they are performing, either provide support to or be supported by partner schools (DfE, 2013b). The latest facet of the government’s drive towards a self-improving school system is Teaching Schools. The concept underpinning this initiative is that the best schools in the country, those judged to be outstanding by Ofsted, can apply to become teaching schools and take on a more central role in the training and development of trainee teachers, the professional development of existing teachers and school leaders, leadership identification and school-to-school support (Chapman, 2013).

The first teaching schools opened in 2011 and it is envisaged that there will be an established network of around 500 across the country by the start of the 2014–15 academic year. Each will lead a teaching school alliance - a group of schools working collaboratively and supported by one or more teaching schools at the helm (DfE, 2013c).

Of course, collaboration, certainly of the more transient nature is not a particularly recent phenomenon. For example, Lomax and Darley (1995), exploring the impact of the LMS initiative on between school collaboration, reported on a number of links and liaisons between primary schools across four London boroughs. These links were initiated at both LA and school level and involved collaboration and shared working across a range of areas such as support groups for headteachers and other sub-groups of staff from different schools (to address issues associated with governmental reforms such as LMS initiative); cross-phase pupil transfer (i.e. partnerships between primary schools and feeder schools); cross-school action research groups (often with an additional coordinating university partner) and; other school-to-school links (e.g. student work experience placements or providing opportunities for Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs)). However, in recent years the emphasis on inter-
school collaboration across the English school system has become much more explicit, the key catalyst being policy makers and their initiatives (such as those described above) that have facilitated the emergence of a spectrum of collaborative models encompassing schools that have voluntarily entered into such arrangements, those who have been incentivised to do so and others (predominantly those deemed to be underachieving) that been ushered into collaboration by central government (Ainscow et al, 2006). Other factors, usually associated with a need to address challenging circumstances, have also contributed to the growth of inter-school collaboration. For example, many small schools in rural areas have entered into partnerships with one another to bolster sustainability (e.g. via shared services, resourcing and, in the more formalised arrangements, leadership), build capacity (e.g. through joint professional development) and provide mutual support (Muijs et al, 2011). Following a comprehensive review of the literature on inter-school collaboration, Atkinson et al (2007) identify the main justifications of inter-school collaboration to be school improvement, shared professional expertise, enriched learning opportunities for students and breaking down barriers between schools.

While there is no doubting the optimistic intentions underpinning inter-school collaboration, Ainscow et al (2006), based on empirical evidence of six case studies of inter-school collaboration, apply more caution to the concept suggesting that ‘collaborative working is not a straightforward option, that can be easily introduced, nor is it necessarily suited to all contexts and challenges. The evidence is that its success demands certain conditions that need to be carefully fostered, and that this takes time.’ (p. 201). Atkinson et al (2007) also point to a number of factors that they deem influential to effective inter-school collaboration such as the strength of existing relations between potential partner schools (e.g. a prior history of effective cooperation is facilitative while previous cultural differences and competitiveness can be a considerable hindrance); the establishment of a clear and shared vision of what the partnership will entail (the absence of which can lead to collaboration being under prioritised); strong leadership of the partnership and a need to involve all stakeholders in the arrangement (to build commitment); and adequate support (i.e. through staff
capacity, resourcing, funding and external support structures). Further, empirical research into the impact of federations on student outcomes underscores the importance of leaders re-conceptualising their roles from ‘institutional to educational leaders’ as they look beyond the needs of their own school to those of the wider federation (Chapman and Muijs, 2013).

The concept of inter-school collaboration is pertinent to this study whereby a number of the case study sites comprise two or more schools operating in partnership in both formal and informal arrangements and sharing physical, human and intellectual resources. The opportunities and challenges these arrangements have created for the schools at the case study sites and specifically the role of the SBM, as a shared resource, are discussed in the findings chapters.

The second section of this chapter has provided an overview of public sector and educational reforms in England over the past quarter of a century and how such reforms have created conditions in the school system for the emergence of school business management as a profession. In the context of this study, a key consequence of these reforms has been the relatively recent emphasis on inter-school collaboration that, as the findings of this research suggest, has afforded opportunities for SBMs to operate across multiple schools and educational settings. The third and final section of this chapter provides a more detailed account of the history of school business management in the English school sector from its origins in the early 1980s to the present day.

2.4 School business management in England

2.4.1 SBMs: Origins
The roots of school business management in the English state school system can be traced back to bursarship, a profession traditionally associated with the independent school sector. The bursar would have been predominantly responsible for the financial management of a school, college or university with typical candidates being ex-military personnel who often found their personal management and organisational skills suitable for the role (Kerry, 2001). One of
the more illustrious incumbents of this profession was the economist John Maynard Keynes (1883-1946) who was bursar at King's College, Cambridge between 1924-44, a time during which he ‘amassed a considerable personal fortune from the financial markets’ and ‘greatly improved the college’s financial position’ (BBC, 2012b). In a more informative account of the specifics of the traditional bursar O’Sullivan et al (2000) cite the biography of Robert Somerville, both master and bursar at the Harrow School for 33 years between 1887-1920, whose responsibilities included relieving teachers of their non-teaching duties, advising on school development plans and dealing with contractors and estates.

Such insights illustrate the long and distinguished history of bursarship (the roll of bursars at King’s College is traceable to the 1400s) and what is also interesting about this account are the parallels between Robert Somerville’s role and those of his modern day successor, the School Business Manager (SBM). Perhaps because of their predisposition to employment within the independent school sector, such references to bursars are rare within the historical research literature.

Within the state school sector, it was not until the early 1980s that scholarly attention turned towards those members of the school workforce not directly involved with teaching and learning. Colin Riches conducted some of the earliest academic research studies on what he termed ‘non-teaching staff’, an umbrella term he used to categorise all staff in school who were not qualified teachers such as administrative and clerical assistants, caretakers and cleaners, grounds staff and gardeners and school meals staff (Riches, 1981). Within his research he alludes to the fact that non-teaching staff are often equivalent in number to their teaching counterparts whilst indicating the implications of this evolving group of school support staff for the headteacher tasked with:

... managing a workforce which is to some extent not his own, and yet these staff are often/sometime in positions of influence in the school, e.g. the controlling caretaker and the “gatekeeper” secretary.

(Riches, 1982, p.154)
It is notable that in modern day schools, the management and co-ordination of this ‘workforce’ is often the responsibility of the SBM whereby Riches’ observations were perhaps early signs of the growing non-teaching obligations of the headteacher. Around this time, the LEA for London undertook some research exploring the implications of increasing workloads for teachers with a view to improving achievement in schools. While non-teaching staff were not the primary focus of this research, one of the recommendations from the final report suggested an increase in provision for administrative assistants in schools to relieve deputy headteachers of their clerical duties (thus allowing them more time in the classroom) (ILEA, 1984). Though sporadic, these glimpses of non-teaching staff highlight their developing profile, which, by the end of the decade, was set to increase significantly.

2.4.2 Bursars in state schools
The educational reforms of the late 1980s, in particular the Education Reform Act, ushered in a new era of autonomy for schools handing them greater control over their finances and strategic planning. One of the key measures of this act was a system of site-based management known as Local Management of Schools (LMS) which gave headteachers and governing bodies more autonomy over their school’s budget (the assumption being that increased decision making at school management level would bring about improved educational outcomes for pupils) (Levacic, 1998). Beforehand, schools were only responsible for the area of the budget relating to teaching materials (e.g. books, stationary) with the LEA held accountable for staff employment and buildings/premises maintenance. LMS gave schools responsibility for the majority of their budgets, which, in turn had implications for the role of the headteacher:

LMS dramatically changed the role of the headteacher from educationalist to institutional manager. S/he now had to learn about recruitment and selection procedures, employment law, buildings maintenance etc.

(Gillard, 2007)
This facilitated an emergence of specified bursarial roles, previously not seen or required, within the state school sector to accommodate this new level of responsibility. One headteacher at this time reports on the recruitment of a bursar in his secondary school following the onset of LMS and the new financial management responsibilities it would bring:

... the need for informed and inspired leadership is greater than ever but so is the threat that time for leadership will be swamped by the need for good management. Hence the need for a bursar who can remove the clutter of LMS from the academic and pastoral leadership in the school.

(Gittins, 1989, p.169)

From an early stage there was an awareness of the advantages of employing a bursar. Mortimore et al (1994) underline the benefits of the role such as the streamlining of administrative and financial operations within a school and the relieving of heads and deputies of non-teaching duties. However, they also point to the ‘the disparity between the new post and the traditional secretary’ and ‘the considerable workload, post-LMS, of the new post-holder’ (p.28). Knight (1993) goes further, suggesting possible tensions should non-teaching staff such as bursars become too involved in decisions concerning pupil education and that a newly appointed bursar ‘needs a thorough induction into this strange new world’ (p.49).

As the profile of school bursars was slowly developing so their role was evolving to meet the needs of a school system in flux. For instance, Szemeremyi (1991) discusses the possibility of schools generating their own income via fund raising and grant applications. He advises that ‘appeals to firms will have to be couched in more business-like terms’ (p.113) and composed as ‘methodologically prepared business plans’ (p.114) before concluding that the appointment of a ‘facilities development manager whose salary is paid from the extra income generated’ (p.114) would perhaps be the most sensible option. Without
specifically mentioning bursars, the remit he describes is typical of a modern day SBM who is expected to have the requisite business acumen to raise money and to justify at least a portion of their salary from the income they generate.

The majority of these early references to bursars in state education focused on the secondary school sector which is unsurprising given that they tend to be larger schools with wider bursarial needs (with regard to premises, buildings and financial management) and bigger budgets to justify the salary of a bursar. Yet there is evidence from this time that primary school headteachers were beginning to feel the strain of an ever increasing administrative burden coupled with their curriculum and leadership duties (Webb and Vulliamy, 1996) and that this was dampening aspirations for headship for those leaders further down the career ladder such as deputy heads (Webb and Vulliamy, 1995). However, for most primary schools a bursar remained an unaffordable luxury (Knight, 1993) although there were suggestions that clusters of smaller schools might pool their finances to share a bursar as a way around this problem (Harrison and Gill, 1992).

Throughout the 1990s the role of the bursar continued to develop in tandem with the leadership and management requirements in schools. The following extract is taken from an interview with a headteacher speculating how the role of the bursar in her school might need to evolve to release her deputy head from an increasingly onerous management burden:

_We may need to change the role of the bursar. We might need someone to take on those activities and also to take away the detailed financial responsibilities carried by one of the deputies who, after all, should have an educational function._

(Headteacher in Ribbins and Marland, 1994, p.48)

This gives an insight into the way schools were beginning to adapt and reorganise their staffing structures, to accommodate this new level of independence from the LA, and the opportunities this would provide for bursars.
However, it is also an indicator of the potential pitfalls of these changes in terms of the senior school leaders' workload priorities:

*If I think back, for example, to the start of LMS none of us was trained in managing budgets. None of us had come into teaching expecting that would be part of any role we would have to play as senior managers.*

(Headteacher in Ribbins and Marland, 1994, p.48)

There were suggestions from some writers that the shifting educational landscape was changing the culture of headship considerably so that the role was becoming more complex and variable than ever before (Hellawell, 1991; Evetts, 1991; Weindling, 1992) and that the headteacher was being transformed into a kind of corporate manager (Evetts, 1994). Such conditions therefore seemed favourable for bursars to play a more prominent role by relinquishing headteachers and senior leaders of their non-teaching responsibilities, yet their influx into the school system was not an entirely smooth process. In a study of 18 secondary schools, exploring their use of resourcing post LMS, Thomas and Martin (1996) found that the majority had created a new bursarial position to accommodate the changes resulting from LMS although none were appointed at a comparable grade to the deputy headteachers and perceived, as they were, ‘to be in a service and support role’ (p.57). They also discovered tension at one school whose governing body were concerned about the level of influence a bursar might develop given the budgetary information they had at their disposal. In the first book to focus entirely on bursarship, O’Sullivan et al (2000) draw on their research with bursars in state schools to highlight the growing profile of the role and its increasing significance in the operation of the school. They describe the bursar ‘as a “fixer” in a turbulent sea of problems and issues’ from which they emerge ‘as a well-known, respected and approachable colleague with considerable technical and managerial expertise’ (p.43). However, they also point to an ‘underlying tension and a sense of inferiority’ whereby ‘teachers were regarded as finding it very difficult to come to terms with the idea of bursars as anything other than office clerks’ (p.68).
While it is not entirely straightforward trying to piece together these somewhat patchy references to bursars there are some recurrent and consistent themes. Firstly, that the educational reforms of the late 1980s were having a significant impact on the amount and type of work that headteachers and senior school leaders were responsible for with schools adapting their staffing structures to cope with this additional workload. Secondly, although these new structures appeared to be alleviating the financial and administrative burden from teachers, allowing them to spend more time on the educational agenda, there were also inherent cultural tensions arising from these organisational changes. These themes would remain ever more relevant heading into the new millennium.

2.4.3 SBMs: Evolution
In 2001, responding to a perceived crisis in the recruitment and retention of teachers due to heavy workloads, the Department for Education and Skills (now DfE) commissioned a large-scale research study into teachers and headteachers workloads. The findings from the Teacher Workload Study (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2001) were largely confirmatory highlighting increasingly onerous workloads for teachers and headteachers (compared to managers and professionals in other vocations), specifically the amount of administrative work that could be carried out by support staff, and a lack of bursarial support. Smithers and Robinson (2003) supported these findings in questioning over 1000 departing teachers across all phases of school to reveal that almost 45% blamed a heavy workload as their main reason for leaving. According to Gunter (2005) an ageing teaching population coupled with significant numbers of newly qualified teachers leaving the profession within just three years had led to ‘a generation of teachers in school who will retire in the next decade’ and whose ‘replacements are not staying the pace’ (p.1). The government response was an upheaval in the structure and design of the school workforce to facilitate support staff (such as secretaries, technicians, TAs and bursars) taking on more of the work traditionally done by teachers. Raising standards and tackling workload: a national agreement (DfES, 2003) was the beginning of a period of what would come to be known as workforce remodelling
in which support staff roles in schools were increased and developed to accommodate more responsibility.

The bursar role was central to this restructuring process. In 2001 Estelle Morris, the then Secretary of State for Education, announced that the government would fund training and professional development pathways for 1000 new school bursars over the next five years. The previous year the New Labour government had signalled their intent to raise the profile of school leadership and leadership preparation by establishing the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) with an aim of putting in place the world’s largest school leadership leadership development programme by 2004 (NCSL, 2001). The NCSL was also commissioned to develop a national programme of training for bursars in a bid to facilitate recruitment and professionalise the role while providing a clear and structured career path. In 2003, following some pilot work, the Bursar Development Programme (BDP) was rolled out nationally with an entry level Certificate of School Business Management (CSBM) covering the basic skills for school finance and resource management. This following year the more advanced Diploma of School Business Management (DSBM) was initiated and it was also around this time that the title of School Business Manager (SBM) was introduced to more accurately reflect the expanding nature of a role which was no longer primarily concerned with school finances, as indicated by the more traditional title of ‘bursar’ (Southworth, 2010). The renamed School Business Manager Development Programme (SBMDP) would continue to expand adding an Advanced Diploma of School Business Management (ADSBM) in 2008 and a School Business Director Programme (SBDP) in 2010. A SBM competency framework was also developed with the National Association of School Business Managers (NASBM) illustrating the six main areas of responsibility of this continuously evolving role.

2.4.4 School business management: A growing profession

With the establishment of a national training programme and accompanying competency framework, SBMs (as they were now more commonly referred) were becoming increasingly qualified and professionalised (Coulbeck, 2006).
Furthermore, the nature of school leadership was changing to become more dispersed amongst senior staff members (Hartley, 2007; Gronn, 2003) and, as such, links were beginning to be forged between SBMs and the role they might play in the leadership and management of schools.

For example, drawing on participant evaluation and case study data from early cohorts of the CSBM, Moorcroft and Summerson (2006) found instances where headteachers had relinquished elements of operational control of the school to their SBM and recruited them onto their Senior Management/Leadership Teams. In such cases the status of the SBM in their school was markedly improved as were teaching staff attitudes towards the role. Conversely, they also found examples of SBMs facing barriers to change particularly where senior teaching colleagues were apprehensive about non-teaching staff taking on leadership roles. The authors suggest that this may be due to them having little understanding of the merits of the SBM role coupled with a lack of trust in their non-teaching counterparts.

Coulbeck (2006), working with SBMs on the CSBM and DSBM courses also reports on first-hand accounts from participants to describe the positive impact they are having on the leadership, management and administration of schools. Further, she argues that the growing number of professional qualifications for SBMs is a clear sign that school business management is emerging as a new profession. However, she also highlights a number of challenges faced by SBMs in establishing their professional identities including a lack of acknowledgement from teaching staff and governors, scepticism about the value of their professional training and a reluctance of senior members of staff to recognise the candidacy of the SBM for membership of the SLT. These findings are akin to those from Aldridge (2008) who conducted cross sectional surveys with SBMs on the CSBM to explore their role in the evolving nature of school leadership. While his results indicated ‘distributed leadership teams, incorporating SBMs/Bursars, across many schools, their uptake is patchy with headteachers, governors and senior leadership members not always being aware of all the potential benefits’ (p.1).
The evidence presented here indicates the potential of SBMs to play an increasingly active role in school leadership set against the wider cultural barriers that accompany scepticism to staff from non-teaching backgrounds taking on senior leadership roles in school. Such notions are supported by Woods (2009) who, based on her own interviews with SBMs, draws attention to the growth of school business management, the link between the SBM role and distributed school leadership and the tensions inherent in this relationship. She suggests that on-going educational reforms have significantly altered the organisation and purpose of schools leading to schools offering child welfare services far beyond the capacity of the traditional educational model (e.g. Every Child Matters, DfES, 2003). Furthermore, schools are increasingly working in partnership with other schools and morphing into larger, more complex structures implying ‘an increased role for SBMs in assisting their teaching colleagues in managing their schools’ complex agendas in the future’ (p.89). Whilst acknowledging the progress and development of school business management Woods believes there remains a tension between teachers feeling their profession threatened by non-teaching staff and SBMs frustrated at being unable to realise their professional leadership training and potential within the school. She proposes that a clearer understanding from both groups of their mutual objective to improve the welfare and educational outcomes of students may help to harmonise the relationship in the future:

Through fostering a shared understanding of how their contributions are different, but nonetheless essential given the way schools now operate, potential for greater interdependence between teaching and administrative staff may result over the longer term.

(Woods, 2009, p.90)

Despite the cultural barriers faced by SBMs, the evidence presented here illustrates how far the role has progressed and developed since its earlier incarnation, the bursar, first emerged in the state school system back in the late 1980s. The conclusions drawn here by Woods are substantiated and developed
further by the findings from this study which highlight the cultural challenges many SBMs still face despite the growth, development and increasing status of the role.

2.4.5 SBMs: An international perspective

Internationally, there are signs of similar attempts to raise the profile and develop the role of non-teaching school staff members with business, finance, administration and human resource acumen as the requirement for roles incorporating these skills increases in educational settings across the globe.

In South Africa a pilot group of 107 graduates became the first SBMs in their country to qualify for the inaugural Certificate for School Business Administrators (CSBA). This was the result of over five years development work between the NCSL, Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) and the Western Cape Education Department in which the NCSL provided course materials from its own CSBM to inform the design of this new accreditation. Covering areas such as financial management, human resources, risk assessment, facilities management, ICT systems and the wider school environment the CSBA has, for the first time, given South African SBMs the opportunity become qualified professionals (NCSL, 2010; Education Update, 2012).

As a profession, school business management is more established in Australia which has a number of professional organisations supporting school business managers (e.g. Association of Business Managers in Victorian State Schools\(^7\), Schools Business Managers’ Association Queensland Inc.\(^8\)) although provision varies across the country with some regions yet to embrace the role. For example, primary and secondary principals in New South Wales recently proposed the introduction of business managers into their schools to help alleviate their non-teaching responsibilities thus allowing them greater focus on the teaching and learning agenda. However, differences between states in regulations surrounding school staffing budget allocations mean that schools in

\(^7\) See [www.education.vic.gov.au](http://www.education.vic.gov.au)

Victoria for example have more flexibility in their workforce recruitment. As such, SBMs are a more familiar sight in schools in Victoria (Newman, 2009). Research has also highlighted the range of responsibilities encompassed by SBMs across Australia including finance, facilities and resource management; governance and strategic planning; human resources and; accountability and legal oversight. Additionally, they often manage support staff, supervise extra-curricular provision and are even involved in timetabling and teaching allocation (Starr, 2012).

In the United States, school business management is a well-established profession (the Association of School Business Officials International\(^9\) was formed in 1910) and forms an integral part of their education system. Unlike the UK and other countries discussed, School Business Officials (SBOs), operate at the district level in an overarching role often working with several schools and principals simultaneously although many of their areas of responsibility would be familiar to SBMs in other parts of the world. These include budgeting, purchasing, financial management, maintenance, human resources, ICT, pupil transportation and security, catering and health care (ASBO, 2012). As business management is a district responsibility, school principals tend to be much more focused on classroom instruction and are able to spend more of their time working with students and teachers.

### 2.4.6 SBMs: Current research

Recent large-scale studies have offered further illustration as to the impact SBMs are having in schools. For instance, the NCSL funded a national programme of inter-school partnerships where clusters of schools were funded to develop bespoke models of shared, effective business management expertise. An evaluation of this programme from researchers at the University of Manchester evidenced a variety of ways in which SBMs were positively impacting on the schools in which they were working such as utilising their experience in site and project management to relieve senior teaching colleagues of these duties; taking advantage of economies of scale to secure best value from suppliers for the

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\(^9\)See [www.asbointl.org](http://www.asbointl.org)
schools in their cluster; undertaking responsibility for school policies and procedures (e.g. health and safety) thus relinquishing teaching staff from these obligations; applying their knowledge of human resources to aid the professional development of the, often, large numbers of support staff employed across their clusters and; networking with other SBMs, outside agencies and the wider community to benefit their school(s). Their impact had also led to improvements in both headteacher job satisfaction and pupil outcomes (University of Manchester, 2010). Moreover, evidence also emerged from this large-scale programme of significant financial benefits associated with increased savings and higher income generation as a result of schools having access to a suitably qualified SBM (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2010; Oakleigh, 2010).

Drawing on the outcomes of this research, Woods et al (2013) highlight the benefits of school to school business management partnerships, with a suitable qualified SBM (or a range of staff members performing elements of the SBM function) as the fulcrum of such arrangements, as a viable alternative to school collaboration based on educational expertise. Similarly, Mertkan (2011) refers to the SBM role as a potential vehicle for closer collaboration and partnerships between schools and businesses while Southworth (2010) underlines how SBMs have moved on from dealing purely with school finances and now have a ‘portfolio of responsibilities and skills that supplement and complement those of other school leaders’ (p. 3). He believes that this upsurge in the training and deployment of the thousands of new SBMs across schools in England over the past decade is a ‘revolution in education’ (p. 3) to rival the rise in classroom TAs or the escalation of school leaders operating beyond their own sites to support and lead other settings. Woods et al (2012) explored the impact of SBMs on primary headteacher succession. Their findings indicate a number of ways in which having a suitably qualified SBM in post could impact on school leaders at different stages of their careers and also aid leadership succession. These included making the headteacher role more attractive for aspiring leaders; easing the transition period from new or acting to fully-fledged headteacher; assisting the headteacher in a challenging or crisis situation (e.g. a poor inspection) and; helping retain experienced headteachers who were thinking of
early retirement. Other research has uncovered evidence of SBMs rising to influential strategic leadership positions in their schools or being appointed as part of an improvement plan to turn around a failing school (Armstrong, 2012a).

2.5 Summary
The structure and content of this chapter are linked closely to the outcomes of this thesis and can be summarised as follows.

The first section explored organisational and educational change, the wider context within which this thesis is situated. Schools, as organisations, have been and continue to be subject to considerable change forces and the role played the SBM in the changing organisational structures of schools is a key area of exploration in this study. The notions of organisational and school culture are also deliberated as it is these areas of the school, the deeper feelings and behaviours of its members, that the SBMs in this study have, both directly and indirectly, influenced. Finally, this section considered the key concepts of leadership and management. As the role of the school leader has expanded in line with wider educational changes this has accommodated the emergence of the SBM. While the SBM role is predominantly an organisational and management position the evidence from this study points to an increase in the level of leadership being exercised by SBMs facilitated by an expansion of the role in terms of both responsibility and professional qualification and development.

The second section of this chapter focused on reform in the public sector, specifically in education. It also considered the growing emphasis on inter-school collaboration. These reforms and the changes they have brought about in the English school system have seen schools develop into larger, more complex operations than previously with significantly higher budgets, increasing organisational capacity and a growing expectation that they will work in partnership with other schools. Against this backdrop SBMs have emerged and evolved to play a crucial role in the operation of the modern school system. Yet, as the findings of this study will suggest, the SBM role is not always confined to a
single school but often across multiple schools as one of the central components of inter-school collaboration, the opportunities and challenges of which are discussed later in the thesis.

The third and final section of this chapter examined the origins and evolution of the SBM in the English state school system charting the growth and development of the role from a relatively indistinct support staff position to the more professionalised and widely recognised role we see in schools today. Yet, while many SBMs are operating very effectively in high-level management (and sometimes leadership) positions, there remains a stubborn resistance in some quarters to the increasing profile and influence of SBMs, which, in turn, can have detrimental effects on the impact and potential of the role. The issues raised in this section are also explored in detail in later chapters.

The next two chapters describe the research strategy and methods employed in this thesis.
CHAPTER 3

DEVELOPING A RESEARCH STRATEGY

3.1 Introduction
This chapter discusses the key stages and considerations in the development of the research strategy for this thesis. It is divided into four sections. The first section discusses the background study from which the thesis originated. The second section explains the philosophical assumptions and research paradigm under which the study has been conducted. The third section describes the construction of the research design. The fourth section outlines the rationale behind the chosen methods of data collection and their appropriateness to the research design.

3.2 Origins of the thesis
This section focuses on the background to the thesis, specifically the earlier research projects that would prove pivotal to its development for a number of reasons. Firstly, the roots of my interest and experience in the area the thesis explores are embedded within these earlier projects. Second, the second of these projects provided the platform on which the thesis was developed. Third, the close association between this earlier project and the research undertaken for this thesis (with both focusing on SBMs) make it important to distinguish between the two.

Between 2007 and 2008 I worked as a researcher on an NCSL funded project exploring new models of educational leadership, management and governance within a range of new contemporary structural arrangements in schools across England. Amongst the key findings from this study was the increasing number of SBMs operating in senior management positions and being utilised as a conduit for shared business management provision between schools (Chapman et al, 2009). It was my experience on this study that first alerted my attention to and sparked my interest in the emerging role of the SBM. In May 2008, shortly after the end of this study, I was recruited into a team of researchers at the University
of Manchester to work on another piece of research funded by the NCSL to evaluate their new SBM programme. The programme was initiated following preliminary research suggesting that SBMs could significantly contribute to leadership capacity within schools (predominantly in the primary school sector which employed very few SBMs), could save up to a third of headteacher time (freeing them to increase their focus on the teaching and learning agenda) and were saving at least 5% in resources which could then be reinvested within their schools (McKinsey and Co, 2007). In response to these findings the NCSL launched the SBM Demonstration Project Programme (SBMDPP) to develop practical knowledge around how schools could benefit from shared SBM expertise with a view to widening the availability of such expertise to schools (Southworth, 2010).

The project itself involved 35 case studies, from a range of geographical and socio-economical contexts, each consisting of groups of schools (of differing types and phases) and outside agencies working collaboratively that had developed innovative approaches to shared school business management. In total, over 300 schools from across England were involved. Each case study was given a grant to support the SBM (or in some cases teams of SBMs) and develop enhanced business management provision over the course of one year. The team from the University of Manchester were commissioned to evaluate each case individually and to develop knowledge to benefit the system by looking across cases. The 35 case studies were divided amongst the four members of the research team, myself included, with each member taking responsibility for data collection at their allocated case study sites. Data were collected via a range of methods summarised in Table 2 below.

The SBMDPP ran for just over two years from May 2008 to June 2010. It therefore overlapped this study, which began in May 2009, for approximately one year though care was taken to separate work on both research projects (including data collection) to avoid any conflict of interest.
The baseline data collected for the SBMDPP (see Table 2) was used to inform the development of the case study profiles for this study (further details of which are provided in Chapter 4).

**Table 2: Summary of data collected for SBMDPP**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data type</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>• Documentary sources providing contextual information about project schools (e.g. OFSTED reports, school development plans, minutes etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Headteacher and SBM information requests (designed to glean information about management structures, leadership arrangements, school budgets, current SBM roles and salaries)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diary</td>
<td>A diary instrument completed by headteachers at case study schools to record how they spend their time in a typical working week (completed over three separate weeks spanning the duration of the project to capture potential shifts in work activity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>Completed by headteachers and SBMs and designed to capture quantitatively, the tangible benefits (i.e. time and money saved, resources generated) and detriments of the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Conducted with SBMs, headteachers and other project stakeholders (e.g. LA representatives, governors). The interviews were scheduled to gather in-depth qualitative data on the facilitators and barriers to the success of each project as well as wider impact and potential for sustainability. Interviews were conducted two to three times throughout the duration of the project.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.3 Philosophical stance

This section discusses the philosophical stance from which this thesis is positioned and the bearing this had on the construction of the research design. The philosophical stance adopted by the researcher is important as it contextualises the research process, linking the aims of the research with the strategies employed to explore these aims:

> ‘Theoretical perspective’ is taken here to mean the philosophical stance lying behind a methodology ... whenever one examines a particular methodology, one discovers a complexus of assumptions buried within it. It is these assumptions that constitute one’s theoretical perspective ... different ways of viewing the world shape different ways of researching the world.

(Crotty, 1998, p. 66)
The philosophical stance or paradigm under which research is conducted has consequences for every aspect of that research from the choice of research questions to the means by which those questions are probed. In this sense it can be understood to overarch and shape the entire research process.

According to Lincoln and Guba (2000) the paradigm a researcher adopts depends on the following key principles. Firstly, how they define the nature of reality or what can be said to exist (ontology). Secondly, how they characterise the nature of knowledge and the relationship between the researcher and those being researched (epistemology). Thirdly, the process by which the researcher acquires the requisite knowledge to understand what it is they are researching (methodology).

Historically (and broadly speaking), approaches to research were categorised as belonging to one of two camps: quantitative or qualitative. According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) these two factions have engaged in an on-going conflict for superiority within the social sciences in what they term the 'paradigm wars'.

Positioned on one side is the (predominantly) *quantitative* approach where research is viewed largely from a positivist perspective. Ontologically, this approach perceives reality as a single entity that can be understood within the boundaries of probability after allowing for unavoidable human influence. Despite an awareness of researcher bias, from an epistemological point of view, this approach strives to be value free with the researcher operating as a passive and objective manipulator following a standardised procedure. Researchers adopting this approach tend to use methods synonymous with those used in the natural sciences such as experimental procedures albeit modified (e.g. quasi-experimental) to be suitable for use with human participants (Lincoln and Guba, 2000).

Positioned on the opposite side is the (predominantly) *qualitative* approach where research is viewed from an interpretivist perspective. Ontologically,
advocates of this approach consider reality as multi-faceted and socially constructed. Epistemologically, it is value-laden and subjective both acknowledging and incorporating the influences of researcher/participant interaction. As this approach is more closely associated with the social sciences, methodological techniques tend to be interactive (e.g. interviewing) with contextual factors explained and incorporated (Mertens, 2005).

It is the latter research paradigm from which this research is approached, as this is deemed best suited to an inquiry that aims to interpret and understand a complex set of relations in a real world setting. The qualitative approach is also aligned with the exploratory nature of the research questions guiding the thesis.

3.3.1 Interpretivism
The interpretivist perspective holds that reality is socially constructed (Husseri, 1965) therefore studying people within their social contexts affords a more meaningful understanding of the ways in which they view their actions and behaviour (Hussey and Hussey, 1997). Those adopting this stance believe in situational uniqueness and contextual depth within their research (Myers, 1997).

For many commentators the roots of interpretivism are located in the work of philosopher Max Weber (1864-1920) who posited that in studying human behaviour the emphasis is on Verstehen (understanding) more than Erklären (explaining) and causality (as is the case with those studying the natural sciences). However, it is worth highlighting that Weber believed the two factions of social and natural science should not be considered mutually exclusive. For example, he did not entirely dismiss the concept of causality in social science, as Crotty (1998) explains:

> For Weber, as far as human affairs are concerned, any understanding of causation comes through an interpretive understanding of social action and involves an explanation of relevant antecedent phenomena as meaning-complexes.  

(p. 69)
Furthermore, Weber was a firm believer that studies of social science should be supported by empirical evidence. As such, he devised a diagnostic tool he labelled the *ideal type*, comprising conceptual constructs generated from the data that are heuristic in nature but nonetheless facilitate an understanding of the findings of a social science inquiry:

> What the ‘ideal type’ embodies is the pure case ... as such it never exists in reality, but can serve as a useful model to guide the social inquirer in addressing real-life cases and discerning where and to what extent the real deviates from the ideal.

(Crotty, 1998, p. 70).

The heuristic model in Chapter 8 of this thesis provides a set of ideal type cases developed from the findings of this study which, as Weber suggests, serve to facilitate understanding of the area this thesis explores.

In outlining his or her philosophical stance it is important for the interpretivist researcher to acknowledge the limitations in attempting to understand the behavioural motivations of the individuals and groups within their inquiry:

> As social researchers who wish to understand social groups we are required to find meanings for action; a tall order in such circumstances. What we are actually constrained to do is to link actions and utterances to interpretations of meanings.

(Williams and May, 1996, p. 67)

To summarise, this thesis is positioned from an interpretivist stance. Consistent with the ideals of this perspective (outlined above) the study aims to collect empirical evidence to interpret and develop an understanding of the behaviours and actions of SBMs within the context of the setting(s) in which they operate thereby exploring the emerging practice of school business management in England.
At this point it is worth re-visiting the research questions that serve to guide this study:

**RQ1:** What roles and responsibilities are SBMs undertaking within, between and beyond schools?

**RQ2:** How do school business managers exercise leadership and management within, between and beyond schools?

**RQ3:** What types of impact are SBMs having within, between and beyond schools?

**RQ4:** What are the facilitators and barriers associated with the development of successful models of school business management?

The following section discusses the development of a research design that would comprehensively address these questions.

### 3.4 Developing the research design

To reiterate, the philosophical stance from which the researcher is positioned ‘has implications for every decision made in the research process, including the choice of method’ (Mertens, 2005, p.7). Once this position is established, the researcher must take the step from the philosophical to the empirical. For Denzin and Lincoln (2000), this is the primary function of the research design:

> A research design situates researchers in the empirical world and connects them to specific sites, persons, groups, institutions, and bodies of relevant interpretative material, including documents and archives. A research design also specifies how the investigator will address issues of representation and legitimation.

(p. 22)
According to Robson (2011), the research design also serves to transform the research aims and questions into a study appropriate for addressing them. He distinguishes between the following two main types of research design:

- Fixed - predominantly quantitative, numerical data
- Flexible - predominantly qualitative data, usually in the form of words

Yet there is room for the researcher to manoeuvre within and beyond these strategies:

*In practice, flexible designs involve the use of two or more data collection methods and it is common to collect at least a small amount of quantitative data.*

(Robson, 2011, p.6)

The design of this study is certainly flexible while the data collected is primarily qualitative encompassing different strands of data gathered over two phases and with collection and analysis conducted concurrently (see sub-section 3.5 for details of data collection methods). Furthermore, and in line with the interpretivist perspective discussed previously, the research is exploratory in that it aims to further understanding, rather than confirm preconceptions, of the practice of school business management in England:

*Exploration, with its open character and emphasis on flexibility ... is arguably a more inviting and indeed accurate way of representing social research than treating it as a narrow, quasi rule-bound and discipline-based process that settles and confirms rather than unsettles and questions what one knows.*

(Van Maanen et al, 2001)

Furthermore, as data for this study was collected from six SBMs in six different settings the research design can also be justified as case study. Opinions differ over the definition of case study. Some authors believe it should be a mainly
qualitative pursuit (Stake, 1995) while others advocate a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods (Yin, 1994). However, it is generally agreed that a case study is a strategy for collecting empirical data to investigate occurrences within a particular setting (or group of settings), is focused on a phenomenon in the context of the setting(s) and is an approach that can utilise multiple methods (Robson, 2011). Mertens (2005) provides a similar definition:

*The commonality in the definitions (of case study) seems to focus on a particular instance (object or case) and reaching an understanding within a complex context.*

(p. 237)

When conducting this kind of research it is important to identify the object or case under focus (i.e. what the case is) and what will be included within the case (i.e. the case boundary). In this thesis, the case can be defined as the individual SBM while the case boundary can be understood as their sphere of professional activity (i.e. the composition of the SBM role) within the setting (i.e. school(s) and/or other organisation) in which they operate. Given this study focuses on six individual SBMs operating across six different settings (case study sites) the research design can be described as a multiple case study design (Stake, 2000).

To summarise, philosophically this thesis has been approached from an interpretivist perspective and is exploratory in nature, the intent being to develop understanding of the emerging practice of school business management in England. The research employs a multiple case study design as it was felt this would provide an appropriate means of interpreting and exploring school business management in a range of contexts while simultaneously providing deeper level of understanding of the SBM role thus addressing the research questions. During data collection a combination of methods were adopted which, aligned with the interpretivist perspective, are predominantly qualitative. The rationale for the selection of these methods is discussed in the following section while the methods themselves are outlined in greater detail in the next chapter.
3.5 Methods of data collection: rationale

This section discusses the rationale for the methods adopted in to collect data for this study. According to Stake (2000) case study research requires the collection of data on or from the following:

- The nature of the case
- The historical background of the case
- The physical setting of the case
- Additional contextual information (i.e. social, economic) of the case
- Informants with knowledge of the case
- Other cases (to further understanding of a larger number of cases)

The methods of data collection employed in this study were selected to address as far as possible the case study components suggested by Stake and are comprised of three strands:

Strand 1: Background data
Strand 2: Survey
Strand 3: Interview

The rationale for the choice of these data collection methods with regard to the case study design is as follows:

Strand 1: Background data

This strand of data comprises information relating to the size, type, phase and geographical location of the school(s) within which the participating SBMs operate. Information on the leadership and management structures of these schools was also collected. This data was sourced from a combination of the baseline data from the SBMDPP (see Table 2), recent Ofsted reports and school websites. Returning to the case study components suggested by Stake (2000), the data from this strand proved informative in describing the physical setting of each case while contributing to understandings of the historical background,
additional contextual information (i.e. social and economic) and wider nature of the cases.

Strand 2: Survey

The second strand of data was gathered via a survey. Normally associated with quantitative research and not necessarily with case study research, the survey chosen for this study is somewhat unorthodox and more closely aligned to qualitative research: Q methodology.

Q methodology was the innovation of William Stephenson (1902-89), a student of Charles Spearman, the inventor of factor analysis (Brown, 1997). Despite his background in the psychometrics movement of the 1920s and 30s Stevenson was critical of positivist approaches to social science. He believed that participants’ required specific abilities to complete the psychological tests associated with this approach so that what was being measured (e.g. numerical reasoning, personality traits) would be influenced by the test itself. For Stevenson, the methodology underpinning this approach was better equipped to measure the similarities and differences between tests rather than people. Put simply, the paradigm of traditional positivistic psychology was unequipped to fully investigate the underlying traits, characteristics and nuances that were of interest to Stevenson. His response was to develop an alternative methodology where, instead of applying tests to a sample of participants, participants ‘are applied to a sample of statements or the like’ (Stephenson, 1953, p.51). Subsequently, what is correlated and factored are those participants’ and their interaction with the statements.

Stevenson’s interest was in subjectivity, how participants classified themselves, as opposed to categories defined by the researcher:

The data from Q are, literally, what participants make of a pool of items germane to the topic of concern, when asked to rank them, in other words, the pattern they express or … the subjectivity they make operant.

(Stainton Rodgers, 1995, p. 180)
Unlike factor analysis, which correlates tests, Q was designed to correlate people, as Stevenson did not see the necessity of measuring phenomena or using large sample sizes as the traditional psychology methods dictated:

\[
Q \text{ method is biased toward small person samples and single case studies \ldots} \text{The purpose is to study intensively the self-referent perspectives of particular individuals in order to understand the lawful nature of human behaviour \ldots Subject selection can therefore be governed by theoretical or pragmatic considerations.}
\]

(McKeown and Thomas, 1988, p. 36)

In correlating people, Q reveals information about similarities and differences in their views on the area being explored, their subjectivity. If participants have different opinions then their profiles will not correlate, but if they do have similar opinions then these correlations can be factorised to form a set of common perspectives. The results can then be used to describe a population of viewpoints (rather than a population of people).

At each case study site, both the SBMs and their professional colleagues were invited to complete a Q methodology survey. Thus, with regard to the case study components suggested by Stake (2000) the use of Q methodology as a means of data collection in this research was to primarily address and gather information on the nature of the case and from informants through their knowledge of the case.

**Strand 3: Interview**

Data collected for the third strand was done so via interviews. This strand yielded for the largest volume of data collected for this study and is perhaps the most important one.

The length the study allowed for interviews to be conducted sequentially at different stages and for data analysis to be integrated and synchronised with the
data collection. This approach is aligned with the exploratory nature of the research (see Robson, 2011) whereby emergent themes could be identified during the initial round of interviews and then used to inform the line of inquiry (i.e. the protocol) for the following round of interviews. Furthermore, conducting interviews at different stages throughout the research study timeline allowed for changes in any of the case studies to be recorded and scrutinised against the research questions while increasing the number of interviews would increase the accuracy and robustness of the data:

*Through multiple interviews, the participant’s story gains depth, detail, and resonance ... Multiple interviews allow the researcher to hear about events when participants are in the middle of them, or not long afterwards.*

(Charmaz, 2001, p. 682)

In line with the nature of the research design, the interview was utilised as a vehicle for exploring rather than informing, so questions were designed to be broad enough to encompass a range of experiences whilst specific enough to tap into individual participant narratives (Charmaz, 2001).

Mindful of this, a semi-structured interview was deemed appropriate. According to Robson (2002) this allows for a malleable protocol where preconceived questions can be adjusted according to the interviewee’s responses and the direction the interview takes. Circumstances in which the interview is an apposite method of data collection are where:

- *the focus is the meaning of particular phenomena to the participants.*
- *individual perceptions of processes within a social unit - such as a work group, department or organisation - are to be studied prospectively, using a series of interviews.*
- *individual historical accounts are required of how a particular phenomenon developed.*

(Robson, 2002, p.271)
Such circumstances apply to this study. Firstly, the focus is on the meaning of a particular phenomenon, in this case the emergence of SBMs and what this means to the participants at each case study site. Secondly, the study seeks individual perceptions of processes within an organisation, in this case the role of the SBM and their impact and influence in schools (using a series of interviews over 2-3 stages of data collection). Thirdly, individual historical accounts of the participants on the evolving nature of the SBM role and how it has developed over time were collected through the interviews.

At each case study site the SBMs and their professional colleagues were interviewed on two or three occasions over the course of the study. Therefore, in revisiting the case study components suggested by Stake (2000) the interview was seen as an appropriate method of collecting information on the nature and historical background of each case (i.e. the SBMs, their role, impact and professional background) and from the informants through whom the case is known (i.e. their professional colleagues).

The only component of case study research suggested by Stake (2000) that has not yet been discussed is the use of other cases to further understanding of each individual case and, in turn, a larger number of cases. The multiple case study design (six cases in total) addresses this component.

3.6 Summary
This chapter has covered the background and origins of the thesis, discussed the philosophical assumptions and research paradigm underpinning the study and described how these assumptions and the research questions collectively informed the development of the research design. The chapter has also introduced and explained the rationale behind the chosen methods of data collection and how each method addresses the key components of the research design.
The next chapter provides a more detailed discussion of these methods and how they were employed while outlining some of the challenges encountered during the process of data collection.
CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the specifics of the research design and methods and is organised into six sections. Following this introduction, the second section discusses the selection of case study sites and participants that form the sample for the study. The third section describes the development of research instruments and the piloting process. The fourth section details the three strands of data collection and accompanying data analysis procedures. The fifth section explores the steps taken to establish trustworthiness in the data while the sixth section discusses the limitations of the research design.

As discussed in the previous chapter, this thesis has been approached from an interpretivist perspective as an exploratory enquiry. The research design can be described as a multiple case study with data collected on the sphere of activity of six SBMs, each constituting an individual ‘case’, across six different settings. A combination of methods was employed to gather these data that, consistent with the interpretivist perspective, is predominantly qualitative.

The central aim of this thesis is to explore the emerging practice of SBMs in England. In order to achieve this aim, the thesis is guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: What roles and responsibilities are SBMs undertaking within, between and beyond schools?
RQ2: How do school business managers exercise leadership and management within, between and beyond schools?
RQ3: What types of impact are SBMs having within, between and beyond schools?
RQ4: What are the facilitators and barriers associated with the development of successful models of school business management?
The following sub-sections describe the strategy undertaken to generate an appropriate sample of participants for this study.

4.2 Sampling

4.2.1 Strategy
Working on the research team for the SBMDPP, I was placed in the fortunate position of having access to a national sample of 36 case study sites. As such, it seemed logical to select the participants for this thesis from this existing larger sample. There were a number of reasons for taking this decision. Firstly, the potential participants were appropriately positioned, with each school or group of schools taking part in the SBMDPP employing a model of school business management (i.e. either directly employing or having shared access to a SBM). Second, these existing sites represented a wide range of school business management typologies in a variety of contexts and circumstances ensuring a diverse sample could be selected. Third, having already spent one year as a researcher on the SBMDPP, I had developed a sound knowledge of the different case study sites and was in a strong position to select those of most interest to the aims of this thesis.

Given these circumstances the most accurate description of the strategy employed to generate a sample for this study would be a hybrid of convenience and purposeful sampling. Convenience sampling describes the selection of participants based on their availability and accessibility (Mertens, 2005). Although it is often viewed as the least rigorous (and therefore most desirable) form of sampling there are elements of it in many qualitative research projects (Marshall, 1996). Purposeful sampling is also a common approach in qualitative research and particularly appropriate for the exploratory nature of case studies:

*Purposeful sampling in qualitative research means that researchers intentionally select (or recruit) participants who have experienced the central phenomenon or the key concept being explored in the study.*

(Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p. 173)
However, the sampling strategy can be defined more specifically as the cases for this study were not only selected on the basis that they were SBMs. Given the range of different SBM models within the 36 case studies in the SBMDPP it was possible to select cases that were significantly distinct from one another so as to represent a diverse sample that would comprise a range of distinct SBM models within different contexts. This type of sampling, still classed as purposeful, is known as maximal variation as participants are chosen to reflect diversity or variation within the area being studies:

*The central idea is that if participants are purposefully chosen to be different in the first place, then their views will reflect this difference and provide a good qualitative study in which the intent is to provide a complex picture of the phenomenon.*

(Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011, p. 174)

The cases in this study were selected based on their distinctness from one another to reflect as broad a range of SBM models as possible and therefore potentially elicit more interesting and complex data.

### 4.2.2 Identification and selection of case study sites

Six cases were identified for this study and, as discussed, these were selected on the basis of their diversity and distinctiveness, with regard to the SBM model employed and other contextual factors (see Table 3). The sample size was also dictated to a certain degree by issues of practicality, specifically the amount of time and resource available to both myself, as the researcher, and the participants. The decision to use six cases was therefore a ‘dynamic’ one which was taken on the basis of achieving sufficient diversity and variability to explore the main research aims in depth (Mertens, 2005) whilst considering issues of access, hospitality, and time and resource constraints (Stake, 1994).

Initial contact was made with the selected SBMs to informally discuss the aims of the study and explain the level of commitment required by themselves and their
colleagues should they wish to participate. The SBMs were chosen as the initial point of contact as it would be these individuals and their sphere of activity that would form the central focus of the research. Without hesitation, each one agreed to participate pending consent from their headteacher (which was granted in each case). The eagerness with which the SBMs agreed to participate was welcome though the reasons for this enthusiasm are not entirely clear. Perhaps as a relatively under researched section of the school workforce (Woods, 2009) they reacted positively to the heightened interest being shown in their emerging profession. The fact that they were already involved with the SBMDPP was potentially an issue for recruitment to this study with a risk that the schools, and SBMs in particular, could feel overburdened with research commitments and concerned about possible conflicts of interest between the two research projects (Mertens, 2005). In fact, the very opposite seemed to occur in that their involvement in the SBMDPP appeared to increase their eagerness to participate in this study. This might be attributed to the positive working relationships fostered between myself, as the researcher, and the participants over the previous year. I was already known to the case study schools through their involvement in the SBMDPP and had therefore developed a level of familiarity and trust which would otherwise have taken time to develop.

Table 3 summarises the key structural and contextual characteristics of the six cases and illustrates their diversity in terms of the arrangements at each case study site and the model of school business management within which the SBM operates. The setting describes the structure of the case study site; the phase refers to the phase(s) of education at the case study site; the locale describes the geographical area of the case study site; and the SBM model describes the school business management model employed by the school(s) where:

- **SBM partnership** refers to two or more schools appoint a SBM to work collaboratively across the group.
- **SBM service provider** refers to a lead school provides school business management provision to one or more other schools in the locality
- **Single site SBM** refers to a sole SBM operating in a single school
Table 3: Case descriptors and context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Case study site name</th>
<th>School setting</th>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Locale</th>
<th>SBM Model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Ridge Lane and Carrbrook</td>
<td>Federation of two schools</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>SBM partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Cross Vale</td>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Single school SBM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Crane Street</td>
<td>Federation of four schools</td>
<td>Cross-phase</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>SBM partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Fernbrook</td>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>SBM service provider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Ainsworth</td>
<td>Cluster of five schools (both secondary and primary)</td>
<td>Cross-phase</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>SBM Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Hamley</td>
<td>Cluster of 10 schools (one secondary and nine primary)</td>
<td>Cross-phase</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>SBM service provider</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was envisaged that there would be sufficient variability and diversity in this sample to comprehensively explore the aims of the research with a range of organisational arrangements, phases of education, and models of business management represented.

4.2.3 Identification and selection of stakeholders

The next step in the sampling process was to select the stakeholders at each site (in addition to the SBM) that would be most suitable to participate in the study. Having worked with SBMs in a range of settings I knew the composition of the role differed between schools but that there were also noteworthy commonalities between many SBMs. For instance, as their area of expertise is not directly concerned with activity inside the classroom the SBM often works apart from and has little contact with the teaching staff. Conversely, the SBM tends to work closely with the headteacher who will naturally have more professional interest in the business management of their school. Of course, these are generalisations (there are many examples of SBM/teacher collaboration in this study that are discussed in the following chapters) but such

10 Site names are pseudonyms.
11 Case study sites A and C are both hard federations (see 4 for full description).
12 In the context of this thesis a cluster refers to an informal collaborative arrangement between two or more schools that share certain services and resources but retain their organisational and structure independence.
generalisations proved useful for the purposes of initially selecting stakeholders to participate in this research.

Mindful of this, it was decided to initially interview and survey the SBM and headteacher from each case study site. This would ensure that the perspective of the SBM, on their role and influence within their setting, could be established, compared and contrasted with the views of the headteacher (the stakeholder assumed to have the widest knowledge of the SBM role). During initial conversations with the SBM and headteacher it was possible to identify, at each case study site, any other stakeholders able to offer a meaningful insight into the SBM role (i.e. teachers who might have worked collaboratively with the SBM, school governors who were instrumental in the recruitment of the SBM). These stakeholders were then approached to complete surveys and for interview at a subsequent stage of data collection. The number of stakeholders who participated in the study varied between each case study site, details of which can be found Table 4 (sub-section 4.5).

On agreeing to participate in the study, all participants were informed in detail of the exact nature of the research study, why they had been asked to take part, what would be expected of them if they agreed to take part, the duration of the research and where it would be conducted. This information was made readily available to each participant as part of an information pack\(^{13}\) given to them at the outset of the study. This pack also contained consent forms for each participant to sign as well as information on confidentiality procedures and their right to withdrawal\(^{14}\).

4.3 Developing instruments

As discussed in the previous chapter, data was collected for this study via the following three strands:

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\(^{13}\) See Appendix I for full information pack.

\(^{14}\) The University of Manchester Research Ethics Committee (UREC) granted full ethical approval for this study in 2009 before any data was collected. The ethics application form and guidelines can be found in Appendix II.
Strand 1: Background data

Strand 2: Survey

Strand 3: Interview

This section will outline the development of the research instruments used to collect data at each strand and the piloting process incorporated into the data collection procedure.

4.3.1 Strand 1: Background data

Collecting background data required no research instruments, as such. Rather it involved planning a procedure for identifying and gathering the required data.

To gather descriptive and contextual information the websites of the schools at which the participating SBMs operate were visited while their most recent inspection reports were also sourced from Ofsted. Further, the baseline data collected at each case study during the SBMDPP (see Table 2) was also sifted through for any other information relevant to this strand (e.g. leadership and management structures). This process was followed for each case study site. Sub-section 4.4.1 specifies the data collected at this strand.

4.3.2 Strand 2: Survey

Developing a Q survey involves a fairly lengthy process of different stages, the first being to define the concourse, which comprises the ‘flow of communicability surrounding any topic’ (Brown, 1993, p.3). The concourse can be obtained via a range of methods (i.e. observations, interviews, literature searching and drawing on the researcher’s own experience). This material, which should comprise as wide a range as possible of opinions and viewpoints surrounding the topic under scrutiny, forms the raw data for the Q set whereby ‘the level of discourse dictates the sophistication of the concourse’ (Brown, 1993, p. 3).

The next step is to develop a set of statements from the concourse, usually around 40–50, to form a balanced representation of the array of opinions on the topic. These statements are written onto a set of cards which are randomised
and numbered to form the Q set which respondents are then asked to place into a normally distributed matrix with a polarised scale such as the example in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Example Q sort matrix**

| Least like me | | | Most like me |
| (-3) | (-2) | (-1) | (0) | (1) | (2) | (3) |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

This procedure is referred to as Q sorting (or the Q sort) and allows respondents to place the statements according to their agreement/disagreement with them. The size and shape of the matrix depends on how contentious the topic is deemed to be in relation to the respondents.

The concluding, and perhaps crucial, element of Q is the factor analysis stage where the correlation matrix of the Q sorts is calculated to signify the level of (dis)agreement between the sorts or the level of (dis)similarity between each sorter’s opinions\(^\text{15}\).

For this study, the Q concourse was developed from a combination of available academic literature and media resources on school business management alongside my own knowledge and experience of the profession. From this raw material an initial set of statements was drawn which was then reduced to a final set of 44\(^\text{16}\). According to Brown (1980) the process of developing and arriving at the final set of statements (usually between 40-50) is a creative rather than scientific process whereby the statements emerge via re-examination of the

\(^{15}\)A full account of the analysis procedure for a Q survey can be found in Appendix XII.

\(^{16}\)See Appendix XIV for final set of Q cards.
initial set or are guided by an underlying theory. The crucial aspect is that the investigator selects statements that polarise so as to represent the full range of opinion about the topic. In this case, the research questions served to guide the development of the final set of statements that are then randomly numbered and printed on separate cards.

Together with the Q set, the following additional support materials\(^\text{17}\) were also devised to form the Q pack:

- **Participant information sheet** detailing the entire research study\(^\text{18}\)
- **Participant consent form**\(^\text{19}\)
- **Participant instructions** on how to complete the Q survey
- **Q Proforma** - a (quasi-normally distributed) matrix where participants can physically place their statements before recording the number of each statement in the relevant cells on completion (see Figure 2)

### 4.3.3 Strand 3 - Interview

As discussed, interviews were conducted during two phases over the course of the study. In line with the exploratory nature of the research the interviews were adapted to follow interesting leads from the first phase of enquiry then modified and tailored in light of emerging themes for the second phase.

During the first phase of data collection, interviews were conducted with the SBM and headteacher. Though the interview questions were subtly adjusted depending on the role of the respondent, the protocol followed this basic structure:

\(^{17}\) See Appendix XIII for participant instructions for Q survey.
\(^{18}\) See \(^{14}\).
\(^{19}\) See \(^{14}\).
**Section 1: The SBM role**
This section of the protocol is designed to establish the exact nature of the SBM post and in what regard it is held (i.e. its perceived importance to the running of the school). This section also covers a more general enquiry about the scope of school business management and how the emergence of the role fits in with wider changes to educational policy. In short, it serves to set the scene for each case study site in terms of the responsibilities of the SBM and how their role is perceived.

**Section 2: Leadership**
This section of the protocol focuses on the level of leadership responsibility distributed to and/or held by the SBM and is important in helping to further define the composition of the SBM role and level of influence they have within their school(s).

**Section 3: Barriers and facilitators to the effectiveness of the SBM role**
This section explores the factors that participants believe to be the key barriers and facilitators to the effectiveness of the SBM role.

**Section 4: SBM impact**
This section of the protocol explores the type and level of impact made by the SBM within, between and beyond their settings and the implications of this impact.

**Section 5: The future**
This section of the protocol explores participants’ views on the future of school business management both in their own setting and more generally.

During the second phase of data collection the interview protocols were modified in line with the relevant and interesting themes emerging from each case but also to accommodate interviews with more stakeholders\(^\text{20}\) (where possible). Subsequently, the protocols became more distinct between cases as

\(^{20}\text{See Table 4 for details of stakeholders interviewed at each case study site.}\)
each one was tailored to the themes emerging from that case study site and to accommodate the different roles of respondents\textsuperscript{21}.

An example interview protocol from the first and second phase interviews can be found in Appendices V and VI.

4.4 Piloting
During the planning phase of the thesis a series of reconnaissance conversations were held with SBMs and headteachers participating in the SBMDPP to test out initial ideas for this study and gain a deeper understanding of the relevant and emerging issues relating to school business management. While the outcomes of these conversations informed the development of the framework for the initial interview protocol, the design of the study allowed for modifications and alterations throughout the research process. As Robson (2002) explains, often the nature of case study research renders a conventional pilot impractical:

\textit{It may be that there is only one case to be considered, or that there are particular features of the case selected such that there is no sensible equivalent which could act as the pilot. In circumstances like these, the flexibility of the case study gives you at least some opportunity to, as it were, 'learn on the job'.}

(p. 185)

The exploratory nature of this research project afforded the opportunity to 'learn on the job' by taking each case at a time and amending and adjusting the data collection where necessary. As with the interview procedure, this was the essence of the cyclical data collection and analysis approach where issues and leads of particular interest during the early data collection stages were followed up in more detail at subsequent stages of data collection. As such, the first case study site to be visited, Crane Street, served as the 'pilot'. When this case site was visited for the first time the interview protocol was still being developed meaning this site was used to test out the instrument even though the data being

\textsuperscript{21} See Appendix III and IV for examples of interview protocols from two phases of data collection.
collected would be retained and analysed with the rest of the data collected at a later stage when the protocol had been refined and finalised. In this sense, the piloting was integrated into the research as Robson (2002) explains:

\[
\text{It may be that the initial formulation leans more towards the ‘exploratory’ pole of case study design, and the later stages with the benefit of experience can have a more ‘explanatory’ focus.}
\]

(p. 185)

The Q survey was also piloted with a small cohort of individuals to test out the statements and procedure and refine the instrument where necessary. Following this piloting process, the survey instrument required minimal amendment beyond a rewording of a small number of statements.

4.5 Data Collection
As discussed, the data for this study was collected via three strands. The following section outlines the specifics of the data collection procedure at each strand.

4.5.1 Strand 1: Background data
Much of the data for this strand was collected at the beginning during the SBMDPP in the summer of 2008 though only the data deemed relevant to the research aims of this study was selected (see Figure 3):

**Figure 3: Background data collected for Strand 1**

- Contextual and descriptive data (e.g. school size, type, phase, intake, achievement, recent Ofsted grades and evaluation)
- SBM arrangements* (e.g. nature of SBM provision/model, SBM role and responsibilities)
- Leadership arrangements* (e.g. management/leadership structure, SBM role in leadership/management)

* As was in summer 2008 (baseline)
Contextual and descriptive data were collected in order to accurately portray the make-up of the school(s) at each case study site. The Ofsted report most recent to the time of the baseline was also read for information on how the case study schools were performing overall and other relevant contextual information. Additional information supplied by the case study schools during the SBMDPP on their SBM arrangements and leadership and management structure was also gathered.

4.5.2 Strand 2: Survey
Firstly, participants were given the Q pack and asked to read through the information and instruction sheets. They were then required to sort through the Q set reading each statement then placing it within the matrix under the heading they felt most reflected their level of (dis)agreement and/or ambiguity with it. This procedure can be arduous at first, so participants were advised to initially sort the statements into three piles consisting of ‘agree’, ‘disagree’ and ‘not sure/no opinion’ before slowly moving around the statements until they had filled all the cells in the matrix and arrived at a sort which best reflected their viewpoint(s). Due to participant time constraints a portion of participants were required to complete the Q survey via post. In these instances participants were given clear instruction and guidance on how to complete the process (within their Q pack). Studies comparing self-administration of Q with those where the researcher is present have found a high level of similarity between results (see Tubergen and Olins, 1979; Reber et al, 2000).

4.5.2.1 Strand 2: Challenges and dilemmas
The initial strategy for the Q methodology survey was for the SBMs and headteachers at each of the case study sites to complete a survey during the first phase of data collection (at the same time as the initial interviews took place). These surveys would then be analysed and the findings fed back to and discussed with the participants during the second phase of data collection (at the same time as the second interviews). It was then anticipated that the SBMs and headteachers would complete a second Q survey during the second phase of data
collection, the findings of which could be compared to the results of their first survey to explore whether there had been a change in their perspective of the SBM role in their school(s). It was also anticipated that the additional school stakeholders recruited to the study for the second phase of data collection would complete a Q survey to explore the wider staff members’ perspectives of the SBM role at each case study site. The findings of these Q surveys could then be used to support and question the findings from the interviews thus adding richness to the data as a whole.

Unfortunately, only 12 participants completed the Q survey in total jeopardising the strategy outlined above. There appeared to be two main reasons for the low response rate. Firstly, there was reluctance on the part of some participants to complete a survey of any description (this was particularly true of the headteachers and other practitioners in the wider sample many of whom had been involved in a great deal of survey related research in the past and felt uninspired to undertake more). Secondly, the relative (or perceived) complexity of the Q survey appeared to discourage some participants who preferred to answer questions and converse through an interview rather than complete what they felt was an overly arduous survey. It is certainly true that a Q survey requires a reasonable degree of thought to complete (unlike conventional questionnaires which can often be completed quickly without much cognition) but therein lies the strength of Q in that it is designed to access the deeper views and opinions held by respondents hence its complementarity to the interview. In any case, whether the task was too burdensome or complex a series of polite reminders to participants the to collect more than the 12 completed surveys proved fruitless. Having analysed and written up the findings of these 12 Q surveys\(^{22}\) it became clear that there was insufficient data in this strand to make a meaningful contribution to the thesis. A decision was therefore taken to remove this strand from the wider analysis of the study. While this was a regrettable turn of events it served to highlight the pitfalls of conducting social science research in real world settings with variables beyond the control of the researcher. Valuable lessons were also learned about conducting research with

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\(^{22}\) See Appendix XII for findings from the 12 Q surveys including a full description of the analytical process.
educational practitioners who may be overburdened with paperwork and therefore not respond well to a survey of this nature.

Conversely, the third strand of data collection, the interviews, had generated a considerable volume of data which it was felt would be sufficient to address the research questions despite the absence of the Q surveys. It was therefore anticipated that the removal of this strand of data would not prove too detrimental to the study.

4.5.3 Strand 3: Interview

During an interview, the most difficult hurdle a researcher must overcome in collecting robust data is getting participants ‘to “tell it like it is” rather than trying to impress the researcher, hide data, or blow off steam’ (Schein, 2004, p.204). Robson (2002) suggests measures that can be taken to lessen the impact of such issues and ensure the interviewee responds in an honest and open manner:

- **Firstly, the interviewer should listen more than they speak**, after all, it is the interviewee’s opinions which are of importance.
- **Secondly, questions should be put in a straightforward and clear manner**, so as to avoid the interviewee becoming confused or feeling threatened, as this will not yield the information you are seeking.
- **Thirdly, eliminate cues which lead to particular responses** (e.g. leading questions) which may prompt the interviewee to give what they believe is the ‘correct answer’ in order to please the interviewer.
- **Fourthly, the interviewer should enjoy the process and appear at ease** during the interview as this makes it far more likely that the interviewee will relax and respond ‘openly and freely’

(p. 274)

A further point is raised by Charmaz (2001) who emphasises keeping the exploratory interview ‘informal and conversational’ and to ensure that the participant’s comfort ‘is of a higher priority than obtaining juicy data’ (p. 679).
My previous experience\(^{23}\) conducting interviews in a wide range of educational settings and situations was central in adhering to these ‘ground rules’.

Interviews were conducted at the case study schools in a location of the participant’s choice, usually a quiet office that offered privacy and put the interviewee at ease. Participants were reminded of their right to withdraw themselves and their data from the study at any time and that all data collected would be treated in the strictest confidentiality and made anonymous before being reported. Along with the ground rules suggested above (Robson, 2002; Charmaz, 2001) a standard protocol was followed beginning with the establishment of a rapport between interviewer and interviewee and a brief reminder of the background to the research and the areas which would be probed during the interview (Creswell, 2009). The interview was then conducted in the semi-structured manner of the protocol. On completion, the interviewee was thanked for their time and opinions. Due to time constraints, four of the interviews were conducted over the phone following the same protocol as the face-to-face interviews. With interviewee consent, all interviews were recorded via an audio device to be transcribed at a later stage.

Table 4 provides a summary of the participating stakeholders and data collected. In all, a total of 33 interviews were conducted, each one between 30-60 minutes in length. Background data was also gathered at each case study site (the 12 Q Survey respondents have been left in the table for information).

\(^{23}\) I had been employed as a research assistant at the University of Manchester’s School of Education since 2006 working on a range of research projects during that time.
Table 4: Summary table of data collected at each case study site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case study site</th>
<th>Background data</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Q Sort Survey 1</th>
<th>Interview 1</th>
<th>Interview 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ridge Lane and Carrbrook Federation</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Federation Business Manager</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Executive Headteacher</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Executive Deputy Headteacher</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>School Business Manager (Carrbrook)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Federation Governor</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crane Street Federation</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Executive Headteacher</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>School Business Manager</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Finance Assistant</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fernbrook School</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>School Business Manager</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Finance Assistant</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross Vale School</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>School Business Manager</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ainsworth Cluster</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Secondary school headteacher</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>School Business Manager</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Primary school headteacher</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Infant school headteacher</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamley Cluster</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>School Business Manager</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Primary school headteacher</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.6 Data analysis
This section outlines how the data from the first and third strands was analysed.

4.6.1 Strand 1: Background data
The purpose of the data collected in this strand was to provide the context for each case study site and establish the model of school business management being employed. In this sense a surface level analysis was sufficient, the main
objective to provide an accurate description of each case. Robson (2002) refers to the collection and analysis of data via documents produced for purposes other than the research being undertaken as an *unobtrusive measure* in that it is ‘non-reactive’ and therefore ‘not affected by the fact that you are using it’ (p. 349). He suggests content analysis as an appropriate means of dealing with this type of data and puts forward a checklist detailing the steps to take when utilising this strategy. A modified version of this checklist was developed based on the establishment of construct categories to draw out the information required from this strand of data. These categories encompassed the main characteristics (size, type, phase of school); context (social, economic); and structure (leadership and management structure, school business management model) of the case study sites under which the relevant data from this first strand could be organised coherently.

Once categorised it was then possible to use the data from this strand to create a case profile of each site to reflect the characteristics, context and structural arrangements. This data also served as a baseline from which to measure change and impact over the course of the study. The contextual profiles of each case study site (developed from this strand of data) can be found at the beginning of each case report in Chapter 5.

4.6.2 Strand 3: Interview

Data analysis was an on-going and recursive process whereby emerging patterns and themes from earlier interviews were used to inform the direction of later interviews at each case study site (Mertens, 2005). As such, the following steps were taken in the analysis of interview data:

1. Codes and notes - informed by the research questions but exhaustive enough to encompass all issues of interest to the study - were taken during initial interviews.
2. These notes were then examined for emerging patterns, themes, similarities and differences both within and between case study sites.
3. These themes were used to inform the protocols for the second phase of interviews and adapted to tease out the specific issues emerging at each site.

4. Generalisations were then developed comprising consistent themes arising from the data leading to the generation of concepts and theories from the findings.

5. The theories and concepts were then scrutinised against the background literature.

(Adapted from Miles and Huberman, 1994, p.9)

This process was repeated until regularities began to emerge within the data indicating the absence of any new information (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Throughout the process of analysing the interview data, along with the coded and notated transcripts discussed above, the following materials were generated as suggested by Robson (2002):

- *Summary sheets* prepared after each interview to encapsulate the main points from the discussion
- *Data display tables* constructed to reduce the data into a more simplistic and meaningful state manner
- *Memo sheets* containing ideas and intuitions arising during the research

An example of a coded interview transcript, summary sheet, a list of codes, a data display and table of key emergent themes can be found in Appendices V, VI, VII, VIII and IX.

### 4.7 Establishing trustworthiness

Guba (1981) and Lincoln and Guba (1985) identify the following four criteria for assessing and establishing trustworthiness in qualitative research:

1. *Truth value*: the level of confidence that the research findings accurately reflect the reality of the inquiry for both the participants of and the context in which the study has taken place. The naturalistic term for truth value is ‘credibility’.
2. *Applicability*: the degree to which the research findings can be applied to other participants and/or contexts. The naturalistic term for applicability is ‘transferability’.

3. *Consistency*: the degree to which the research findings would be replicated if the study were to be repeated with the same or comparable participants in the same or comparable context. The naturalistic term for consistency is ‘dependability’.

4. *Neutrality*: the level of confidence that the research findings have been determined by the participants and the context within which the research has taken place rather the personal opinions, biases and motivations of the researcher. The naturalistic term for neutrality is ‘confirmability’.

   (Adapted from Guba, 1981, p. 80)

The following steps were taken within this research to address each of these four criteria (according to their naturalistic translations):

### 4.7.1 Credibility

In naturalistic inquiries, credibility refers to the establishment of ‘truth value’ whereby ‘inquirers are most concerned with testing the credibility of their findings and interpretations with the various sources from which data were drawn’ (Guba, 1981, p. 80).

There are a number of means by which the researcher can address credibility. For example, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest a period of prolonged engagement whereby the researcher invests sufficient time with the participant(s) and their context(s) to develop an understanding of the culture of their setting(s), to identify and address any distortions and preconceptions (on the part of both researcher and participant) and to develop trust. My prior involvement with the SBMDPP involved several visits to the case study sites prior to this research where I developed a familiarity with the case study sites enabling me to detect factors which may have distorted the data and also build a trusting relationship with the research participants. Additionally, inspection
reports and school websites were also consulted at length during the initial strand of data collection to further expand my knowledge of each case study site.

Another means by which credibility can be enhanced is via triangulation, or the use of multiple methods to collect data. According to Guba (1981) using more than one method simultaneously can derive the strengths of each method while compensating for their individual limitations. In this study data were collected via interviews and analysis of background information and relevant documents in a bid to provide triangulation and add richness and credibility to the findings. Perhaps of more significance to this research, Shenton (2004) describes ‘participant triangulation’ where data is collected from ‘range of informants’ so that ‘individual viewpoints and experiences can be verified against others’ (p. 66). Within this study every attempt was made to gather data from an array of stakeholders at each case study site. While this was not always possible, the data gathered collectively represent the views of participants from many different roles across the case study sites. Site triangulation is also suggested to lower the ‘effect on the study of particular local factors peculiar to one institution’ (p. 66). As such, credibility is heightened when similar results are found between sites. Data were collected at a total of six case study sites in this study.

A further tactic to enhance credibility is by ensuring honesty in participants. This can be achieved in a number of ways including affording participants the opportunity to withdraw from the study or refuse to participate should they wish and also making clear the anonymity of their participation and confidentiality of their data. In this sense, those who do participate will hopefully have a genuine interest in the research resulting in a more honest dialogue (Shenton, 2004). The strict ethical protocols guiding this research ensured that these conditions were met. Furthermore, participants were urged to be as forthright as possible in their responses to the survey and interview questions while my position as an independent researcher was also emphasised in the anticipation that this would facilitate truthful responses and allay any fears that participants might have had about losing credibility with their colleagues (Shenton, 2004).
The professional qualifications and experience of the researcher can add credibility to research as participants may be more comfortable and open if they believe the research is being conducted by a trustworthy and credible individual, or team (Patton, 1990). In this research it was anticipated that my prior experience on the SBMDPP would add a sufficient level of professional credibility to the research particularly having previously worked with many of the case study participants.

4.7.2 Transferability
For the naturalistic researcher, transferability concerns the formation of 'working hypotheses that may be transferred from one context to another depending upon the degree of "fit" between the contexts.' (Guba, 1981, p. 81). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) transferability can be achieved in qualitative studies if what is being researched is described in sufficient detail and data is drawn from the 'widest possible range of information' (p. 316). They label this as a 'thick description' of an inquiry, one that enables the reader to decipher its transferability (or applicability) to other settings or circumstances. It was anticipated that the triangulation of data collection methods along with the longitudinal nature of the research would facilitate such thick descriptions of the case study sites in this research. The authors suggest purposeful sampling to 'maximise the scope and range of information obtained' (p. 224) which will, in turn, enhance the thick descriptions. Such an approach to participant and case study selection was taken during this research (see section 4.2).

According to Firestone (1993) and Yin (1994) a more appropriate form of transferability, applicable to multiple case study research such as this, is theoretical or analytical transferability. For Yin (1994) the benefit (and purpose) of studying multiple cases is to add strength and rigour to the theory being generated and increase the capacity of that theory to be applied to other cases or settings (rather than apply, or generalise, the findings to a wider population).
Conversely, Miles and Huberman (1994) argue that preoccupation with transferability in case study research can lead to over-deduction and the loss of the idiosyncrasies that give the cases their individuality. They therefore advise caution during analysis to ensure each case retains its distinctiveness. With regard to transferability, the goals of this research are to provide analytical (rather than statistical) generalisations and, perhaps more importantly, achieve new insights and understandings of the phenomena being explored.

4.7.3 Dependability

Dependability is the naturalistic interpretation of consistency whereby the qualitative researcher is concerned with whether or not similar or stable findings would emerge if the study were repeated using the same methods and an equivalent sample (Guba, 1981; Shenton, 2004). For Lincoln and Guba (1985) dependability is closely aligned with credibility (see 4.7.1) therefore taking steps to ensure credibility can go some way to ensuring dependability.

Dependability can also be addressed by creating an audit trail of the data collected during the research. Such a trail allows the reader to trace the steps taken by the researcher to gather, organise and analyse the data and thus determine whether the inquiry was dependable (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Steps were taken throughout the research process to generate such a trial and are evidenced in Appendices V, VII, VIII and IX which contain examples of a coded interview transcript, a list of codes developed to analyse the data, a table displaying the coded data and a table of the key emerging themes generated from the coded data.

According to Shenton (2004), to achieve dependability is to ensure that the research study is described clearly and comprehensively enough to enable ‘a future researcher to repeat the work, if not necessarily to gain the same results’ (p. 71). This should include details of the research design, data collection process and a ‘reflective appraisal of the project’ (p. 72). It is anticipated that this methods chapter has provided sufficient detail of the research process to satisfy this criteria while the sub-sections on limitations (4.8) and further research (7.8)
along with the final chapter collectively comprise personal reflections on the research process.

4.7.4 Confirmability
For the naturalistic researcher, confirmability concerns ‘characteristics of the data: Are they or are they not confirmable?’ (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 300). As discussed earlier, in relation to credibility, the authors suggest triangulation as a means by which confirmability can be addressed, sentiments echoed by Shenton (2004) who also suggests that in achieving confirmability ‘steps must be taken to help ensure as far as possible that the work’s findings are the result of the experiences and ideas of the informants, rather than the characteristics and preferences of the researcher’ (p. 72). Additionally, Miles and Huberman (1994) believe a clear justification of the decision-making process throughout the study and an acknowledgement of the perceived limitations of the research are also valuable techniques for ensuring confirmability. As highlighted, this study has employed multiple methods to collect data from a range of sources in a bid to achieve triangulation. Furthermore, the research process and limitations are described in sufficient detail for the reader to clearly understand the reasoning and logic underpinning the methods and decisions undertaken throughout the study.

4.8 Limitations
The following section highlights some of the limitations inherent in this study firstly covering the three strands of data collection and secondly within the wider research design and methods employed.

4.8.1 Strand 1: Background data
There are a number of interconnected issues to consider when analysing the contents of documentation to collect information for research. Firstly, the process can be very time consuming, particularly as the data may be limited or incomplete and there may more than one source to sift through and extract the relevant information from. Also, in many cases, the data will have been produced for some other purpose (rather than the research for which it is being used). This
inevitably distorts the data towards whatever its primary purpose was (Robson, 2002) while data collection is inflexible as the researcher is limited to what already exists (Mertens, 2005).

4.8.2 Strand 2: Survey
As discussed previously, it also would have been preferable to collect Q surveys with more participants and during different phases in order to generate a richer and more robust dataset. Unfortunately, due to the challenges discussed in subsection 4.4.2.1 this was not possible.

4.8.3 Strand 3: Interview
For Robson (2002) a significant issue concerning the use of interviews is that they are extremely time consuming to conduct (30-60 minutes to obtain valuable data) and transcribe (a factor of 10 between recording and transcription time is fairly standard). The analysis can be similarly onerous with large volumes of data to trawl through and code before teasing out the relevant themes (Mertens, 2005).

The issue of bias is a also threat as the researcher or interviewer has the ability to influence interviewee responses perhaps through leading questions in order to draw out a preferred or desirable response or unwittingly through body language. Furthermore, the interviewee can also conceivably manipulate their response towards what they believe the interviewer wants to hear or in a way that they feel reflects them in a more favourable light (Johnson and Weller, 2001).

4.8.4 General limitations

Depth of the research
A common criticism of case study research is that the approach focuses the researcher’s attention on the depth of information at the expense of breadth generating outcomes and conclusions that are not generalisable beyond the research study (Abercrombie et al 1984). As discussed in the previous chapter it
was not the intention of this study to develop generalisable findings, rather it was the intention to develop a deeper understanding of the area being explored within the contextual confines of the six case studies.

**Susceptibility to preconception**

Another criticism levelled at case study research is that it is has a bias towards verification or a tendency to confirm the preconceptions of the researcher (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Given the nature of this study this criticism is of less concern as the research questions and aims are exploratory while there are no preconceptions or hypotheses or assumptions to test.

**Lack of observation**

One method that may have provided a deeper insight into the phenomena being explored during this study was observation, a data collection strategy commonly utilised in case study research (Yin, 1994; Robson, 2002). For example, it could be argued that observing or shadowing the SBMs in their daily routine may have provided a deeper insight into their role, impact and interactions with the other school stakeholders. Unfortunately, time and resource constraints precluded the possibility of utilising this method.

**Volume and complexity of data**

The sheer volume of data to emerge from case study research is problematic as whatever the strategy for analysis vast quantities must be omitted. This then presents a challenge as to how the researcher accurately portrays each case, in what is inevitably a simplistic version, without leaving out important information. With multiple cases the researcher has the problem of trying to standardise the data into a comparable format so that analysis can be conducted between as well as within cases again running the risk of losing vital information in the process (see Miles and Huberman, 1994). The result is a very time consuming process of carefully sifting through the large amount of data from the various sources (Mertens, 2005).
4.9 Summary

This chapter has described the specifics of the research design and methods; the sample selection; instrument development; piloting process; data collection and; data analysis. The steps taken to establish trustworthiness in the data and the limitations of the research design have also been discussed. The next chapter details the findings of the study by examining each case individually before drawing together the key themes emerging across all the cases.
CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS I: INDIVIDUAL CASE STUDIES

5.1 Introduction

The focus of the following chapter is the findings and analysis of the data collected at each individual case study site.

Over the course of the study, a significant volume of data was collected across the six case study sites. Having analysed the data and completed profiles for each of the six case studies it was felt that two of the cases were repeating many of the issues and themes that had already emerged. The data had reached saturation point (Bowen, 2008; Charmaz, 2003) whereby the findings from these case studies were not judged to be adding enough new information to the data to justify including them in the main body of the thesis. However, there remained elements of these case studies that were of interest to the wider research. A decision was therefore taken to move these cases from the main body of the thesis to the appendices where they could be acknowledged and discussed within the findings without saturating the data. The full case descriptions for these two case studies can be found in Appendices X and XI.

The key characteristics of all six case studies are reiterated Table 5. The four case studies that have been included in the main body of the thesis encompass a single school SBM in the primary sector; a single school SBM in the secondary sector; a SBM operating across two schools in the primary sector and; a SBM operating across multiple schools in a cross-phase setting. The two case studies that have been removed from the main body of the thesis are shaded.
Table 5: Case study characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Case study name</th>
<th>School setting</th>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Locale</th>
<th>Model*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Ridge Lane and Carrbrook</td>
<td>Federation of two schools</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>SBM partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Fernbrook</td>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>SBM service provider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Crane Street</td>
<td>Federation of four schools</td>
<td>Cross-phase</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>SBM partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Cross Vale</td>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Single school SBM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Ainsworth</td>
<td>Cluster of five schools (both secondary and primary)</td>
<td>Cross-phase</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Hamley</td>
<td>Cluster of 10 schools (one secondary and nine primary)</td>
<td>Cross-phase</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>SBM service provider</td>
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*Model descriptors below:

- **SBM partnership** - two or more schools appoint a SBM to work collaboratively across the group
- **SBM service provider** - a lead school provides school business management provision to one or more other schools in the locality
- **Single site SBM** - a sole SBM operating in a single school

The chapter is organised as four accounts of individual case studies that have been developed from data collected at each site. Each case is presented as a chronological narrative according to the different phases of data collection and structured around the interview protocol headings to explore the evidence surrounding the SBM role; SBM leadership and management; barriers and facilitators to the effectiveness of the SBM role; SBM impact and; reflections on the future of school business management. The most prominent themes to emerge from the case are outlined at the end of each account. These themes are discussed further in the cross-case analysis chapter that follows and are then subject to deeper interpretation, in relation to the academic research literature and the research questions, in the seventh chapter of the thesis.
5.2 CASE STUDY A: RIDGE LANE AND CARRBROOK FEDERATION

5.2.1 Synopsis
This case site comprises a federation of two primary schools, Ridge Lane Primary School and Carrbrook Primary School, which share a governing body and a federation leadership team. This team encompasses an executive headteacher, and executive deputy, an Inclusion Manager and a Federation Business Manager (FBM) who are tasked with executive leadership responsibility across both schools. One of the schools also has its own SBM who operates solely within that school. Over the course of this study the partnership between the two schools developed from an informal collaboration with a sharing of certain provisions and practices to a formal arrangement with a joint leadership and governing structure. The central focus of this case study is the FBM whose role developed substantially throughout the duration of this study from a SBM operating in a single school to a strategic position working across two schools, the implications of which are highlighted and discussed.

5.2.2 Case A: School business management model
Figure 4 illustrates the model of school business management in November 2010 when data collection was completed at this case study site. Over the course of the study the FBM had developed from working as the SBM at Ridge Lane Primary School to operating across both schools in the federation. The business management model employed by this case study site is a SBM Partnership with the FBM jointly employed by both schools. Due to the strategic position of the FBM, both schools have additional business management provision. Carrbrook employ their own SBM and Ridge Lane have recruited additional administrative capacity to take care of operational business management duties at their respective schools.
5.2.3 Context

Ridge Lane and Carrbrook Primary Schools are located two miles apart in an urban district of a large city in northern England. The catchment area of both schools covers one of the largest municipal housing estates in the country and is one of significant social and economic disadvantage where numbers of students with free school meal (FSM) eligibility and special educational need (SEN) provision are well above the national average. The vast majority of students attending both schools are of a white British background (Ofsted, 2007).

Ridge Lane Primary School is above average in size with approximately 460 students aged between 3 and 11 years of age. It also has a Children's Centre on site that caters for children from 0-5 years. Following inspection in 2007, Ridge Lane was graded as ‘outstanding’ by Ofsted who described it as a school where ‘students achieve very well and their personal development is exceptional’. They also commented on ‘the excellent leadership of the headteacher and her senior management team who ensure the school is constantly improving’ (Ofsted, 2007, p.4).

Carrbrook Primary school is a smaller than average school with approximately 280 students aged between 3 and 11 years of age. Carrbrook also has a Children’s Centre on site that caters for children from 0-5 years. In 2007,
Carrbrook was given a ‘notice to improve’ by Ofsted as a result of student underachievement and a decline in standards. Shortly afterwards Carrbrook began to work more collaboratively with Ridge Lane and the two schools entered into a learning partnership, an arrangement that involved the headteacher of Ridge Lane becoming executive headteacher of both schools (though each school retained their own governing body).

5.2.4 Data collection: Phase 1

Baseline data was collected at this case study site in June 2009 via a telephone interview with the SBM from Ridge Lane. At this point the learning partnership had been in operation for a year and was becoming more firmly established with the two schools collaborating in a number of key areas such as shared resources in teaching and learning and joint maintenance contracts to take advantage of economies of scale.

At Ridge Lane the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) was made up of the executive headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher and the SBM. They also had a Senior Management Team (SMT) comprising all members of the SLT plus four classroom teachers, a learning mentor and the senior teaching assistant (TA). At Carrbrook the SLT consisted of the executive headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher, and inclusion manager. They also employed a SBM who was not a full-time member of the SLT, but who was consulted by the executive headteacher on relevant issues (e.g. finance, premises) when necessary. Though both schools employed a SBM there were clear differences between the two roles in terms of experience, expertise and status in their respective schools. During this study it was decided to focus more closely on the SBM at Ridge Lane as her role was more expansive.

School Business Management provision

At Ridge Lane the SBM had been in post since 2005 when the role was created during a staffing restructure (although the executive headteacher admitted to not fully understanding the role or its potential at that time). Yet by 2008 the SBM was responsible for school finances and accountancy; administration;
human resources (HR); premises; health and safety; extended school provision;
the on-site Children's Centre; the lunchtime staff (and associated arrangements)
and; the marketing of the school. She was also a member of the SLT and actively
involved with certain aspects of strategic planning and leadership within the
school. Moreover, there were plans to develop the role further by training some
of the administrative staff to take on some of her operational duties so she could
expand and develop the strategic side of the job. Prior to becoming a SBM she
had worked in administration in both the education and business sector for over
10 years. She also held a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 4 in
Business, had completed the CSBM at the NCSL and was studying for the DSBM at
this time.

At Carrbrook the SBM had been appointed in 2007 to release the then
headteacher from the day-to-day running of the school budget and other
administrative duties. The SBM role had gradually developed throughout her
first year in post and by 2008 she had full responsibility for the management of
the school budget, HR and premises as well as line managing the administrative
and lunchtime staff, the caretaker and IT technician. She was also working
alongside the executive headteacher on matters relating to finance, premises and
HR. The role was very much an operational one and though she was less
experienced than her SBM counterpart at Ridge Lane she had successfully
completed the CSBM in her first year in post and had ambitions to develop
professionally in the future.

5.2.5 Data collection: Phase 2
The case site was visited for the first time in September 2010 where interviews
were conducted with the executive headteacher and SBMs from both Carrbrook
and Ridge Lane. There had been significant changes at the case study site since
the baseline data was collected a year earlier. Firstly, the federation had become
formalised with both schools now sharing a governing body. As such, the
executive headteacher had formed a Federation Leadership Team (FLT),
comprising herself, the executive deputy (previously the headteacher of
Carrbrook) and the new FBM (previously the SBM at Ridge Lane, see below), to
work strategically across both schools. Each school had retained or appointed a deputy and assistant headteacher to lead their individual settings on a day-to-day basis. Both schools also had their own school management teams.

**SBM role(s)**

In the wake of the formal partnership arrangement a new role, Federation Business Manager (FBM), had been created and filled by the SBM at Ridge Lane. This new position was set at a higher level than her previous role and she now formed an integral part of the FLT working across both Ridge Lane and Carrbrook. Subsequently, the operational business management role at Ridgeway was transferred to members of the administrative staff (who had been trained to take on these duties). At Carrbrook they retained the services of their own SBM to fulfil a similar operational function in their school.

As FBM, her duties were now more focused on strategic financial and business planning for the federation. The FBM was also expanding her knowledge of the educational agenda and feeling confident in her new role:

> I see my role as vitally important because you’ve got that rounded view at leadership level looking at teaching and learning but all the stuff that supports it too. To have simply had the executive head and deputy at leadership level might have meant that you had loads of great ideas but not been able to execute them.

(FBM, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2010)

The establishment of a business management role at such a strategic level made clear the regard in which the executive headteacher held her FBM and the importance she attached to having a staff member with business management acumen contributing to decision-making at the highest level within the federation. It is also worth highlighting that this was an internal appointment whereby the FBM had worked at Ridge Lane for a number of years and was therefore familiar to the staff, students and wider community at this school (though less so at Carrbrook).
At Carrbrook, the SBM’s role had not changed significantly in the year since the baseline data had been collected. Rather, it seemed that her second year in post had been one of embedding her position being the first SBM in the school’s history. Consequently, the biggest changes for the SBM had been staff comprehension of the role:

*I think when I first came to this school the staff didn’t have any idea what a SBM was because they had a senior administrator whose role wasn’t as advanced as this one ... I think the staff now appreciate the job that I do and it has become apparent what they need to come to me for rather than what they need to go to Janet [executive headteacher] for. So there has been a definite change since I started.*

(SBM, Carrbrook, 2010)

Being the first incumbent of the SBM role at Carrbrook had brought with it some cultural challenges with staff members taking time to fully understand and appreciate the role and its purpose. Though operating in a more reactive role than her more senior counterpart at Ridge Lane, the SBM at Carrbrook had started to take on elements of strategic responsibility with regard to staffing and resourcing in her school and had been able to support the executive headteacher and Carrbrook’s new deputy headteacher (who had been appointed in early 2010) in some of their leadership work.

**Leadership and management**

In terms of leadership and management responsibility there were clear differences between the SBM and FBM in line with the status of their respective roles. At Carrbrook, the SBM felt she would like to expand and develop her role but accepted that, at the current time, hers was more of a managerial position responsible as she was for line managing a number of support staff (i.e. administrative, lunchtime, IT).
Conversely, the FBM, being positioned at a higher level across the federation, felt her role was increasingly leadership based:

*It's increasing because yesterday I took a phone call from a staff member here and dealt with an issue which required leadership and it was a teaching staff member too. I mean it was a health and safety issue but they rang me about it because Janet was out and Jenny [executive deputy] was at a meeting.*

(FBM, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2010)

The FBM drew comparisons between her role and that of a governor in that she was now involved in the decision-making process of a range of areas across the federation from business and resource management to the educational agenda (e.g. she had recently started monitoring student data to identify dips, trends and patterns). In fact, the only area in which the FBM was not actively involved was the curriculum and lesson delivery though she hoped to be able to do some classroom observations in the future to see how the teachers were using the resources and begin to develop her understanding of teaching practice.

The executive headteacher summarised the key differences between her two business managers when discussing their respective management and leadership responsibilities:

*I would say, certainly that the FBM isn't a manager, she is a leader. However at Carrbrook the SBM is a manager and part of that comes with experience and the expertise they have and also the training ... their knowledge and skills set comes into it too.*

(Executive headteacher, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2010)

It was clear that management was a central aspect of the role for both the FBM and the SBM. In terms of leadership they were perhaps less experienced but the FBM was actively developing in this area, particularly given her new post which required a significant level of leadership. Yet, while there was no questioning the
professional ambition of the FBM, interesting questions were beginning to emerge as to the level of involvement in the teaching and learning agenda of a staff member without qualified teacher status (QTS).

**Barriers to the effectiveness of the SBM role**

At Carrbrook the SBM cited workload as a challenge claiming she was rarely left with enough time during the day to complete the tasks required of her. This inevitably meant working longer and more unsociable hours:

> I work longer hours than I’m employed to work anyway, I’m here early in a morning as I find them quieter to get your head down, and later at night as well when the kids have gone and you’ve not got parents coming in.

(SBM, Carrbrook, 2010)

The issue of workload and the growing breadth and depth of the SBM role is a concern for many of the SBMs within this study and is a concurrent theme running across the case studies.

The FBM cited time as a challenge, particularly as her role was new and would need to become established alongside the new FLT arrangement:

> The fact that we’re across two sites will also compound this [establishment of new FBM role] because we need to ensure that at least one of the three [FLT members] is on site at both schools during the school day but then the problem is that we never get to see each other as a team ... I think we’ve all acknowledged that that this first year’s going to be a bit of a learning period.

(FBM, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2010)

As with the working relationships (discussed in the previous section), there was an acknowledgement that the new leadership structure and the new FBM role
would take some time to become embedded and accepted and that there may be some challenges along the way.

Another less tangible challenge highlighted by both the FBM and executive headteacher were staff attitudes towards the new role. Some members of staff seemed to find the idea of a non-teaching staff member operating at such an influential level a difficult one to grasp:

*There are some people who don’t understand the role, don’t want to understand the role but also are very sceptical of the role and I think that comes more from the leadership side of the staffing rather than the teachers. I think there is a perception that the role is a threat to the teaching profession.*

(Executive headteacher, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2010)

As highlighted earlier, the idea that a non-teaching staff member might be making decisions that directly influence aspects of the teaching and learning agenda clearly did not sit comfortably with some senior leaders. Whether this was borne out of a genuine concern over the aptitude of the FBM to make such decisions or a lack of understanding of the role was unclear. What was obvious was the executive headteacher’s unwavering support for the FBM and her determination that, in her opinion, such misconceptions should not be a barrier to the role and its impact. Rather, it was anticipated that, given time, the FBM would be able to embed her new position and make a positive impact on the federation thus raising her profile and staff understandings of her role. Further, having already worked at Ridge Lane for a number of years, prior to appointment to this new role, the FBM was at least familiar to many of the staff members at the federation and also had a strong knowledge of the context in which the schools were situated. It was felt that this previous experience would also facilitate her transition from single school SBM to FBM.
**Facilitators to the effectiveness of the SBM role**

Both business managers cited a positive working relationship with the executive headteacher as being central not only to them fulfilling their roles effectively but also to the success of the wider model of leadership and management within the federation. The FBM described the executive headteacher’s approach as combining approachability and accessibility with a trust in her staff to fulfil their responsibilities without a requirement for micro-management. This appeared to have fostered a mutual respect between the executive headteacher and her workforce:

> Bravely, she [executive headteacher] invests a lot of trust in people ... when you have it, you’ll cover each other’s backs and you’ll pick each other up, it’s not a critical thing, it’s a genuine support of one another and a high level of trust running through which makes the team work well.

(FBM, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2010)

From the interviews with the executive headteacher it was clear the value she placed on all her working relationships particularly with those staff members on her leadership teams. However, it was the FBM whom she singled out as being her closest ally:

> To be honest I’d be totally and utterly lost without her. I trust her implicitly and I feel as though that is reciprocated. I feel as though she is a friend and confidant as well as a colleague, somebody I can sound off to, have a cry with, shout at ... I mean I can do all those things I mention with other members of my SLT but what I’ve found, because of the proximity in which we work, is that I do more and more of that with Alison [FBM]. I think that also comes down to personalities.

(Executive headteacher, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2010)
This illustrates the close personal, and strong working, relationship between the executive headteacher and FBM and how crucial this relationship is in alleviating the pressures associated with school leadership.

The working relationship between both business managers and the teaching staff were not quite as well established mainly because both parties tended to operate in different spheres within the school. However, there was evidence of some crossover where the FBM had collaborated with teaching staff on certain projects:

An example of that would be sitting down with the foundation team who are looking to re-design their outdoor playground so I’d be involved in the contracting and in speaking to them about what they need it for and what kind of things they would like to achieve with it.

(FBM, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2010)

Also, the teaching staff at both schools were becoming more aware of the business manager roles and readily approached them with queries relating to their area of expertise (e.g. budgetary or premises issues) where previously they might have first spoken to the executive headteacher. This was seen as a cultural change as both business managers had established their roles to the extent that all staff members now knew who they were and what areas of the school they held responsibility for. In the case of the FBM and her team the changes were particularly significant:

Part of that is also about the relationships that have been developed, the openness, the honesty, the professionalism of both the teachers and the FBM but also about that ethos that she’s [FBM] created within the team that she works with. They are no longer just ‘the ladies on the school desk’ which was really sad because they are crucial ... they are the first people any visitors to the school see.

(Executive headteacher, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2010)
Not only had the FBM worked on raising her own profile across the federation, she had also taken steps to ensure that the profile of her team of support staff was also heightened. As such, they were now perceived in a more positive light and appreciated for their role in the operation of the federation. Two key themes emerge here: the FBM’s contribution to the cultural shift in attitudes towards support staff and also the FBM as a champion of this sector of the school workforce using her status and influence to improve working conditions for her team.

The profile of the SBM role varied between the other school stakeholders. For example, the governors, having been involved in the appointment of both business managers, had a clear understanding of the role and its purpose yet the parents had taken more time to comprehend the SBM role:

*When I started it was different but over time they’ve seen me out and about in school so have come to realise the role and view me in a different way. They still know it’s an office space post as it were but they will talk to me as one of the management about issues they traditionally would have gone to the teacher’s with.*

(FBM, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2010)

For the most part both business managers had shown patience and quietly gone about their duties and, over time, they were eventually accepted, understood and appreciated by other school stakeholders. However, if they were able to make a meaningful, noticeable impact along the way then this helped their cause significantly.

Overall, both business managers had worked to raise their profiles within the federation and develop positive relationships with all educational stakeholders. For the FBM, such relationships had become even more important as her role now incorporated working with a range of staff members at every level making it crucial that everyone at the federation understood who she was and what her role entailed.
**SBM impact**

In terms of impact, each interviewee alluded to improvements that had been made by both business managers to the school finances through more efficient management (e.g. contract negotiation, sharing resources) and an increase in funding streams to bring more money into the federation:

> In financial terms, four years ago we were having redundancies and now we’re not because we manage our budget much more effectively ... The premises are now on a rolling programme and things are refurbished regularly which wasn’t in place previously ... I think we have a slicker operation of systems and procedures now.

(FBM, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2010)

Streamlining finances, generating income and improving the infrastructure might be viewed as logical areas in which one would expect an SBM to have made an impact and it was clear that this was the case at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook. Yet, interestingly, the interviewees placed just as much emphasis on the improvements the FBM had made to the wider operation of the school (e.g. by changing systems and freeing up time for the executive headteacher):

> Things that I would just do out of routine, something as simple as speaking with the parents at the start of the day and directing them to the right person which, more often than not, wasn’t me. It’s not just her [FBM] that has changed things but rather the culture she has instilled, ‘this is how we deal with phone calls now’, ‘this is how we deal with parents who come to the desk, we signpost them to the correct person’

(Executive headteacher, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2010)

Again, there seemed to have been a cultural change within the federation as a result of the systems and procedures that the FBM had put in place. Working at a strategic level had afforded the FBM the opportunity to make such system
changes in a way she might not have previously been able. For example, she had introduced a performance management scheme for all support staff at Carrbrook to give them a voice and improve motivation:

*If you're told your doing something well it encourages you and builds confidence but also if you're struggling with something you know that twice a year you have your appraisal and it serves as a forum to voice your opinion ... it's a better system all round where people feel valued.*

(Executive headteacher, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2010)

Overall, both business managers were making a positive impact at the federation though it was the FBM who had perhaps made the biggest impression given the relative status and influence her new role had facilitated. Furthermore, the impact had stretched beyond the more obvious sphere of finance to encompass a wide range of other areas such as staff development, headteacher workload and the profile of the support staff.

5.2.6 **Data collection: Phase 3**

A final case site visit was conducted in January 2011 during which follow-up interviews were conducted with the executive headteacher, FBM and SBM whilst the executive deputy and one of the school governors were also interviewed.

**SBM role(s)**

In the year since the previous visit the FBM had taken on a new role with the NCSL as a Regional Advocate for School Business Management. This part-time position involved a commitment to working outside of the federation both at the NCSL and also visiting schools in the region to offer support and advice on business management. Within the federation she had continued to develop her role which was now increasingly focused on leadership and long-term strategy rather than management and day-to-day operations:

*As a leadership member of staff, she [FBM] needs to be a strategic leader. There are other people within her team that can do either the*
managing of staff or the day to day business ... she’s much more strategic in thinking about the future, the vision, the direction, not only of the business functions but how that benefits and impacts on the teaching and learning.

(Executive headteacher, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2011)

This was an interesting development in that the FBM’s role had risen to a level such that she was able to delegate her work to staff members within the federation and take on an additional role that allowed her to work outside of the federation for a portion of her week.

The FBM had also been expanding her understanding of teaching and learning, the one area of the school operation she had previously felt her knowledge base was lacking:

I’m getting involved in things like sitting in on lesson observations, having more to do with the student progress reviews and having a much better overview of teaching and learning as well as the business side of it so that I can understand that relationship between resources and effectiveness then linking that in with staffing structures, budgets and all the rest of it.

(FBM, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2011)

Her motivations for this stemmed from both a personal drive to have a clear understanding of every area of the school and the expanding nature of her role which increasingly incorporated leading the federation in the absence of the executive headteacher (who had also taken on a new part-time post outside of the federation) and the executive deputy (who was not always available due to the split-site nature of the two schools in the federation). Given that she was often the most senior staff member in the school(s) it is perhaps understandable that she would want to develop her knowledge of all aspects of the federation. Furthermore, despite her non-QTS being a talking point, the FBM was adamant it should not be a barrier to her fulfilling her role effectively:
I think that if you have those leadership skills then very little of the decisions that you have to make on a reactive basis are specifically teaching and learning based, they would maybe be more health and safety or student behaviour and things like that ... We had a discussion at Governors meeting about this kind of thing, about somebody who is non-QTS having that level of responsibility in school and actually on a day-to-day basis, and even on a short term basis, we didn’t think there was any issue at all.

(FBM, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2011)

The FBM clearly wants to fill the gaps in her knowledge of the teaching and learning agenda and sees no reason why a non-teaching professional could not lead a school given the right structure. Controversial as this may seem, her viewpoint warrants attention if only because her executive headteacher has, in many ways, engineered her rise to her current position.

At Carrbrook there had been little change to the SBMs role although she drew attention to the increased support structures available as a consequence of the federation becoming formalised (i.e. the increased presence of the FBM whose skills and knowledge she could draw upon for professional support). However, the clear differences between the strategic leadership role of the FBM and the more operational management role of the SBM at Carrbrook are noteworthy.

**Leadership and management**

Since the previous site visit the federation had appointed a new member of staff, an Inclusion Director, to the FLT to support the team in an area they felt provision needed strengthening. The leadership of the federation had also been inspected by Ofsted who visited specifically to scrutinise the effectiveness of the new model. The resulting Grade 2 ‘Good’ was viewed by everyone at the federation as recognition that they had made the right decision to formalise their collaboration and that their model of leadership was working effectively. As previously highlighted, the executive headteacher had also taken on a new role
with the NCSL as a School Leadership Advisor, a role involving a commitment of working two days a week at the NCSL. For the executive headteacher, the fact that both herself and the FBM had been offered, and were able to take, these opportunities to work outside of their setting reflected favourably on themselves as professionals and the federation leadership model:

*I would actually say that because of the leadership structure we have in place, we’ve been able to manage both our roles. How we do that is also down to us as individuals but the benefits it brings back into the federation are significant ... it’s about how we’re thinking about the federation and schools leading schools for the future but it also reflects that we’re doing our jobs well, the fact that we’ve been able to take on extra roles.*

(Executive headteacher, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2011)

While it is commendable that the FBM secured a new position within the NCSL it again raises concerns about workload and the seemingly limitless remit of the business manager and the potential distraction of spending half the week away from what might be perceived as their core duties. However, as highlighted below, this is a concern that the FBM is well aware of.

The interviewees identified a number of key characteristics as central to the federation leadership model and its success. Firstly, the malleability of the model in reacting to the needs of the federation, as evidenced in their appointment of an Inclusion Manager when it became clear that this was an area requiring an increased focus, coupled with a commitment to continued adaptation to any future challenges:

*It might be that the model we’ve got now isn’t the one we need in 18 months time; again, we will re-shape and re-think depending on what we need.*

(Executive headteacher, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2011)
A second important characteristic of the federation leadership model is their members’ shared belief in the strategic direction of the federation so that each member of the FLT is pulling in the same direction:

*I think one of the things is that we are quite similar in our outlook and our ethos and the standards that we expect as a leadership team. We have very similar ideas about the vision we have for both schools; we’re very clear on that.*

(Executive deputy, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2011)

Thirdly, the collective understanding that the needs of the students are prioritised above everything else and that senior leaders’ personal success does not detract from the core business of the federation:

*It’s quite easy to get carried away with stuff, especially when you’ve been asked to do this and that and you can easily get consumed by all the other stuff. The bottom line is that there are almost 700 students that we serve here ... almost like having that moral imperative about what we’re doing.*

(FBM, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2011)

A final characteristic of the federation leadership model was the high level of trust between the members of the FLT, both professionally and personally. They are confident in their colleagues’ abilities and decision-making but also able to communicate openly, honestly and constructively with each other when required:

*There was a comment that governors made in talking about the success of the federation in light of the Ofsted report and his comment was; ‘what you’ve got is four people working for the good of the school and no one person trying to out-do anybody else’ and actually I think that probably sums it up.*

(FBM, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2011)
These four elements: flexibility; a shared belief in the leadership strategy; a collective agreement of the central priority of the federation and; a mutual trust between team members appear to be the driving force behind the success of the new leadership structure at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook. Furthermore, to have their leadership model scrutinised by Ofsted had been a challenging period for the staff at the federation, particularly the senior leaders who had put so much faith in their new system. A positive verdict was therefore of huge relief and even more welcome considering the new model had only been in operation for 12 months.

**Barriers to effectiveness of the SBM role**

While the new leadership model had become more established and appeared to be functioning effectively, the unique blend of personalities and shared work ethic, so important to its success, was also a cause for concern in terms of succession planning:

*I'm normally at work just after 7:30 and I could work until 18:00 without a problem ... but then what we're all concerned about is the succession planning part of it because we're prepared to do all of this work but if we were to expect whoever came in after us to do the same amount of work then that would be an unfair expectation.*

(FBM, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2011)

Of particular concern was the FBM role, a role which the FBM had made her own by developing, expanding and moulding it not just around the requirements of the federation but around her own attributes and personality. Both the executive headteacher and executive deputy admitted the FBM would be almost impossible to replace were she to leave her post. As such, the FBM herself was taking steps to alleviate some of these concerns by sharing expertise and good practice amongst her support staff so that her role and the wider model could be sustainable:
You have to look at that continuity and development because if, all of a sudden, Alison [FBM] wasn’t here then who can start to fill her position? It’s not all about leaders saying ‘I’m the pinnacle, I know everything and no-one shall know anything else’ and that’s one thing I do like about Alison and the system of business management we have at the minute. It’s about sharing expertise and highlighting the development needs of staff.

(Governor, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2011)

Again, this reinforces the emergent theme, highlighted earlier, of the FBM taking responsibility for the professional development of her support staff.

Despite this, the continued expansion of the FBM role both within and beyond the federation had begun to raise issues around workload, career direction, and ultimately, the sustainability of the role in its current form:

It is difficult to get the balance right, last week I was out for two days, this week I will have been out for two and a half days and actually that has a huge impact because you lose the feel of the school and I’m conscious that I have to be quite careful about where I want my career to go.

(FBM, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2011)

As discussed previously, the potential implications of taking an additional role outside of the federation was a growing concern for the FBM in terms of her commitment to the federation and future career plans while her workload had continued to increase.

Another barrier, reiterated by the FBM, was the perception of her role from certain stakeholders and it seemed there remained a lack of understanding in some quarters of the exact nature of the FBM role. The FBM had continued to take steps to increase her profile and assert her position across both schools in a bid to facilitate a federation-wide understanding of her role:
I think she made a real effort to be extremely visible (and still does) so whether it’s at Ridge Lane or Carrbrook she’s always available and visible to staff, parents, to everybody so they know her role and how important it is within the school.

(Executive deputy, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2011)

A more technical barrier had emerged between the federation and the LA who were unwilling to re-numerate the FBM role with a salary commensurate with her senior leadership colleagues due to her non-QTS:

Alison [FBM] is unfortunately paid on a lower scale and is therefore paid less than some of our teachers who are at the highest end of their scale yet Alison has more responsibility and that is a bit of a problem. Our LA does not recognise non-QTS as leadership staff so we’re still challenging that.

(Executive headteacher, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2011)

Consequently, there was an on-going dispute between the two parties that had created a certain amount of animosity and a perception from the federation that their LA was not particularly supportive of their model of leadership. The role of the LA and its relative influence in schools is something that differs between case studies in this thesis, an issue made all the more pertinent by the recent raft of government policies to encourage schools in England to operate (more) independently from their LAs.

**SBM impact**

All interviewees highlighted the financial impact made by the FBM and her team in generating income and resources for the federation and also making significant savings. For instance, there was now a surplus in the annual federation budget as a result of savings made by the FBM while she had also decided it was in the best interests of the federation to change their catering provider from the one supplied by the LA saving money and improving the
quality of the service. Though this was regarded as a bold decision it was confidently supported by the federation governors:

Not only do we think we can maintain or improve the standard of meals for the students, we can also get better rates of pay for the much valued catering staff who work in the kitchens of both schools. If our FBM didn’t have the confidence to take on these big projects then we wouldn’t do it.

(Governor, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2011)

The governor also explained that they had plans for the four catering staff members to be more directly involved with the students, by talking to them about diets and healthy eating, and by organising the new catering arrangements the FBM had allowed this to be possible.

Additionally, the executive deputy drew attention to the FBM’s work on the federation-wide policies for staff, introduced by the FBM, which had enabled the whole organisation to function and operate on a smoother, more professional footing:

She manages all the cover for our professional development and management time, she’s introduced things like practices and procedures for staff absence and requesting time, cleaning and health and safety audits. So we know that the practices of the school are top rate really because of the work that Alison [FBM] and the team she manages does.

(Executive deputy, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2011)

She also underlined the diversity of the FBM’s impact highlighting her work with the students as an example:

She has taken a lead on a project linking us to a school in Ghana which is allowing some of the students to have a wider understanding of
different countries and cultures ... as a non-QTS member of staff she has taken a lead on that even though it involves producing learning materials.

(Executive deputy, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2011)

This illustrates the wider implications of the changes made by the FBM to directly impact on the students in ways which might not seem immediately apparent when discussed purely in financial terms.

Despite these tangible achievements, the FBM felt very strongly that her impact should not be measured individually or simply in relation to resourcing and finances:

_The fact that we can spend more money on resources and we have that financial capacity ... those are all part of the story but actually, for me, the headlines are that Ridge Lane’s results are continuing to improve and Carrbrook’s are now on that trend ... we are starting to see a difference. Those are the successes and I’m a part of that team which is bringing them about._

(FBM, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2011)

While she accepted that she had fulfilled this aspect of her role well she was adamant that the combined impact of the FLT on improving the educational experience and standards of student achievement throughout the whole federation was where they should focus their attention. Despite the suspicions of some staff members of the increasingly influential role of non-teaching professionals in schools, the SBMs within this study are clear that their focus is the same as the teachers and senior leaders in their schools, namely ensuring the best educational outcome and experience for all the students in their schools.

Finally, all those members of the FLT who were interviewed spoke about the balance they had established in their team:
You’ve got somebody leading pastoral, you’ve got somebody leading curriculum, you’ve got somebody leading business and you’ve got somebody leading the strategic direction of the school and balance of those four roles is really important because each of those perspectives is vital to the bigger picture rather than having three people focusing on curriculum which would give a distorted view in my opinion.

(Executive headteacher, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2011)

The role of the FBM was seen as integral to achieving this balance given the alternative perspective she was able to offer as a result of her professional background.

**Looking forward**

On a personal level, the FBM had ambitions to continue to expand her role and develop professionally. She was considering studying for the National Professional Qualification in Headship (NPQH) seeing no reason why not being a qualified teacher should be a barrier to school leadership:

_Hypothetically, should the federation grow we might change the leadership structure ... and then there would be no reason why I, with NPQH, couldn’t head up a school knowing that there is teaching and learning experience there already._

(FBM, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2011)

Given her rapid rise to such an influential and prominent position it seemed certain that the FBM would continue to develop her expertise. Whether she would become a school leader in her own right was a more debatable topic but her ambition was not in doubt.

On a broader scale, there was a sense from participants that the SBM role was becoming a necessity for schools:
I just want to make it clear that I can’t see schools functioning without this role to be honest because of the focus it allows the teaching leaders to have as opposed to the management of the building.

(Executive deputy, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, 2011)

The executive deputy went on to suggest that she would not consider a headship position in the future without the knowledge that a SBM was in place or assurances that she would be able to recruit one, particularly given the current times of austerity and the associated requirement for more financial creativity as budgets are squeezed.

5.2.7 Summary of key themes
A number of key themes emerge from this case study and are summarised below. These key themes will be revisited and discussed in more depth in the cross-case analysis chapter that follows these four individual case studies and then considered in relation to the research questions guiding this thesis in the discussion chapter.

**SBM role**

*Leadership and management*

The presence of two business managers working at different levels within their organisations illustrates the ways in which the role can differ between schools. At this case study site the FBM role is positioned at a higher, more influential level than the SBM and this is reflected in the characteristics of the two roles. Where the FBM has more strategic and leadership responsibility across the two federated schools, the SBM is focused more on the operational aspects of the single school within which she is situated although she does have some managerial responsibility.

*Breadth and depth of the role*

The FBM at this case study site provides a good example of the potential breadth and depth of the business manager role and the associated implications for workload. Her position at the federation involves operating both within and
between the two schools and has seen her role expand to the extent that she has trained staff members to support her. She has also taken on an external role operating beyond her school, effectively removing herself from the federation for two days a week. While this expansion of her role is a positive sign of her capabilities it has also raised questions as to the manageability and sustainability of her workload, the future direction of her career and succession planning for her role.

**Barriers to the effectiveness of the SBM role**

*Common understanding/acceptance of the role*

This case study has highlighted the some of the cultural barriers faced by SBMs as they establish themselves in a sector where their role, in its current incarnation, did not previously exist. For the FBM this has been particularly challenging due to the high status of her position and the leadership responsibility that accompanies her role. For some of the federation stakeholders, the notion of a staff member without QTS operating at a strategic level has been difficult to comprehend.

**Facilitators to the effectiveness of the SBM role**

*Working relationships*

The strength of the working relationship between the FBM and her executive headteacher is a vital component of the leadership and business management models at this case study site and a key reason why the FBM has been handed such high status and decision-making capacity. Both individuals commented on the mutual respect and trust they have in one another along with the positive rapport and critical friendship they enjoy. The relationships between the business manager, the headteacher and the other members of the school workforce are influential factors in the effectiveness of the business management models and the level of leadership exercised by the SBMs across the case studies in this research.

**SBM profile**

The FBM has worked hard to raise her profile within the federation, most notably by increasing her visibility amongst staff, students and parents and ensuring everyone knows who she is, even if they do not necessarily fully comprehend her
role. She has also involved herself in all areas of the school from the business management to strategic leadership and is even developing her knowledge of the teaching and learning agenda. According to the executive headteacher, these have been key tactics to breaking down the cultural and attitudinal barriers that the FBM has faced from a small minority of stakeholders who have not been fully supportive of the decision to appoint a non-teaching professional at such an influential position in the federation.

Professional/personal ambition
The FBM at this case study site has perhaps the most influential position of any of the other SBMs in this study and she is clearly very capable in her role. However, her rise to such a prominent position may also be attributed to her confident and aspirational nature and thirst for professional learning. Her desire to complete the NPQH offers a further illustration of her ambitions and poses the question of whether a non-QTS staff member could ever lead a school. Such drive and determination is a characteristic typical of many of the business managers in this study.

SBM Impact

Headteacher
The impact of the business manager role on the headteacher at this case study site has been significant particularly in terms of the redistribution of responsibilities whereby the executive headteacher, by her own admission, has been able to spend more time on the educational agenda having dispersed much of her previous financial and operational responsibilities to the FBM. As such, the executive headteacher is happier in her role and believes the federation is benefiting as a result of her focusing more of her attention on improving teaching and learning.

Finances
Both the business managers have made a positive impact on the finances of the schools in the federation by increasing efficiency of contracts, sharing resources and generating new funding streams.
Support staff
One of the priorities for the FBM has been to raise the profile and improve the working conditions for the support staff across the federation. She has addressed this in a number of ways such as introducing a system of performance management and appraisal for this section of the federation workforce; sharing her own expertise and good practice amongst her business management team and both encouraging and facilitating their professional development and; working to raise the profile of the support staff amongst across the federation so the other stakeholders have a greater understanding of the work of both business managers and their teams of staff.

Cultural
While less tangible there is evidence to support a cultural impact made by the FBM at this case study site particularly in relation to her contribution towards the shifting perceptions of the federation support staff and the greater appreciation of their role across the federation. This change in attitudes has largely resulted from the work of the FBM in raising the profile of the support staff. The concept of school business management was an entirely unfamiliar one to the vast majority of the federation stakeholders prior to the initial appointment of the FBM (in her previous position as the SBM of Ridge Lane School). Alongside the executive headteacher, the FBM (and, to a lesser extent, the SBM at Carrbrook) have worked hard to raise their own profile and foster a wider understanding of their burgeoning profession and the benefits it can bring to the school operation.

Educational change
Inter-school collaboration
The federation arrangement at this case study provides an illustration of formal inter-school collaboration and the key role of the business manager in this arrangement whereby, alongside the governing body and executive leadership team, this role is shared across the two schools. As the existing SBM literature suggests, business management can act as a key conduit through which genuine and sustainable inter-school collaboration can occur.
5.3 CASE STUDY B: CROSS VALE SCHOOL

5.3.1 Synopsis
This case site comprises a single large primary setting, Cross Vale School. Two months before this study began the school recruited a SBM for the first time in their history. The case study follows the SBM's journey in establishing her role, and embedding new systems and processes within the school and charts the impact she has made despite facing cultural barriers and resistance both to her position and the changes she has implemented.

5.3.2 Case B: School business management model
Figure 5 illustrates the model of school business management at Case B, in October 2010 when data collection was completed at this case study site. Over the course of the research, the SBM had established her role within the school, progressively taken on more responsibility and widened her remit. By the third and final case site visit the school had also appointed a part-time administrative assistant to support the SBM with her expanding workload. The model of business management employed at this case study site is a single site SBM.

Figure 5: Model of school business management at Cross Vale School – October 2010

5.3.3 Context
Cross Vale is a larger than average primary school with just under 300 students serving a small, rural village in the east midlands region of England. The surrounding area is reasonably affluent with only 3% of students at the school
eligible for FSM provision. The vast majority of students are of white British origin and very few speak English as an additional language.

In early 2009 following a turbulent period, which had seen standards of student attainment drop significantly and financial difficulties that had forced the LA to take control of their budget, the school was graded as ‘inadequate’ by Ofsted and given a notice to improve.

5.3.4 Data collection: Phase 1
Cross Vale was first visited in October 2009, two months after the appointment of the SBM and just over a year after a new headteacher had taken up her post. Interviews were conducted with the headteacher and the SBM.

School business management provision
In September 2009, following the ‘notice to improve’ Cross Vale appointed their first ever SBM as part of a drastic school improvement strategy initiated by the new headteacher who had only been in post for one year herself (having been appointed in September 2008 to improve the school). This was a strategic move by the headteacher who, conscious that the challenges Cross Vale faced were not restricted to the classroom, recognised that wholesale changes to the entire operation of the school were necessary. This was acknowledged by Ofsted, despite the negative verdict:

The new headteacher, with the deputy, provides far-sighted leadership. They have a clear and accurate view of where improvements are needed. A well-judged range of measures to improve provision and raise standards have begun to be introduced.

(Ofsted, 2009, p.5)

The headteacher placed the SBM onto the SLT at Cross Vale alongside herself, the deputy headteacher and the three phase leaders (foundation, key stage 1 and key stage 2). As well as the first SBM to be appointed at Cross Vale she was also the first ever non-teaching member of their SLT.
**SBM role**

The new SBM’s professional background was in education where she had spent nine years as a primary school administrator before taking a post as a SBM in a large cross-phase federation of three schools. From there she had moved to Cross Vale to take up the second SBM position of her career. Having been in her new post for just six weeks the differences between her new and previous role were already evident:

> It's similar to my previous role [in a cross-phase setting] but in a primary school it’s more hands-on to be honest ... I think you have to have a lot more knowledge in a primary school of different systems and how they work, you need to know about everything rather than being specialised in just finance or admin, it’s a wider role.

(SBM, Cross Vale, 2009)

At Cross Vale, the SBM had been handed responsibility for finances, HR, premises, and health and safety measures. She had also been tasked with leading the community cohesion agenda, an area that Ofsted felt Cross Vale needed to improve, and was therefore trying to build stronger links by establishing a community group. Linked to this, the school had not previously offered any extended provision for students either before or after school so the SBM had been applying for funding to address this area of provision. Additionally, many of the systems and processes at Cross Vale were in desperate need of review (e.g. school accounts, catering) so the SBM had taken the lead in assessing and reorganising these areas to improve them and make them more time and cost efficient. Over the longer term, the SBM had plans to introduce a Montessori nursery at Cross Vale to address declining student numbers.

What was evident from the outset was the size of the task faced by the new SBM at this case study site in relation to the volume and diversity of the work she had taken on. However it was also clear that she was thriving on the challenge and
that her past experience in a larger setting would also be beneficial in her new role.

**Leadership and management**

Following her appointment, the SBM was given line management responsibilities for 15 personnel at Cross Vale comprising all the administrative, midday and premises staff. For the headteacher it was important to give all her senior leadership staff ownership of their specific areas of expertise therefore the SBM had been handed freedom to lead in all areas of non-teaching provision both within and beyond the school:

*At the moment we’re having a new roof, a £400,000 project, which I’ll be managing from the school side working with the contractors and the health and safety to work out which part of the roof we do first, holiday openings etc. In terms of the financial stuff I’ll be taking a strategic role ... the Community Cohesion is also strategic; I’m going to set up a community group involving the parish council and the local church.*

(SBM, Cross Vale, 2009)

As discussed earlier, the headteacher at Cross Vale had also placed the newly appointed SBM onto the SLT in a bid to strengthen the leadership structure and allow the SBM to widen her influence across the school. According to the headteacher they were now running a smoother, more efficient operation:

*For example, let’s say there’s a glaring gap in KS1 so they might suggest investing some money in phonics, here is my evidence for this. I’ll then look at Lucy [SBM] and ask if we can find the money for this and, if so, I’ll give the proposal the go ahead and she will deal with it. Whereas before I was doing all that myself and messing about with budgets and spreadsheets ... it’s such a better system now.*

(Headteacher, Cross Vale, 2009)
From the outset, the SBM was entrusted with line-management and strategic leadership responsibilities and given the autonomy to initiate and lead projects in areas she felt required attention. Further, it seemed she had already made an impact on the workload of the headteacher and the wider school operation.

Barriers to the effectiveness of the SBM role

For the SBM, staff attitudes were potentially the biggest barrier to her being able to fulfil her potential and she had particular concerns about their adaptability to the requisite changes. Both the SBM and the headteacher commented that the school had operated in a traditional way for many years and that working practices and systems, no longer appropriate for a modern school, were deeply embedded amongst many staff members at Cross Vale. Such issues were also reflected in their most recent Ofsted report, challenges they would have to overcome if they were to make the necessary progress:

_The staff will be the biggest barrier for leading change, taking everybody on board and involving everyone, as they’ve never had that sort of leadership before. The headteacher only came last year after they were given a notice to improve by Ofsted so it’s getting them to understand that they have to change and evolve into a 21st century school._

(SBM, Cross Vale, 2009)

Similarly, the SBM was concerned about staff attitudes towards a non-teaching staff member making strategic decisions about the future direction of the school and challenging the existing systems and processes:

_It’s been really hard work being a new member of the SLT and not being teaching staff ... The other thing is that the style of leadership across a range of services, which is how I’m used to working, is new to this school. There are many services that are not involved here and I’m questioning them as to why this is, so I feel like the enemy at the minute!_  

(SBM, Cross Vale, 2009)
However, the SBM remained confident that, given time, she would be able to overcome these barriers:

*Looking forward I think they need to have a much more open culture and start looking outside this box, they’ve become quite insular so the cultural change will be to do a lot more out there, and bring the school into the 21st Century!*  
(SBM, Cross Vale, 2009)

A number of themes emerge here, most notably a resistance to educational change from staff members and the challenges faced by the SBM in relation to her being an externally appointed candidate, with little prior knowledge of the school context, and the associated issues of acceptance amongst her new colleagues amplified by the fact that her role is new to the school.

**Facilitators to the effectiveness of the SBM role**

Being a recent appointment, the SBM had had little time to establish any meaningful working relationships or cultivate her profile within the school. The governing body were well aware of her role having helped to appoint her and she had regular meetings with governors regarding the school’s short and long-term financial strategy. She had also, quite quickly, gained the trust and respect of the headteacher who, in turn, had placed a great deal of faith in her SBM by giving her the freedom to overhaul systems and practices, explore new ways of operating and implement long-term projects at Cross Vale. Placing the SBM onto the SLT was also a bold step since they had previously never had a SBM, let alone a non-teaching member of their SLT. However, the headteacher felt that if they were going to change attitudes towards the SBM it was vitally important that she became a visible presence so that all school stakeholders could see the positive impact the SBM was making and come to understand and appreciate the role:

*It’s a bit of a learning curve for them in that we haven’t had an SBM before and some of them haven’t really taken on board that she’s more...*
than a secretary but others, especially the senior members of staff, understand her role and will ask her to support them in their strategic thinking ... it is a case of raising awareness with the teachers lower down the pecking order which is up to me and Lucy.

(Headteacher, Cross Vale, 2009)

Similarly, the SBM believed her involvement in the community cohesion agenda would bring her into more regular contact with the students, parents and other members of the local community thereby raising her profile and the understanding of her role beyond the school gates.

**SBM Impact**

Despite only being in post for a short period of time the SBM had already made some tangible short-term impacts and put in place systems to engender more significant, long-term impacts. As discussed many of the systems and practices at Cross Vale were no longer fit for purpose and were thus being reconfigured by the SBM. For example, she was reviewing the catering system and actively bidding for additional funding for the school kitchen, which was in desperate need of renovation. As such, uptake of school meals amongst students was very low. She had also introduced the sale of milk in the school, all part of a wider agenda to gain Healthy School Status24 for Cross Vale. For the headteacher this was an area of significant importance:

*The SBM is part of the SLT and she brings to those meetings all those areas that she's responsible for and they do impinge on school improvement and the raising of standards for example, yesterday she came and talked about the Healthy Schools Status and she linked that to school meals and you'll know that if you provide a decent meal for a child in the middle of the day they will perform better in the afternoon.*

(Headteacher, Cross Vale, 2009)

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24 The National Healthy Schools Programme was established by the New Labour government in 2004. To gain Healthy School Status, schools had to demonstrate evidence in four areas relating to personal, social and health education; physical activity; healthy eating and; emotional health (DoH, 2005).
Another area requiring immediate attention was the school accounting system which, prior to the appointment of the SBM, was logged manually in books with records dating back to the 1950s. The SBM had therefore computerised this accounts system and electronically archived all the records to ensure a more organised and efficient system. She also had plans for the school to gain their Financial Management Standard in Schools (FMSiS\(^{25}\)). These initial steps were part of a wider agenda to improve the finances by taking the school out of deficit and regaining control of their budget from the LA thus giving Cross Vale more freedom over their own finances:

*At the moment they don’t have their own budget, it was taken off them after their financial difficulties, so I’m putting all the policies in place to hopefully, in the very near future, get that back.*

(SBM, Cross Vale, 2009)

For the headteacher, being able to relinquish non-teaching responsibility and decision-making to the SBM with the confidence this would be dealt with in a far more efficient and effective way than she herself would have previously done, was a source of comfort:

*There’s no getting away from the fact that schools are small to medium sized businesses. I’ve got a £1 million budget, it’s huge and I wasn’t trained to be a finance manager I was trained as a teacher so I need someone to take care of that for me and there’s the partnership element between the headteacher and the SBM.*

(Headteacher, Cross Vale, 2009)

In highlighting the ‘partnership’ between herself and the SBM, the headteacher also draws attention to the importance of their working relationship and the esteem in which she holds her SBM, describing her as an equal.

\(^{25}\) From 2007 it became a legal requirement for all schools to attain the FMSiS. A standard intended to help schools evaluate the quality of their financial management and covered areas such as leadership and governance; policy and strategy; and people management. The FMSiS was scrapped by the coalition government in 2010.
In a short space of time the SBM had transformed the business management of Cross Vale from a functional operation to a strategic and professional agenda. Her appointment had impacted significantly on the headteacher who was now far more comfortable in her own role and able to focus more of her attention on educational improvement at the school:

*I was having to do a lot of the SBM work such as dealing with finances (the strategic side of the role just didn’t get done) all of which was taking me away from the curriculum. Lucy has taken over the strategic side of the business management of the school and is also able to delegate some of the lower level office tasks so it’s transformed my role as headteacher really.*

(Headteacher, Cross Vale, 2009)

In the short space of time since her appointment and despite the barriers she had faced, the SBM had made some significant impacts most notably to the school finances, the systems of operation (e.g. accounting, catering) and the workload of the headteacher. Crucially, although it was taking time for her role to be accepted by some staff members, the SBM had the unwavering support of her headteacher and governing body.

### 5.3.5 Data collection: Phase 2

Cross Vale was visited for a second time in November 2010 approximately 15 months since the SBM had been appointed and just over a year since the previous case site visit. Interviews were conducted with the headteacher, the SBM and the new administrative assistant recently appointed to support the SBM in her work.

*SBM role*

In the time since the last case site visit the SBM had been developing her role significantly. She was now line-managing all non-teaching staff, including the TAs and had also instigated extensive and radical restructuring to improve the
efficiency and effectiveness of this section of the school workforce. For example, she had initiated the appointment of a midday controller to supervise the lunchtime staff. She had also supported the headteacher in the dismissal of the school caretaker (following disciplinary problems) and replaced this staff member with a contract cleaner, saving money and providing a more effective service than the previous arrangement. Further, she had taken steps to improve the employment conditions for non-teaching staff such as establishing a system of regular meetings for the TAs to discuss any issues they have and which she could then report back to the SLT. These meetings were arranged to run parallel to those of the SLT giving the TAs a voice in the wider school improvement agenda. Such was the growth of the SBM’s role, the school had appointed an assistant to support her work, a position funded by money saved and generated by the SBM herself during her first year in post.

**Leadership and management**

In terms of management, the SBM’s capacity had increased and, having taken on responsibility for the TAs, she was now the line manager for a total of 26 non-teaching staff members at Cross Vale. With this extra responsibility had come some difficult decisions as the school were employing too many support staff meaning redundancies were unavoidable mainly in lieu of the parlous state of the school finances but also because the support staff had not been managed or utilised effectively for a significant length of time:

> Before Hazel [current headteacher] arrived they’d kept on a lot of the TAs and said ‘you can stay, we’ll find you something to do’ and it’s led to a massive deficit budget so I’ve had to get rid of a lot of staff which wasn’t easy ... they’re quite a strong team, quite angry and upset because I’ve moved them around from safe places where they were working but I think I’m getting them on board now.

(SBM, Cross Vale, 2010)

The introduction of a system of regular TA meetings had gone some way to alleviating the tensions between the SBM and the TAs who, despite the relative
upheaval to their previous working practices, were beginning to see the benefits of this new way of operating. For the SBM, giving her staff a platform to air their opinions whilst clearly communicating her own ideas to them was the basis for an effective working relationship:

“*We’ve set up a termly TA meeting and they take it in turns to chair the meeting and though I’m overseeing it I’m making sure they take responsibility for it as well ... I think I’m getting them on board now and, because I’m sharing a lot more with them, the communication is there for these meetings. I think they’ve got a better understanding of why we’ve got to do what we have to do. That’s the key thing, communication.*

(SBM, Cross Vale, 2010)

The SBM had undertaken equally contentious restructuring operations with the school catering and lunchtime staff, neither of which she felt were providing the required standard of service to the children at Cross Vale. In the case of the school kitchen, children had been eating off paper towels during their lunch:

“*She looked at our school meals provider and told me what I already knew, that it was substandard and I hadn’t had time to put the wheels in motion and get a new contractor in but Lucy’s done that and she’s made a transformational difference in that respect.*

(Headteacher, Cross Vale, 2010)

As the manager of the kitchen was a well-known member of the community, the decision to replace her was met with strong opposition from many parents and locals and did not endear the SBM to them at all. She had also instigated the appointment of a midday controller to supervise the lunchtime staff and ensure they were interacting with the children during the lunch break. This decision had been met with similar levels of hostility leading to two lunchtime staff members resigning in protest yet, given time to see the new system working effectively, the antagonism was slowly dissipating:
Their comfort zone had been ruffled ... They were being asked to contribute the school improvement agenda and all they saw their role as was being outside in the playground with the children at lunchtime. We’re saying ‘look, it’s more than this. The way you interact with the children at lunchtime has a bearing on their learning in the afternoon and a bearing on their life chances because of their attitudes etc.’ So she’s really taken a lot of flak from them and they were willing her initiatives to fail and they haven’t and now they’re showing her respect.

(Headteacher, Cross Vale, 2010)

In a similar scenario, the school caretaker had resigned due to on-going disciplinary issues with the SBM and headteacher. As with the outgoing kitchen manager, the caretaker was a well-known member of the local community who were aggrieved with the SBM particularly when she decided the replacement would be a cleaning contractor as this was a far more financially favourable option for the school.

This highlights the tensions faced by the SBM following the decision to replace certain staff members and make others redundant which, though necessary, had not made her very popular. However, as the headteacher pointed out, the school was beginning to see positive impacts of these drastic changes, which was slowly altering negative attitudes toward the SBM.

The leadership structure had changed at Cross Vale since the previous case site visit. In a bid to improve efficiency, the headteacher had taken the decision to restructure the SLT as it was felt that having six staff members (i.e. headteacher, deputy, SBM and three phase leaders) was counterproductive due to the volume of issues requiring attention at each meeting and the differentiation in priorities. They had therefore streamlined the team into a core group comprising the headteacher, deputy head and SBM who now met separately to talk about whole school issues before meeting with the wider team to focus on issues relating to specific phases of the curriculum. This move was part of a whole school review of
staffing roles and responsibilities exploring ways in which they could improve the entire operation of the school and ensure that all staff members were achieving their full potential. The SBM was very much a part of this initiative:

This has allowed the three of us who are members of the core team to focus tightly on the issues so when we come to the meeting it's much more directive, much slicker. So there has been that element of restructuring and, as that has worked, we're going to look to grow more leaders within the staff and look to see what everybody's roles and responsibilities should be and Lucy is very much a part of supporting me to achieve that aim.

(Headteacher, Cross Vale, 2010)

The SBM had come to play an integral role in the school leadership agenda. She was confident of the balance her skills, experience and (non-educationalist) perspective brought to the SLT and of her role in supporting the headteacher and deputy to shape their ideas into realistic outcomes:

It's us three that really make the decisions. I bring all the financial aspect of it and I'll say 'no, we can't afford to do that', that sort of thing. I think I bring a different perspective than the head and deputy, I'll see something that maybe they haven't and can add something from a different angle.

(SBM, Cross Vale, 2010)

The headteacher's strong support for and advocacy of the SBM role and its importance to the leadership of the school is very clear and a central force behind the influence and impact the SBM has been able to make at this case study site. As a result, the SBM has been given a considerable amount of leadership and decision-making responsibility and freedom in her role.
Barriers to the effectiveness of the SBM role

One of the sternest challenges facing the SBM and the headteacher was altering the culture of the school from one of negativity and failure to a more optimistic and positive outlook. This had proved particularly difficult considering the problems the school faced when the headteacher was appointed and it seemed that many staff had been reluctant to accept the necessity of whole school change:

*The main challenges have been breaking the culture of indifference, apathy, tradition and really bringing the administrative side of the school into the 21st century ... and moving the school forward at a pace they’d not been used to as well as dealing with those glaring things that people had been pushing to one side.*

(Headteacher, Cross Vale, 2010)

Again, the problems associated with implementing school-level change and addressing deeply embedded behaviours are highlighted here with patience and perseverance appearing to be the most effective way of overcoming these barriers.

Another significant challenge for the SBM is workload. Much of this can be attributed to the SBM herself who is clearly committed to working unsociable and unpaid hours in order to hit the ambitious targets she sets herself in improving the school. While the results of this relentless workload are evident in the positive impact she has made at Cross Vale, her work-life balance is an obvious concern:

*She does work long hours ... she shouldn’t work as long as she does and she’s often working at home but I can’t stop that, I’ve tried! But she’s made such a huge difference to this school.*

(Headteacher, Cross Vale, 2010)
Linked to this are issues surrounding the SBM’s salary, which is not commensurate with her qualifications and experience. While the SBM was aware of this when she took the job (taking a £12,000 salary reduction when moving to Cross Vale) it is evident that the current arrangement is not sustainable in the long term:

_For my future career, I won’t be able to stay here that long. The system will be good and I hope that will continue but ... the school is so short of money I’m massively under-paid compared with other SBMs._

(SBM, Cross Vale, 2010)

Another barrier, related to workload is the lack of time. As highlighted, the SBM already works longer hours than she is contractually obliged, without any extra pay and while she had managed to generate and save enough income for a part-time administrative assistant to support her it was clear that there were still not enough hours in the day:

_We get frustrated that we can’t do more, we’ve quite a bit that we’d like to do and put into place but it’s having the time to do it really. Sometimes, when I finish, I think ‘what have I achieved today?’_

(Administrative assistant, Cross Vale, 2010)

The SBM explained that much of her day was spent working on operational duties (i.e. taking phone calls, dealing with students) and it was only in the evenings and weekends that she was able to focus on the strategic planning and development that was central to the forward momentum of Cross Vale’s improvement agenda:

_We’re very reactive at the moment and we’d like to be more proactive, it’s a slight frustration._

(Administrative assistant, Cross Vale, 2010)
The problems faced by small schools (usually in the primary sector) in finding the requisite financial resources to fund adequate business management provision are highlighted here and this is a common thread running through this study. While some schools, such as those in Case Study A, have been able to collaborate and share such provision thus easing the financial burden, Cross Vale is not in such a position meaning the SBM, despite the support of her administrative assistant, has to take on operational as well as strategic responsibilities.

**Facilitators to the effectiveness of the SBM role**

The sheer volume and depth of changes being made at Cross Vale, many of which were being led by the SBM meant she was always going to face a significant challenge in developing positive working relationships with all the school stakeholders. For the headteacher and school governors, who had initiated her appointment and understood the potential of her role to improve the school, this was not an issue and the SBM had enjoyed a good working relationship with both parties since she began. However, the difficult decisions she had made regarding the support staff under her management had not endeared her to them or to the close-knit community from which many of them came. According to the headteacher, the SBM also had to work hard to be accepted because her predecessor (the previous school secretary who left when the role expanded to a SBM position) had held such a high profile within the school and wider community:

> Lucy had a huge act to follow so not only has she commanded the understanding and respect of the staff, she’s had to command the understanding and respect of the village because it’s unique this place, they run the school ... Normally a SBM would get on with it and people accept it, but not here!  

*(Headteacher, Cross Vale, 2010)*

The SBM had started to gain the respect of her work colleagues through a combination of time (for them to understand her role and for her initiatives to
become embedded in the school) and resilience (having stuck to her objectives in the face of quite fierce opposition). By the SBM’s own admission not all her plans had come to fruition but she remained confident in her long-term strategy.

In a bid to strengthen links between the school and the local community, the SBM had begun a number of initiatives involving local residents, local businesses, community groups and other relevant services and stakeholders. For example, rather than having a critical incidence plan for Cross Vale, the SBM set up a critical incidence plan for the whole village whereby if there was a serious incident (e.g. a fire at the school) then there would be a whole community response:

_We’ve got a group set up, which will start soon, working with the parish council and other community stakeholders ... and we’ll put together a plan from there. I’m also starting business meetings which will be local businesses coming into school, sharing their ideas as to where they can share different areas of their work and also what they can do for the school._

(SBM, Cross Vale, 2010)

Such initiatives had raised the SBM’s profile and improved relations considerably with local residents who, like the staff members at Cross Vale, were beginning to understand and appreciate her role. Her work with the local community also included many parents who were beginning to develop an understanding of her role and how it differed from that of her predecessor.

Collaboration between the SBM and the teachers had also increased through a number of new initiatives introduced by the SBM. For example, she had established a system for teachers to complete a form projecting their resource requirements for the year with an action plan as to where they would be used. This meant they no longer had to make multiple requests to the SBM throughout the year when resources ran out. The SBM had also worked jointly with teachers to set up a gardening club, enter competitions and write bids for additional
funding, in areas such as extended provision. As a result, her profile had been raised with the teachers who understood her role and with whom she now enjoyed a productive working relationship.

**SBM impact**

The appointment of the SBM had made a huge impact on the role of the headteacher who had been able to shift her focus to the areas of the school where her strengths lay and consequently improve her work-life balance:

> The most significant difference is that I was focusing on what was going on in the office and not being able to get into the classroom but I'm much more frequently in the classroom now ... I go around and I drop in, sit around and talk to children, make sure teachers have got what they need in order to do their job. I'm able to collect in books, do the work scrutiny and sit in work and do it rather than take them all home and do it in the early hours of the morning or whatever so she has freed me up in order to focus on my main task ... it's been transformational.

(Headteacher, Cross Vale, 2010)

For the headteacher, the presence of the SBM gave her own role more appeal and would be key for succession planning in the future:

> I think they'd get a better response to an advert, if you can say ‘well established SLT including a SBM’ and you put in the job description exactly what the head does and what the SBM does, I think it would be much more attractive.

(Headteacher, Cross Vale, 2010)

On a much broader scale, there was evidence that the SBM was playing a key role in the slow process of cultural change at Cross Vale. As highlighted earlier, the range of new systems introduced had not proved universally popular but were slowly becoming accepted as the signs of positive impact were beginning to emerge and staff began to acknowledge that the old ways of working were no
longer suitable. The SBM had also instigated a number of initiatives to aid Cross Vale’s transformation into a more modern and forward thinking school. For example, she suggested the school logo and uniform could be updated to help improve and modernise the school image. The idea was initially met with scepticism:

*I put a competition out for children to be involved in designing a new logo then took different elements of their designs to form a new one but, at first, the parents were reluctant and a bit like ‘why is she changing our school?’ But now they all want the school uniform with the new logo on and won’t have the old one so it’s a U-turn really. They can see that we’ve got a new logo and the uniforms look better.*

(SBM, Cross Vale, 2010)

Individually, such initiatives seem relatively minor but when considered alongside all the other initiatives and the larger system changes to staffing structures and working practices implemented by the SBM the extent of her efforts to make a difference at Cross Vale become clear. Furthermore, she had instigated and managed a number of successful projects to improve the educational environment for the students at Cross Vale such as having a new roof installed in one of the classrooms (the previous one was leaking) and a musical trail installed in the playground (a pathway around the play area with different instruments at various locations). She had also recently secured funding to build an outdoor classroom where students could be taught in an alternative environment to stimulate their learning experience. Financially, over the 15 months since the SBM had been in post she had generated well over £100,000 for Cross Vale and saved even more. According to the headteacher this alone justified her appointment:

*Justifying the expense of a SBM to the governors when the school was in a deficit budget, that was a difficult one to do but I had to persuade them that we couldn’t afford not to afford her, if you see what I mean?*

(Headteacher, Cross Vale, 2010)
More importantly the implementation of these initiatives had improved the educational experience for the students at Cross Vale. According to the headteacher, this would ultimately lead to an improvement in standards and achievement:

*In terms of the direct impact on the measured standards then I’ll wait until we’ve got everything ratified from last year but I would say, just as a general rule of thumb, that she has supported our academic achievement targets just through those interventions.*

(Headteacher, Cross Vale, 2010)

As an external and tangible measure of how far the school had progressed during the two years since the headteacher was appointed, Cross Vale had recently received an improved inspection grade from Ofsted who, in recognition of the progress the school had made, upgraded their status from the ‘notice to improve’ to ‘satisfactory’. This was a significant positive step for everyone at Cross Vale and the headteacher was keen to point the important role played by the SBM in this process:

*It’s been a great success, not without its hiccups but the school would not be where it is now - we’ve had a successful Ofsted inspection in June - if I had not have appointed Lucy. The role is critical, pivotal to the school improvement agenda and within the day-to-day running of the place and I’m just delighted with her.*

(Headteacher, Cross Vale, 2010)

This highlights the breadth of the impact made by the SBM from the school finances (through income generation and money saving initiatives) to wider cultural change through the new systems and structures she has implemented. Furthermore, the headteacher has been able to focus more of her time on the educational agenda to the benefit of students.
**Looking forward**

In the longer term, there are plans for Cross Vale to extend their services to other schools in the region. The headteacher has ambitions for them to become an established hub of support and provision and envisaged a pivotal role for the SBM:

Lucy has secured a grant to refurbish the kitchen so we will be able to deliver meals to other schools that don’t have a kitchen and that’s an example of a service that we can provide. I hope she’ll be able to go out in a SBM role and talk to people about the successes we’ve had and support smaller schools with that strategic forward planning ... not just in the local community but the wider community and our school being a centre of excellence in terms of school business management.

(Headteacher, Cross Vale, 2010)

Although the headteacher had hopes that the SBM would remain at Cross Vale over the longer term and help her to realise her goals for the future she was acutely aware that she might leave her post for a better paid position elsewhere. She had therefore established succession planning for the SBM through the administrative assistant who both the headteacher and the SBM were mentoring and supporting through her business management qualifications:

She [admin assistant] has a key mentor in Lucy and she has me and so there’s succession planning for Lucy, somebody in there who could step up, eventually ... in the budget we’ve built in a salary for a SBM for the next five years so if Lucy should leave then the money is there for somebody else. It’s very important; we can’t turn back the clock now it would be a retrograde step.

(Headteacher, Cross Vale, 2010)

In talking about their plans for the future expansion of the SBM role and also the steps taken to ensure a succession plan is in place, it is evident that the
headteacher at Cross Vale sees the SBM as a central role in the future of the school which reflects favourably on the impact made by the current SBM.

5.3.6 Summary of key themes
A number of key themes emerge from this case study and are summarised below. These key themes will be revisited and discussed in more depth in the cross-case analysis chapter that follows these four individual case studies and then considered in relation to the research questions guiding this thesis in the discussion chapter.

**SBM role**

*Leadership and management*

The SBM role at this case study site is positioned strategically with a high level of leadership, management and decision-making responsibility. Yet due to the size of the school, she is also required to work operationally. While steps have been taken to address this by employing an administrative assistant to support the SBM in her work, budgetary constraints means this is only a part-time position hence such support is limited.

*Breadth and depth of the role*

The worryingly heavy workload taken on by the SBM at Cross Vale is symptomatic of the issues facing many of the SBMs in this research whose roles are seemingly limitless. While many are happy to take on extra responsibility there are obvious concerns and implications surrounding work/life balance and the sustainability of the role, particularly as regards SBM succession planning and the potentially unrealistic expectations placed on a new incumbent should the existing SBM leave her post.

The primary sector setting of this case study site also illustrates the financial barriers faced by small schools in securing adequate business management provision particularly considering the pay reduction taken by the SBM to take the position at Cross Vale and also the nature of the job itself which, even with support staff, is very functional compared to a secondary SBM. Comparisons
might be drawn between the headteacher role that also differs in a similar way between the primary and secondary sectors.

**Barriers to the effectiveness of the SBM role**

*Common understanding/acceptance of the role*

Linked to the above point is the theme of educational change and some of the challenges associated with this notion. At Cross Vale, indications of the need for change were clear from the parlous state of the school’s finances and inadequacy of the services they were providing their students to the poor standard of education the students were receiving, as indicated by the ‘notice to improve’ given to them by Ofsted. The introduction of the SBM and her contribution to improving the school has been significant. While it has been a difficult journey due, in part, to a lack of understanding and appreciation of the role, this case also illustrates the benefits of patience and perseverance when implementing a drastic change agenda in the face of resistance and negativity, as the school is now on an upward trajectory and the SBM has gained the respect of the staff.

**Facilitators to the effectiveness of the SBM role**

*Working relationships*

The strong working relationship between the SBM and headteacher at Cross Vale has been a significant facilitating factor in the effectiveness of the SBM role. The faith and trust placed in the SBM by her headteacher characterised by the autonomy and influence she has handed her to make changes based on her own professional judgement, experience and knowledge has been key to the SBM overcoming the cultural and attitudinal barriers she faced as a result of her being a new face, in a new role, taking tough and unpopular decisions. Without the support of the headteacher, the positive outcomes that are now emerging, as a result of the changes implemented by the SBM, may never have come to fruition.

*SBM profile*

Another means by which the SBM at Cross Vale has enhanced the effectiveness of her role has been to increase her personal and professional profile within the school and wider community. This has been particularly important in this school
considering she is their first SBM so in order to address the natural scepticism from some stakeholders that accompanied her appointment she has made a considerable effort to be a visible presence in the school and wider community to increase the level of understanding surrounding the nature of her role. In some ways this has been done explicitly via her involvement in community projects while in others ways it has been more of an implicit process by, for example, implementing new systems and processes and allowing people time to see the positive impact of her work.

Professional ambition
The aspirations of the SBM are a pervading theme within this case study. The SBM makes it very clear that while she enjoys her role at Cross Vale, she expects to move onto to a larger organisation, more suitable to her skillset, experience and knowledge, in the near future. Along with the headteacher, the SBM also talks about her plans to widen the level of impact she is making, beyond Cross Vale, to other schools and to the wider community.

SBM Impact
Headteacher
The SBM has made a clear impact on the workload of the headteacher allowing her to redistribute much of her non-educational responsibility and focus more of her attention on the teaching and learning agenda at Cross Vale. The headteacher is subsequently happier in her role and believes it has become more manageable and attractive because of the presence of the SBM.

Finances
Financially the SBM has made tangible impacts, overhauling the accounting system at Cross Vale and changing the ways they manage their finances with a view to achieving the FMSiS and retaining their school budgetary control from the LA. She has generated over £100,000 for the school through grant applications and other avenues of income and saved even more through cost cutting measures and streamlining of contracts, comfortably covering her annual salary.
Support staff
As with the FBM in Case Study A, the SBM at this site has made it a key priority to improve the management of the support staff including the establishment of regular meetings, chaired by them, where they can air their views and suggestions and which the SBM then feeds back to the SLT thus handing this section of the workforce a say in how their school operates.

Students
The SBM has made a positive impact on the students at Cross Vale in a number of ways from securing an improved catering service to provide lunches to new facilities such as the musical walk and outdoor classroom playground. She has also sourced funding to repair the roof of one of the classrooms and renovate the school kitchen.

Cultural
Culturally, the changes the SBM has made at Cross Vale have contributed to shifts in the attitudes and perceptions of staff members and other school stakeholders. While the SBM role and some of the new systems and processes the SBM has introduced were initially viewed with suspicion and animosity, the positive impact of such changes have slowly become evident and those who doubted her role and her methods have begun to show an appreciation, understanding and respect for the SBM. Furthermore, while the turnaround of the school (including the improved Ofsted grading) and the changing mind-set from negativity and failure to one of optimism and embracing of change cannot be attributed entirely to the SBM, the headteacher is in no doubt as to the considerable contribution the SBM has made.
5.4 CASE STUDY C – CRANE STREET FEDERATION

5.4.1 Synopsis
This case site comprises a cross-phase federation of schools. When the research study began, the federation was in its infancy and trialling an innovative business management model with two SBMs sharing responsibilities across three schools. By the end of the study the federation comprised four schools all of which were beginning the process of converting to academy status. Furthermore, one of the two SBMs had left their post and a new business management model had been implemented. This case study charts these changes.

5.4.2 Case C: School business management model
Figure 6 illustrates the model of school business management at Case Study C, in September 2010 when data collection was completed at this case study site. Over the course of the study the business management model at Crane Street had changed significantly from two SBMs sharing the role across three schools to one SBM leading a business management team across four schools. The fourth school, Secondary School B, is situated a few miles from the other three with its own SBM. Though formally under the same leadership and governance of the other schools in the federation, the SBM works with Secondary School B less frequently than the other three schools. The model of business management employed at this case study site is a SBM Partnership whereby all four schools have bought into the SBM’s services.
5.4.3 Context
The Crane Street Federation comprises two primary schools (one small and one average sized), and two secondary schools all located in a rural town within the East Midlands region of England. The schools serve an area of significant social and economic disadvantage with over 50% of students attending the schools eligible for FSM provision.

The region in which the schools are situated has on-going problems with falling student roles and many smaller schools facing the threat of closure. In a bid to increase sustainability and address this issue the LA recognised that schools would have to enter into partnership arrangements to share staff and resources if they were to remain financially viable operations.

In September 2008, following 18 months working informally as a soft federation\textsuperscript{26}, the two primary schools and one of the secondary schools opted to formalise their partnership and become a hard federation\textsuperscript{27}. The schools were already sharing an executive headteacher though each also had their own head of school (a similar role to the headteacher but with a diminished responsibility). The new hard federation meant these three schools now shared a governing

\textsuperscript{26} See \textsuperscript{4}.
\textsuperscript{27} See \textsuperscript{4}.
body and would start to share other services in more formally than they had previously. A local special school that had been a member of the soft federation opted out of the formal arrangement preferring instead to retain their own headteacher and governing body.

5.4.4 Data collection: Phase 1
This case site was first visited in June 2009, just under a year after the schools had formally federated. Interviews were conducted with the executive headteacher and jointly with both SBMs. This was the first case study site visited during the research study and the interview protocol was still under development at this time. As such, the interviews conducted during this visit were structured slightly differently to those conducted at later case study visits.

SBM role(s)
The secondary and the larger primary school both employed SBMs to support their respective heads of school in financial and business management allowing them to focus their attention on the teaching and learning agenda. The smaller primary and the special school had lower levels of school business support therefore took on more of this responsibility themselves. One of the key drivers behind the formalisation of the federation was to extend the work of both SBMs to create, over the longer term, a federation wide business management system. This would support the two smaller schools with their financial management; develop the skills of the financial and administrative support staff in all four schools and; build business management capacity to source additional funds and facilitate the federation in realising its aim to develop further provision for all their students with a view to eventually creating a 3-19 campus.

The SBM at the larger primary school (Primary School A) had worked there for the previous nine years, initially as the school administrator before becoming the school bursar (before the role was re-labelled as SBM). She had completed the CSBM and DSBM qualifications as well as a National Certificate in Business and Finance. At the time of the first data collection phase she was studying for the ADSBM.
The SBM at Secondary School A had been in post for the previous four years, prior to which she had worked in educational administration roles in a range of institutions including a further education college, a polytechnic college and two primary schools. Her qualifications included a BA, MA and MBA in Educational Management for school bursars. At the time of the first data collection phase she was studying for the ADSBM.

Due to their experience and qualifications, the executive headteacher was keen to retain the services of both SBMs and integrate them into the new federation arrangement. It was therefore decided to divide federation business management responsibility between two positions: a SBM Finance and SBM Community to draw on their respective strengths:

*Because we’ve federated, when we’ve looked at changing roles we’ve done it horizontally instead of vertically so that both SBMs have elements of the role across the federation rather than across single schools.*

(Executive headteacher, Crane Street, 2009)

The SBM Finance held responsibility for managing all aspects of the financial and human resource provision across the federation which included supervising individual school administrative staff. She also had the services of a finance assistant to support her role.

The SBM Community held responsibility for all non-statutory provision across the federation including extended schools, pastoral care, networking opportunities, premises management and any other work involving the federation and the local community.

This new arrangement had allowed both SBMs to retain a post and given each of them a role within the federation that drew on their individual and professional experience and knowledge:
The issue for me was that I was head of two schools with two very good bursars but two very different individuals with very different strengths so it was an opportunity to bring out the best in the both of them. So rather than duplicating it was drawing on strengths, which is what we have done.

(Executive headteacher, Crane Street, 2009)

The move to create new roles in order to retain both SBMs when the three schools initially federated was an innovative one with the SBM role essentially divided in two allowing both incumbents to retain a full time position. In no other case study within this research was there a comparable arrangement. However, the new business management structure was not entirely risk free as the next section explains.

**Barriers to the effectiveness of the SBM role**

The process of becoming a federation had implications for everyone in each of the three schools involved. However, the impact on the administrative and support staff was particularly acute. For example, both SBMs (and the finance assistant from the secondary school) had seen their roles become federation wide (as opposed to teaching staff who remained school specific) which, in the case of the SBMs, had also required a re-configuration of duties:

*If you look at the staff across the three schools then moving into the federation has clearly had the biggest impact on the two SBM roles, they have had to adapt more than anyone else.*

(Executive headteacher, Crane Street, 2009)

Both SBMs had made compromises in relinquishing elements of their roles with potential implications for their professional development and future employability. For the SBM Finance, this was not seen as particularly problematic as her new role was very much aligned to that of the traditional school bursar (i.e. dealing predominantly with school finance) but for the SBM
Community this was a significant issue as her new post was more unorthodox (i.e. dealing predominantly with community links) and therefore perceived as being less transferable to another setting. Despite these challenges, the SBMs remained pragmatic about the new arrangement:

*If we moved on, the role wouldn't be split like it is; we would be expected to do it all. I think it's important that we both keep each other informed on how our roles are progressing, because things do change and new legislation comes in.*

(SBM Community, Crane Street, 2009)

While the optimism of both SBMs was encouraging there was a sense that neither had much choice in the new arrangement, as the alternative would have been for one of the SBMs to lose their job.

Both SBMs, the finance assistant and the administrative staff from all three schools had also been moved to a single office (located at Primary School B) from which all federation business management would now take place. While this move was seen as necessary to ensure a slicker and more professional operation it had also taken some adjustment:

*I don't have my bursar next door to me anymore she's in another building, I also don't have the finance assistant next door to me on the other side anymore, she's in another building so everyone has to understand that things now take that little bit longer.*

(Executive headteacher, Crane Street, 2009)

Since the move to a system of federation wide business management an emerging challenge was the growing workload of the SBMs and their capacity:

*I certainly can't take anymore work from the head than I currently have and one of the things I think is happening is that work gets passed from the head and SLT onto the SBMs but unless you put enough support*
underneath the SBMs so that they can take it on, you end up with a workload problem for the SBM. We have recently been appointing more admin staff in school with a view to making the whole business management operation more effective and efficient.

(SBM Finance, Crane Street, 2009)

Given one of the central reasons for employing a SBM is to alleviate headteacher workload the fact that these SBMs were apparently struggling with their own workload seemed somewhat ironic. Furthermore, it was the opinion of the executive headteacher that the impact of the SBMs on her workload had been negligible anyway:

Workload is workload and if somebody takes one piece of work from you then you find something else to do. It doesn’t mean I go home early on Friday afternoon because I’ve got all my work done!

(Executive headteacher, Crane Street, 2009)

In this sense the executive headteacher seemed somewhat dismissive of the ability of the SBM to be able to free up her time to focus on educational priorities.

**Facilitators to the effectiveness of the SBM role**

Significant planning and consultation had taken place between the schools before entering into the formal federation to ensure that the process would run as smoothly as possible. For example, the executive headteacher spent a substantial volume of time working with senior leaders in both primary schools to build working relationships with the secondary school before their partnership was formalised while the support staff from each school also prepared for the federation in advance:

A lot of staff have tackled it with a positive attitude to change and we did a lot of development and consultancy work between support staff in each school to plan who would do what role, particularly when there was going to be a crossover between roles.
This positive and productive attitude towards the changes was also highlighted by the executive headteacher who praised both SBMs for the professional sacrifices they had made to accommodate each other in the new arrangement:

Their honesty in giving up aspects of their roles, that’s always difficult isn’t it? The trust involved of saying ‘I’m not going to do this part of the traditional bursar role’ is difficult for people.

(Executive headteacher, Crane Street, 2009)

This highlights the importance of clear consultation and planning before initiating a large-scale change if such change is going to succeed. Though such forward thinking cannot conceivably guarantee against any problems occurring, it at least affords all stakeholders a clear picture of the planned changes and the implications this will have for everyone involved.

**SBM Impact**

In the school year since the federation had been in operation there had been a number of notable impacts made by both SBMs. For example, the SBM Community had instigated the introduction of Montessori teaching methods at the nursery of the larger of the two primary schools. Following a recent inspection, this had helped improve the nursery’s Ofsted grade from ‘satisfactory’ to ‘good’ and there were now plans to introduce the Montessori to the nursery of the other primary school.

The SBM Community had also secured a significant amount of external funding for the federation over the previous 12 months including £20,000 for staff training and equipment for the Montessori nursery, £20,000 for afterschool childcare provision and £7,000 to set up a federation breakfast club. Furthermore, she had established a community group involving all external agencies working with the schools in the federation to extend and strengthen their links with the local community.
The SBM Finance had focused her attention on developing new cross-school policies to improve the operational side of the new federation. For example, she had created federation wide procedures (e.g. common policies for finance, a critical incidence plan, a courier postal system and a brand new IT system linking all three schools with a wireless intranet) saving time and money while ensuring a more professional and efficient operation.

The early signs were encouraging and suggested that the new business management model had not affected either SBM’s ability to make a positive impact across the federation.

**Looking forward**

While the executive headteacher was an advocate of the SBM, she raised concerns about the rapid growth of the role, believing certain aspects of the SBM job description were becoming unrealistic:

> What I will say about the job descriptions for the ADSBM is that I don’t know of a school in the country that would employ one of them because that describes a headteacher. I wouldn’t give away that autonomy to anyone and I said to both of my SBMs ‘don’t ever aspire to that because you won’t get it here’, its way too senior a job.

(Executive headteacher, Crane Street, 2009)

The executive headteacher went on to explain that, in her school, the views and opinions of the teaching staff would always take precedence over staff members without qualified teacher status:

> Both SBMs were brought onto my SLT as senior members but the strategic decisions made about schools are done so by people who are in charge of teaching and learning, because everything is actually about teaching and learning.

(Executive headteacher, Crane Street, 2009)
These views are indicative of the perceived threat that some within education believe SBMs pose and highlight the potential for conflict between teaching and non-teaching staff members at school leadership level.

5.4.5 Data collection: Phase 2
The case site was visited for a second time in February 2010. In the time since the first data collection phase a fourth school (a secondary situated a few miles away from the other schools) had joined the hard federation and was now under the leadership of the executive headteacher (though this fourth school had retained its own governing body). In a more significant development, the SBM Community had left her post and moved to another school leaving the SBM Finance as the senior business manager at the federation.

According to the SBM Community her reasons for leaving the federation were the challenges she had highlighted during the first phase of data collection. Namely the way in which the SBM post had been split which had left her at a significant disadvantage in terms of her professional development and future employability. She had therefore taken the decision to move on to another setting and into a more orthodox SBM role.

During this second data collection phase, interviews were conducted with the executive headteacher and the remaining SBM though neither were willing to discuss the SBM Community or her departure at this time suggesting the circumstances under which she had departed may not have been entirely amicable.

SBM role
The departure of the SBM Community had led to some reconfiguration of roles and responsibilities at the federation. The SBM Finance was now the sole SBM and responsible for all business management across the hard federation with responsibility for finance, HR, premises, catering and some elements of staff recruitment. Supporting her were an administrative assistant and finance
assistant (previously based in the two primary schools) to whom she was the line manager. The latest school to join the federation already employed a SBM who would remain in post and consult the existing federation SBM if and when required:

Another secondary school joined last year but at the moment I don’t have any responsibilities for doing my role over there as they already have a bursar but the fact that Louise [executive headteacher] has taken over as executive head over there means that if there are issues coming up that she wants to deal with she’ll often come to me about it rather than dealing with through their SBM. For instance, they have a bit of a HR issue at the moment and I’m dealing with that but strictly speaking I’m not encroaching on the responsibilities of the bursar there.

(SBM, Crane Street, 2010)

The SBM had also generated some additional consultancy work with another primary school from outside of the federation who were buying some of her time for business management services. The expansion and restructuring of the federation had clear implications for the SBM who had seen her role simultaneously develop and expand. This draws comparisons with the FBM in Case Study A whose role had also grown in tandem with their federation.

Reflecting on her role, the SBM felt it remained pivotal to the successful operation of the federation though she was not convinced that her profile was as high as it could be and that everyone in the federation understood the extent of her work. Furthermore, it seemed that her work was so varied that it was difficult for the SBM to accurately explain exactly what her role involved:

I think it’s very important though I’m not always sure how important other people perceive it as being. I think part of it is that people don’t really know what you do, partly it’s my own fault because I’m not very good at blowing my own trumpet ... I think that people only notice how important your role is when they see an impact of you not being there. I
don’t know exactly how important Louise sees my role or if she even realizes the extent of it, I’m not sure really.

(SBM, Crane Street, 2010)

The SBM described the role as quite isolating. Most educational settings tend to have just one SBM meaning they must make a concerted effort to raise their profile amongst the other school stakeholders:

I think that’s why so many SBMs working across the country find it a lonely job and it’s only when you’re talking to someone doing a similar role in another school that they understand what you mean. The teachers talk about how busy they are but don’t appreciate that you take work home and work during the school holidays and at evenings and think your role is easy because they don’t understand what’s involved.

(SBM, Crane Street, 2010)

This highlights how crucial it is for SBMs to raise awareness of their role within the school so that all stakeholders know what the purpose of the SBM is and can come to appreciate the work that they do. The alternative can often result in an inaccurate interpretation of the role and tensions between the SBM and staff members who do not fully understand the purpose of the role. Unfortunately, for the SBM at this case study she felt uneasy raising her own profile and subsequently unappreciated.

The executive headteacher, on the other hand, was in no doubt as to the importance of the SBM role in terms of her effectively leading across multiple schools and while she made reference to the fact that the SBM kept a low profile she did not feel that this was detrimental to her knowledge of the federation:

As executive head of four schools what Jenny [SBM] does is give me that financial and HR advice and is the first person I would ask for advice on lots of HR issues but then she’s also a member of all of the leadership
teams and as much as anything, that’s not because she makes a fantastic contribution verbally but what it does mean is she knows what’s going on and can therefore second guess things, check things out and she’s on the same wavelength as everybody else.

(Executive headteacher, Crane Street, 2010)

It is clear the SBM’s contribution is valued by the executive headteacher and, despite her misgivings about the expansion of the role, the executive headteacher obviously feels it is important to have a non-teaching presence at senior leadership level of her federation. However, the executive headteacher seems to view the business management role with much more caution than her counterpart at the federation in Case Study A where the FBM has a much wider influence.

**Leadership and management**

Since the previous visit the SBM had now taken on line management responsibility for the business management and administrative staff across the federation as part of her new role. Having previously worked in a relatively solitary capacity, this new management responsibility had taken some adjustment (see barriers below). In relation to leadership, the SBM felt this was also an area she could develop and, because of this, that she perhaps had not been as forthcoming in volunteering herself for leadership roles as she might have been. She attributed this to her reticent nature, having gotten used to working in relative isolation in the past, but was determined to improve her leadership capabilities and was taking steps to do so:

Maybe I’m a bit behind at putting myself forward for these types of things if you know what I mean? Part of it is that I quite like getting on with my own things in my own space and actually to push myself into that position where I’m asking for more responsibility in terms of leading is not something I find easy. This is the area that I need to work on.

(SBM, Crane Street, 2010)
According to the SBM, her lack of self-confidence is inhibiting her development. This is interesting when compared to the SBMs in the previous case studies who would be described as much more assertive and confident, qualities which have facilitated their ability to develop their roles and raise their profiles, often in the face of adversity.

However, the executive headteacher was more positive explaining that the SBM, along with the other members of the SLT, plays a central role in leading in her area of expertise and that this was crucial to the effectiveness of her own role as the leader of four schools in the federation:

*We have this ethos that we are better together than separately and that actually, in today’s world, a headteacher can’t be all the things they are expected to be, it’s not possible. That’s where that other role, financial viability, comes in.*

(Executive headteacher, Crane Street, 2010)

The executive headteacher also underlined the distinctive perspective the SBM brought to the leadership agenda in highlighting potential issues that other SLT members might not always think of:

*It’s ‘have you thought about?’ ‘Don’t forget that’ ... the first thing I did when I came here was put Jenny on the leadership team; it’s not possible to run a school without the SBM being party to what’s going on.*

(Executive headteacher, Crane Street, 2010)

Despite reservations about her leadership skills and self-assurance, the SBM was aware of the importance of her role on the SLT in terms of balancing opinion and keeping a realistic perspective of what was achievable:

*I do my best to try and be strategic and to point out things when the opportunity arises because I know I bring a different viewpoint to the*
leadership agenda. It’s not always the best position to be in because you end up feeling like you’re the bucket of cold water! But, on the other hand at least if you can say ‘have you thought about this?’ then it gives people an opportunity to consider a different viewpoint.

(SBM, Crane Street, 2010)

Though acceptance and understanding of the SBM role differs between the case studies, the vast majority of SBMs in this research are members of their SLTs and are at least able to have some influence on the decision making process at senior leadership level. The fact that several of these SBMs are the first non-teaching members of their SLTs is perhaps indicative of the growing appreciation of school business management within the school sector.

**Barriers to the effectiveness of the SBM role**

The move to a federation and having responsibility for business management over three schools was a challenge for the SBM as her workload had increased so that she was no longer able to do everything herself and therefore expected to delegate work to her support staff, something she found did not come naturally:

*I don’t feel as though I have the autonomy I used to have. It’s not necessarily a bad thing … but it’s just when I was doing it all myself I felt I had more control, now I can’t do it all myself because there’s too much to so I have to delegate and line manage which brings other issues such as leadership which I need to improve on.*

(SBM, Crane Street, 2010)

Similarly, the professional autonomy the SBM had previously enjoyed (working in a single school) had now been stripped away so that all decisions had to be justified to the wider federation. This had created some challenges with teaching staff who did not necessarily understand why she was making certain decisions:

*For example, the grounds maintenance contract - I’ve got the tenders sorted out and we’ve got some recommendations of who to go with. I*
knew who I wanted to go with and it was the second cheapest overall and that was the recommendation I made to the SLT but someone in that meeting said 'I think their all much the same so we should just go with the cheapest' but the problem with that is that whilst I know where they're coming from I also know that when the job doesn't get done properly the person who'll have to sort it out will be me!

(SBM, Crane Street, 2010)

The move to a larger organisation had thrown up challenges for the SBM who was now leading a team of staff, something she was clearly not used to doing and, given her lack of leadership and line management experience, did not feel particularly adept at. Also, having to justify her decisions to other people was another adjustment that had not come easily to the SBM.

**Facilitators to the effectiveness of the SBM role**

The SBM underlined the productive working relationship she enjoyed with the executive headteacher and that her somewhat reserved and cautious professional attitude complemented the more audacious approach taken by the executive headteacher in her work:

*I think we've got a very good working relationship I think we've got very different styles. For a start, she [executive headteacher] is a risk taker and I'm very much the reverse so often if she wants to do something that I think is risky I'll point out that I think it's risky, she may well go ahead a do it anyway but at least she knows how I feel and it may just make her re-think her argument.*

(SBM, Crane Street, 2010)

The SBM suggested that certain personalities correspond with specific roles in schools and that finding that balance both personally and professionally is crucial for a healthy and productive working relationship:
She's a visionary, she can move things forward and carry people with her but she also tends to lose interest in things quite quickly. Once they are up and running she’s already on to the next idea so someone needs to pick the things left behind ... I’m not saying that would always be me but I tend to be much more logical, organised and quite boring really! I hope we complement each other quite well but it’s down to personality and whether it suits the role you are in.

(SBM, Crane Street, 2010)

The SBM and executive headteacher do not appear to have a particularly close personal relationship, particularly compared with their counterparts in Case Study A (this is maybe a result of differing personalities and styles of working) but this has not precluded them from forming an effective team and it is clear that both individuals know one another's strengths.

**SBM impact**

For the executive headteacher, the most noticeable impact made by the SBM had been her management of the schools within the federation and the associated relinquishment of school business decision making from the executive headteacher:

*What she does is allow me to relax and trust the information so I know that the school is safe because she’ll have followed the processes, I know it’s well managed, I know HR is up to date and properly done. Because of her professional capacity, I know those things are well done. It’s legal things that will come to bite you, the standard of teaching and learning is vital but whether the school is safe or not, those are the things that will hit the headlines and in terms of a headteacher’s stress level.*

(Executive headteacher, Crane Street, 2010)

Having the peace of mind that all the relevant rules and regulations were being followed throughout her organisation was very important for the executive headteacher.
The executive headteacher also drew attention to SBMs management of the support staff and the systems and processes she had introduced for this section of the school workforce in order to create a culture of fairness and equality:

_Because of her personality she manages them fairly and very strongly so what that means for the culture of the school is that everybody knows they are treated equally ... with all of those processes, people can see that decisions are transparent._

(Executive headteacher, Crane Street, 2010)

The SBM clearly felt very strongly that all staff members should have a voice and an understanding of the significant role they play in the whole school operation.

_There are certain things I’ve tried to do ... like introducing professional development reviews for support staff and regular meetings for different groups of support staff, I’ve done quite a bit of organising training for support staff like catering and cleaners who’ve had the opportunity to do National Vocational Qualifications, and I hoped that I was trying to influence the school culture in terms making the support staff feel their role was important and valued and that they all had their part to play in making the school successful._

(SBM, Crane Street, 2010)

As with the previous two case studies, the SBM at Crane Street had assumed a moral duty to improve the working conditions for the support staff at her setting and used her status and influence to achieve this.

5.4.6 Data collection: Phase 3: Follow-up conversation

It was not possible to arrange a mutually convenient date for a further case site visit to this case site. Instead, a brief follow-up interview was arranged via telephone with the SBM. This was conducted in September 2010.
In the time since the previous case site visit it had been decided that the four schools sharing executive headship would all convert to academy status under a single, overarching trust.

**SBM role**

The move to academy status had implications for the SBM and her team mainly because in doing so they were effectively removing themselves from their LA and all the services they had previously provided. For the SBM, this had meant introducing a new accounting system for all the schools in the trust which had implications for the other secondary school that had previously ran all of their accounts separately via their own system and through their own SBM:

> So effectively, we’re back to the stage we were at previously now where we have a SBM over at Secondary School B who needs to become part of this team and who is going to take responsibility for certain areas ... whereas when we did this the first time the decision was made that the SBM Community and I would be on an equal footing ... it's been felt that that arrangement raised too many issues and so Louise has made it clear that this time around I will have the seniority and manage the team.

(SBM, Crane Street, 2010)

Linked to this was the alignment of the administrative and financial staff from all four schools into a single site from where all business management for the trust would now take place. The executive headteacher would also be moving her office into this centralised hub. This new structural reorganisation built on the previous centralisation of the business management team by moving executive leadership and business management of the federation into a new external, purpose built, site separated from the school buildings thus implying a more business type model.
This move was still in progress when the SBM was interviewed but the implications were that her role would become much more leadership focused and strategic:

*I think this will prove to be my opportunity to develop that and I think at that point I would have to delegate a lot more. What’s tended to happen in the past is that I’ve done a lot of the ‘doing’ rather than asking people to do the task and then monitoring whether the task has been done. Because of this I’ve not found the time to actually monitor the things that I’m asking other people to do which has meant that if something has gone wrong then I’ve not found that out until a long time after. So I can see that there’ll be a lot more scope for asking people to deal with things I’ve previously dealt with and then asking them to feed that back.*

(SBM, Crane Street, 2010)

Self-confidence remained an issue for the SBM but this new arrangement was also seen as an opportunity for her to assert her authority and raise her status as a leader across the academies trust:

*Louise and I have had a conversation about the fact that she sees my status as being important; she wants it to be clear where I sit within the structure and the importance of my role. So we’ve had a conversation about how this is going but I think part of the reason why I don’t have the profile that maybe I should have is that I don’t project that and push myself forward.*

(SBM, Crane Street, 2010)

Looking forward the SBM felt that her role would continue to develop in the manner described and would grow according to the requirements of the academies trust. However, she realised she would also have to work on her leadership and communication skills and also learn to relinquish control of her responsibilities if she were to fulfil her potential.
5.4.7 Summary of key themes
A number of key themes emerge from this case study and are summarised below. These key themes will be revisited and discussed in more depth in the cross-case analysis chapter that follows these four individual case studies and then considered in relation to the research questions guiding this thesis in the discussion chapter.

**SBM role
Leadership and management**
The role of the SBM at this case study site has developed and grown throughout the course of the study with the level of leadership and management she is expected to exercise gradually increasing alongside her responsibilities. By the last data collection phase she was line managing a team of business management staff across three schools and providing guidance and support to a SBM at a fourth school. Furthermore, she was also providing business management support to another school in the locality, which is not part of the federation. The SBM appears at ease providing support to other schools and with the strategic element of her role in terms of forward planning and forecasting. However, unlike the FBM at Case Study A and the SBM at Case Study B, she is much less comfortable with line management and leadership of colleagues, having been used to operating solitarily for most of her career. Such reluctance suggests a lack of confidence and natural leadership, attributes she accepts she will have to develop if she is to fulfil her potential in a growing role.

**Breadth and depth of the role**
The fact that the original SBM role was divided into two positions covering different elements of the post highlights the diversity and volume of work associated with the role. When this model failed resulting in one SBM leaving her post, the remaining SBM was left with a significant workload across three schools that would have been unmanageable. However, as with the previous two case studies, the SBM receives business management support, in this case from her team of administrative staff. This highlights the growth of the SBM role...
whereby SBMs are increasingly reliant upon staff to support them in their duties and responsibilities.

**Barriers to the effectiveness of the SBM role**

*Common understanding/acceptance of the role*

The executive headteacher of Crane Street Federation, while advocating for the SBM role, remained critical of the growth of school business management believing the role was over developing such that it was becoming a potential threat to the headteacher position. Her justification was the job description for the Advanced School Business Manager for which she felt many of the responsibilities were exclusively those of the headteacher’s. The SBM literature suggests such opinions are shared by many within education and illustrates, perhaps understandably, why there remain cultural barriers to the SBM role in some quarters of the school system.

**SBM Impact**

*Finances*

The grants secured by the SBM Community early in this study totalling nearly £50,000 for staff training, equipment for the new nursery and after school childcare provide a good example of the financial impact that a SBM can make and the indirect benefits this has for students.

*Support staff*

As with the first two case studies, the SBM has used her status and influence to improve the working conditions of the school support staff setting up a system of regular appraisal and arranging development opportunities for the federation support staff many of whom had been able to complete NVQs in their line of work. Again, this illustrates the moral obligation that many of the SBMs in this study feel towards giving a voice to school support staff, increasing awareness of the importance of this section of the school workforce and providing them with opportunities for professional growth.
Educational change

Inter-school collaboration

The move to become a federation provides an example of the increasing level of inter-school collaboration in the English school system, in this case of a formal nature where three of the schools are sharing a governing body and (along with a fourth school) an executive headteacher. As with Case Study A, business management is a central plank in this collaborative arrangement as, alongside governance and executive leadership, the SBM and her team provide a shared service to the schools within the federation.

Changing role of the Local Authority (LA)

Finally, this case study has highlighted some of the implications of academy conversion for school stakeholders, particularly the business management staff at this case study site who have assumed more responsibility due to the increased financial and operational autonomy resulting from their independence from LA management and the services it previously provided. The increasing dismantling of this middle tier of government coupled with the academisation of the school system will have similar implications for the roles and responsibilities of many business management and support staff in schools across England.
5.5  CASE STUDY D – FERNBROOK SCHOOL

5.5.1  Synopsis
The focus of this case study is a SBM operating at a secondary school, Fernbrook. Over the course of the study the school embarked upon partnership work with a number of their feeder schools. As part of this collaboration, Fernbrook began providing these schools with business management provision, essentially selling the services of their SBM. This case study charts the growth and development of the SBM role, the impact she has made and the steps taken by the school to accommodate her increasing partnership work. The wider implications for capacity, workload and succession planning are also discussed.

5.5.2  Case D: School business management model
Figure 7 illustrates the model of school business management at Case D, as was in September 2010 when data collection was completed at this case study site. Over the course of the study the SBM role at Fernbrook had developed and expanded following an intensification of the business management partnership work between this setting and their feeder primary schools. From operating predominantly at Fernbrook and offering intermittent support to some small schools in the locality, the SBM was now spending a substantial portion of her working week at any one of up to 25 feeder schools in the area offering business management support, advice and expertise. As such, Fernbrook had employed a full-time finance assistant to assume the SBM’s operational responsibilities on a daily basis. The model of business management employed at this case study site is a SBM service provider whereby Fernbrook, as the lead school, supplies business management provision to one or more other schools.
5.5.3 Context
Fernbrook School is a smaller than average secondary school serving around 650 students between the ages of 11 - 16 years old, a higher than average proportion of which have a special educational need or disability with around 25% eligible for FSM provision. The majority of students are white British. The school itself is situated in a geographically remote coastal location to the North West of the country. This area suffers from significant social and economic disadvantage characterised by high levels of unemployment, sustained migration within the 18-30 year old cohort and reduced birth rates. Subsequently, the schools in this region have endured accelerated decreases in student rolls. Education in the local town has undergone a period of large-scale restructuring in recent years with three of the original five secondary schools being closed and replaced by a new academy.

5.5.4 Data collection: Phase 1
This case site was first visited in September 2009 where interviews were conducted with the headteacher and the SBM.

SBM role
At the time of the first data collection phase, Fernbrook employed a full-time SBM, an experienced and qualified staff member who had worked in both financial and educational administration for over 15 years and also completed the CSBM, DSBM and ADSBM. She had been in her current position for just over
five years and the role had developed somewhat in that time both in terms of the title (i.e. from bursar to finance manager to SBM) and an increase in responsibility. Fernbrook had recently started preliminary partnership work with a number of primary schools in the surrounding area (approximately 25) to provide them with business management guidance and expertise. This initiative had been established by Fernbrook to provide support to the smaller schools in the area whose budgetary constraints had restricted them with regards to the operational services they could access. In addition to her role at Fernbrook, the SBM had been handed responsibility to lead this emerging partnership work with the local schools. However, as this work was still at an early stage it had not made much impact on her role at the time of the first case visit.

The responsibilities of the SBM included school finances and administration, HR, health and safety, site management, premises contracts, external agencies, timetabling and the line-management of all non-teaching staff (excluding the TAs). Essentially, her role encapsulated anything in the school that was not directly linked to the teaching and learning agenda:

\[
\text{Really she is that collecting point of many of the elements of school life that are not defined as the curricula or academic. So in terms of staffing, commissioning services, procurement, all of those elements, she is very vital indeed and worth a tremendous amount of time and attention.}
\]

(Headteacher, Fernbrook, 2009)

It was clear from the first interview that the headteacher was a keen advocate of the SBM role and that he held his SBM in particularly high regard. Here he describes the SBM role as crucial to schools across both phases, indicating why he was eager to establish a shared business management strategy between Fernbrook and the smaller schools in the vicinity:

\[
\text{For secondary's I think it is an invaluable role that headteachers couldn't work without. I think it is a role that when it comes to primary}
\]
schools their smaller operation disadvantages them from having in many cases and therefore reduces their potential benefit from it.

(Headteacher, Fernbrook, 2009)

He also suggests that the constant stream of government initiatives and changes to the ways in which schools operate is increasingly facilitating the requirement for a qualified business manager:

I think changes to areas such as health and safety and the Disability Discrimination Act and so on are such enormous growth areas that it wouldn’t be a job that a headteacher could do without additional capacity, it’s essential.

(Headteacher, Fernbrook, 2009)

Leadership and management

The SBM was an established member of the SLT at Fernbrook having been asked to join the team in 2004 when the current headteacher first started. Despite being the only non-teaching member, the SBM felt her role was fully supported by the senior school stakeholders:

At this school, my role is wholeheartedly recognised, I’m on the SLT and governors fully support my role so in that sense I’m fortunate and I don’t really see any barriers.

(SBM, Fernbrook, 2009)

Having been a member of the SLT for five years the SBM seemed to have established her role amongst the other senior leaders at Fernbrook. The headteacher was in no doubt as to the level at which the SBM operated and viewed the role as a genuine leadership position particularly given the area of responsibility covered by the SBM:

She takes decisions, she has command essentially over the whole school budget and advises me on that. I say ‘can we afford?’ and I am advised
on that. I’m not informed, it’s at a much higher level than that and that’s how the decision making goes ... What I would say is that Rachael [SBM] represents my equivalent in terms of a number of areas of school practice.

(Headteacher, Fernbrook, 2009)

Consistent with his collaborative values, the headteacher seemed comfortable and confident relinquishing tasks and dispersing leadership responsibility amongst his senior staff. This had allowed the SBM to exercise leadership in a number of areas:

There are seven of us on the SLT and responsibilities are delegated throughout those members then fed down through the line management structure. Currently I’m working on the reorganisation [of schools] which is going on in the town, and the enlargement programme of Fernbrook school where I’m taking a major lead role, talking to planners and architects, working with the LA on funding etc. ... I’m working on the transformation into a Trust school and I’m on the board, with the governors, who are establishing it

(SBM, Fernbrook, 2009)

The level of responsibility handed to the SBM is indicative of the broad and diverse nature of her role, encapsulating a combination of project and line management duties and strategic leadership responsibility:

She is essentially the employment leader for all support staff and all the areas that accrue to that and all those areas of operations. She also works at a strategic level. For instance, we are in the midst of a school enlargement project and her role in that is the analysis of requirements of provision, which has been absolutely essential.

(Headteacher, Fernbrook, 2009)
**Facilitators to the effectiveness of the SBM role**

A key factor in the headteacher's approach to the dispersion of leadership responsibility at Fernbrook is the faith he places in his senior staff members. For the SBM this is a key factor in their positive working relationship:

> You need to respect each other and I think that’s very much the case here. I think a lot of it is also down to trust and ability as well and that’s built up over a period of time where you get to know how much responsibility you can give to someone and leave them to run with tasks.

(SBM, Fernbrook, 2009)

This level of trust is also important to the headteacher who explained how his own role is made easier with the knowledge that his SBM is making the right decisions in those areas of the school management that she is qualified to manage, something intensified by the scale of the school operation:

> We work very closely and I can’t envisage how things would work if we didn’t. The budgetary management is absolutely essential, we’ve got a budget that’s approximately £4 million and that’s very significant indeed because you can imagine the weight off my mind to know that it’s being appropriately managed.

(Headteacher, Fernbrook, 2009)

The SBM’s relationship with the teachers was not as well established. This was mainly because the SBM did not work with the teachers a great deal and so they rarely encountered one another professionally. As such, some of the teachers did not necessarily have a full understanding of the SBM role and what it involved. This was particularly true of the more experienced teachers to whom the role was a relatively unknown quantity:

> I think there remains a residue of old educational and professional snobbery and you just get those where they see someone who isn’t a teacher as a little old lady who works in the office. Rachael doesn’t
broker those kinds of attitudes and neither do we generally but they still
break through sometimes, it’s just a professional leftover isn’t it?

(Headteacher, Fernbrook, 2009)

However, in refusing to ‘broker’ such attitudes, the headteacher and SBM have been able to largely overcome such minor attitudinal challenges without any detriment to the effectiveness of the SBM role.

**SBM Impact**

The SBM’s impact at Fernbrook was evident on several levels. Firstly, she has led on a number of projects both generating and saving money for the school:

_We’ve been able to carry out, under her project management, some very significant and creative adaptations to the building even within the financial restrictions that we’ve got. She manages it well, there’s clarity around that and we know what we can do so that it allows us to plan in a more strategic manner._

(Headteacher, Fernbrook, 2009)

Second, the volume of work she is able to take from the headteacher, allowing him to focus more of his time and efforts on the educational agenda, had also made a significant impact:

_In terms of my workload then she allows me to work appropriately in line with the pressures of government directives ... I don’t know how I would attend to the issues of teaching and learning if I had to worry about the job she does too. It enables a qualitative dialogue at a professional educational level that we couldn’t sustain otherwise._

(Headteacher, Fernbrook School, 2009)

Third, through the projects and initiatives she has established, and through her approach to the role, the SBM has influenced the culture of the school in relation to staff attitudes:
All adult workers in the school realise that there is that quality of care and attention to what we do and, just in terms of the morale of people every single day ... but it's in ways that you probably wouldn't realise and take for granted, the quality of lighting, a regular programme of updating and replacing the furnishings and decoration of the building just adds to the quality of life within the place.

(Headteacher, Fernbrook, 2009)

This highlights the diversity of impact that can be made by a SBM, impacts that stretch much further than school finances. Though these economic benefits are clearly important and can make a huge difference to schools, the reduction in the headteacher’s bureaucratic workload, the maintenance of the basic operational function of the school and the wider attitudinal shifts that facilitate a positive and productive working environment for all stakeholders can be just as vital.

**Looking forward**

In terms of forward planning the headteacher was ambitious as to the future direction of the school. His strategic vision was to develop the partnership work with the surrounding schools and look at moving to a more autonomous operation, away from the LA, with Trust status being the most likely option. The SBM had already played a key role in the initial exploration and consultation phase of these plans and it was anticipated she would continue to be involved should they develop further:

Secondary schools are in a position to be able to easily recognise and afford such a post. With regard to primary schools, that needs some thinking about but talking to some of the primary schools in our cluster, there is a gap there and the headteachers do an awful lot of work that I would see as my responsibility.

(SBM, Fernbrook, 2009)
Moreover, the headteacher was keen for the SBM to continue to develop professionally, even intimating a somewhat radical leadership model in the future:

I've suggested to Rachael that, if she were interested, she might think about doing the NPQH and I would see her as being capable of doing that and that it would be a very interesting way for a school to operate. Now I understand that the governors are going to have to take on that question and ask themselves whether our leadership and management function is the most appropriate as we move forward.

(Headteacher, Fernbrook, 2009)

This illustrates the regard in which the headteacher at Fernbrook holds his SBM but also the role he sees business management playing in schools in the future. It also highlights the headteacher's innovative approach to the running of his school and draws comparisons with the Case Study A who also have a very progressive executive headteacher and a FBM who has been handed substantial freedom to develop her role and become an influential and integral member of the leadership structure in the same way as the SBM at this case study site has.

5.5.5 Data collection: Phase 2
Fernbrook School was visited for a second time in September 2010, a year after the first case site visit. Interviews were conducted with the headteacher, the SBM and the new finance officer.

SBM role
Since the previous data collection phase the SBM’s role had changed quite significantly mainly due to the growth of the partnership work that Fernbrook were exploring a year earlier and that proving to be a huge success. The SBM was now providing SBM support and development to 25 primary schools in the local area although a side effect of this new arrangement was that the SBM was spending substantially less time at Fernbrook:
They meet on a half termly basis and I go along and I minute take for them and set the agendas in consultation with the chair, though I can add to that agenda if required ... My role is very much seen as helping them and if I’m required to feedback on anything and I’m required to go away and look into something then that’s what I do.

(SBM, Fernbrook, 2010)

In addition to the primary partnership work, the SBM had been leading the drive for Fernbrook to become a Trust, in partnership with a local special school. Again, this had taken a substantial amount of her time to facilitate the consultation process, attend meetings with the relevant parties and generally coordinate the process from the secondary school side. Consequently, Fernbrook had recently employed a new finance officer to take on the SBM’s operational duties in the school. So far this was proving successful:

*With all the working that is going on collaboratively we’ve been in the fortunate position to be able to employ a finance officer to sort of fill in the work I would normally have done 12 months ago which has allowed me to step outside the school and do the partnership work.*

(SBM, Fernbrook, 2010)

The drive to collaborate was a key element of the headteacher’s ethos and this was having a direct impact on the SBM whose workload seemed to be growing significantly:

*We’ve just gone over to Bank View [local Special School] and offered a financial management service to them, which is extra work on our desks but it’s all just part of that collaboration and partnership working. If we’ve got the skills in our building here to enable him [headteacher of Bank Top] to carry out his role as headteacher and he doesn’t have access to those skills then why wouldn’t you?*

(SBM, Fernbrook, 2010)
A number of interesting themes emerge here. First, the growth and expansion of the SBM role, which has developed beyond the confines of a single school at this case study site, highlight the unbounded nature of school business management as a profession that can encompass any number of different areas of educational provision within, between and beyond the school. Second, while such a role expansion can be beneficial for professional development there are implications particularly in terms of workload; a challenge faced by the SBM at this and other case study sites in this research. Third, and related to the previous point, is the move to strengthen business management capacity by employing a new member of support staff. This was also the case at the Case Study B where they had employed additional business management support and Case Study A where they had trained existing staff members to build their business management capacity.

**Leadership and management**

The SBM had continued to exercise both leadership and management in her role and remained a recognised and valued member of the SLT at Fernbrook. Despite being the only non-teaching member of the team, the headteacher was keen to highlight the extent of the SBMs leadership and management responsibility once more conveying the regard in which he held her and the importance of her role:

> We’ve got a senior leadership team that consists of six people, five of those have come up through the traditional structure ... Alongside that we then have Rachael who is our none teaching member of SLT and our strategic leader in terms of resource management ... if you think of the school as an employer of just over 100 staff and half of those are non-teachers so if this is quite a large medium sized business then she is the leader of half of it in many ways, very directly.

(Headteacher, Fernbrook, 2010)

The SBM role had become firmly embedded at Fernbrook and the systems and procedures she had in place had become well embedded in the school. As such, many staff members now actively sought her advice on a range of issues:
I think we’ve established quite a strong routine here and Rachael knows such a lot about the school because she’s been here a long time and is used as a point of reference by an awful lot of staff.

(Finance officer, Fernbrook School, 2010)

The SBM had become a well-known figure at Fernbrook perhaps through a combination of the numbers of years she had worked there and the status at which she now operated within the school. This familiarity was enhanced by her role as line manager for all support staff in the school.

**Barriers to the effectiveness of the SBM role**

Some challenges to the effectiveness of the role were highlighted by the SBM, one of which was a shortage of time and the associated implications this had for her work/life balance:

>Whilst I’m contracted for 37 hours you could probably add another 20 onto that and a lot of people in education don’t realise that that is the case and it is. I do 10-hour days … If I want to get through my work I must use my own time which isn’t recognised financially.

(SBM, Fernbrook, 2010)

The school had already taken on a full-time finance officer to support the SBM yet she was still working long, unsociable hours, without appropriate financial remuneration:

>You can’t simply clock in at nine and go home at five unfortunately and also I’ve heard it said ‘that’s not in my job description’ well I’ve never had that attitude and I never would. I just wonder if I didn’t do those hours as I do then what would suffer as a result.

(SBM, Fernbrook, 2010)
In many ways, the freedoms the headteacher of Fernbrook afforded his SBM to explore any avenues of development, both professionally and for the school, combined with her strong work ethic, personal ambition and devotion to her job appeared to have created an almost limitless role:

What happens is you get boundaries blurred so if Rachael is responsible for site management then that could be understood to be that she looks after the bricks and mortar but, in actual fact, as we move towards an enlargement project she’s actually leading and supporting teachers developing their projected learning environments and that touches on every element of it and she’s giving leadership within that. So, as I say, you can’t see the edges and her job grows and grows, not least because she has an on-going developing expertise in many of these areas.

(Headteacher, Fernbrook, 2010)

While the initiative showed by the SBM in developing her role is a positive it also raises concerns as to the sustainability of the model both for the SBM and her ability to cope with a constantly increasing workload and for the school in finding a comparable replacement if she left her post.

Facilitators to the effectiveness of the SBM role
Having established herself and her role amongst members of the SLT and support staff, the SBM had been working to raise her profile in and around the school with some of the stakeholders who were previously less familiar with her role. For instance, she had increasingly been working with the students, attending their school council meetings and leading on projects that directly impacted on them. One such project was a summer sports camp initiative for the students:

There was the Euro camp basketball group who approached me to lease our minibuses over the summer. I saw an opportunity and negotiated four free places on their camp for our students, which was a great success and will be running again next year. I’ve even had thank you
cards from all of the boys who attended! I don’t normally get cards like that so it really did bring it home how much impact I’m having on the students.

(SBM, Fernbrook, 2010)

The SBM’s work with the students, school stakeholders with whom a SBM might not normally be expected to interact, underscores her desire to make a direct and positive impact on their educational experience and offers a further illustration of the potential breadth and diversity of the SBM role.

The SBM had also been developing relationships beyond the school gates through the escalating partnership work that Fernbrook were pursuing which was having a positive impact on her role:

Relationships are key … outside of school we have good relationships with other business managers of secondary schools and there is a local meeting we attend and that is a great facilitator because you can share problems, you can share ideas ‘somebody has this problem, how did you deal with it? What do you think about this?’

(SBM, Fernbrook, 2010)

The peer support and sharing of expertise outlined here is very much aligned to the collaborative ethos championed by the headteacher at Fernbrook and further illustrates the benefits of his collaborative approach.

For the SBM, the relationships she had forged with other stakeholders at Fernbrook were central to her realising her full potential and performing effectively in her role:

I have a good support structure of staff that are respectful of each other. An understanding headteacher is another one and a supportive governing body as well. I also have good relationships with the rest of senior management.
It is clear how important the support of her headteacher and other senior stakeholders is to the SBM and underscores such support as a central driver to effective business management.

According to the headteacher, the personal and professional qualities shown by the SBM were the biggest facilitator to the role:

_We’ve got someone with the ability, imagination, training and a business background but she's also got the strategic understanding of how she can help the school to move forward. You can have a financial wizard but you wouldn’t get that as well. You need the strategic vision, which she’s got._

(Headteacher, Fernbrook, 2010)

For the headteacher, the SBM brings much more than financial acumen to the role. Crucial as these skills are, it is clear that a wider knowledge of the school system coupled with the ability to think strategically and creatively, are attributes the headteacher believes an effective SBM should possess.

**SBM Impact**

Since the previous case site visit and mainly as a result of the partnership work with the primary schools, the SBM identified a number of areas where she had made significant financial impacts both in resource generation and monetary savings. For example, she had secured affordable transport at a significant discount (half the price of the cheapest local rate) for the primary, infant and nursery schools in the area through a mini-bus hired from one of the secondary schools with a £2500 incentive attached which paid for over 50% of the first years lease. She also obtained funding for two staff members from each of the schools to attend mini-bus assessment training (at a cost of £100 per school) so that the schools can then pursue ‘learning outside the classroom’ where students are taken outside of school to experience learning in different environments.
Furthermore, the SBM had organised a Primary Inset Event, the largest educational conference ever to happen in the region, attracting over 450 stakeholders from the primary, infant and nursery schools in the area to focus on narrowing the achievement gap. As well as making significant financial savings, the event also fostered a real sense of collaboration between the schools in the area. The same event was subsequently planned for the coming year and, having charged delegates a £20 entrance fee this year, the SBM had already raised enough money to fund it.

The positive impact made by the SBM had not been strictly financial. Her coordination of the partnership initiative had saved the headteachers of the 25 schools involved a significant amount of time and effort. For example, she was leading a project on community cohesion that included attending an event as the representative for all the headteachers in the group. Following this event, the SBM had provided feedback to the group thus saving them time and resource. Furthermore, her management of joint bids for funding between the schools was an on-going benefit to the headteachers who would otherwise have had to organise and submit such proposals themselves.

The SBM had also been heavily involved in Fernbrook's bid to convert to a Trust school in partnership with Bank View Special School. In doing so she was saving the headteachers of both schools a significant amount of time and energy by shadowing board meetings; liaising with solicitors regarding land and assets transfers and other legal implications; organising new staff contracts; and reviewing whole-school policies in line with Trust status. Furthermore, she was exploring the possibility of a shared business management model with Bank View. Moreover, she had continued her work at Fernbrook managing projects to improve the school environment:

*We have carried out developments in our existing small gym and hall and they’ve been transformational. They’ve maintained the quality and the moral and enjoyment of young people who are working in those areas has increased … it is a lovely new environment and we’ve got*
retractable seating which means that the space turns into quite a fine theatre for performance that the whole community acknowledges and enjoys and that comes through creative and imaginative thinking, much of it on her part.

(Headteacher, Fernbrook, 2010)

The depth and breadth of the SBM’s impact is evident and paints a very positive picture of her contribution to many different aspects of the educational agenda at Fernbrook. However, it is also questionable as to whether the volume and pace of work undertaken by the SBM is sustainable over the longer term. The SBM has been given the freedom to innovate, develop professionally and mould the role around her work ethic and ambition but if she were to leave the post would it be acceptable and realistic to expect her successor to operate at the same intensity? This is a question that many of the headteachers in this study have had to consider.

*Looking forward*

Looking forward the headteacher felt that there was enormous potential for the role of the SBM to play a central role within education, particularly in the primary sector where SBM provision was still relatively scarce:

*Through the project of business management direction, there is enormous potential there to improve the quality of what schools are doing. Probably the growth identified by the [National] College is in the primary sector because many secondary schools go a good way with the function but unfortunately the primary sector are financially vulnerable. The irony is that if there was the vision to identify what school business managers in primary schools could do it might constitute an element of financial prudence.*

(Headteacher, Fernbrook, 2010)

The headteacher at Fernbrook is a strong advocate of business management provision being made available to all schools and this was obviously a central
driver behind his decision to ‘share’ his own SBM with the primary schools in the surrounding area. At this case study at least, it seemed such a model was proving to be successful.

5.5.6 Summary of key themes
A number of key themes emerge from this case study and are summarised below. These key themes will be revisited and discussed in more depth in the cross-case analysis chapter that follows the four individual case studies and then considered in relation to the research questions guiding this thesis in the subsequent discussion chapter.

SBM role
Leadership and management
The SBM at Fernbrook holds a high level of leadership and management responsibility operating at a strategic level in the school as a member of the SLT and also line managing all the support staff. As with the executive headteacher at Case Study A, the headteacher at this case study is a firm believer that the SBM role should be set at a strategic level with a high level of decision-making responsibility. The headteacher at Fernbrook even suggested that his SBM should consider taking the NPQH with a view to taking on even more leadership in the school. Controversial as this idea is it demonstrates the regard in which he holds the role. This is in stark contrast to the executive headteacher in Case Study C who was cautious as to the growth of the SBM role. However, like the executive headteacher at Case Study A, the headteacher at Fernbrook has been a huge facilitating influence on the growth and progression of the SBM. The SBM has been handed a great deal of freedom to expand her role and develop professionally while the headteacher, in turn, has been comfortable relinquishing all non-educational responsibility to his SBM. Akin to the FBM and executive headteacher in Case Study A, their relationship is based on a mutual trust and appreciation of one another’s knowledge and expertise.
Breadth and depth of role

The breadth and depth of the SBM role at Fernbrook is noteworthy encompassing a range of aspects of educational provision within, between and beyond her school and is again comparable to the FBM at the Case Study A whose responsibilities stretch far beyond the school finances. The diversity of the SBM's role at Fernbrook is also reflected in the wide range of impacts she has made to the headteacher, the school finances and the students. Yet, as with her counterparts in the other case studies, the unbounded nature of the SBM's role is clearly having implications for her workload and work/life balance and also raising questions surrounding sustainability and succession planning for the role. Again, to draw similarities with the other case studies, Fernbrook have attempted to address issues of workload by recruiting an additional staff member to support the SBM in her work.

Facilitators to the effectiveness of the SBM role

Working relationships

The positive and productive working relationship between the SBM and the headteacher has been a key facilitator to the effectiveness and growth of her role. The level of trust the headteacher places in his SBM has afforded her the opportunity to develop her position from operating within a single school to a working across a number of schools and with other organisations to improve educational provision within their local community. The headteacher views the SBM as his ‘equivalent’ in relation to the areas of provision she has responsibility for which illustrates the high regard in which he holds her as an individual but also his advocacy for the SBM role more generally.

SBM profile

The SBM has also looked to raise her profile within, between and beyond her school in order to raise awareness and increase the level of understanding amongst the school stakeholders as to the nature of her role. For example, she has engaged in projects with students at Fernbrook making a concerted effort to contribute to their educational experience in positive ways such as advising the student council or coordinating a summer camping trip. She has also increased
her engagement with headteachers and SBMs in the wider area through her inter-school partnership work and regular regional business management meetings.

**Barriers to the effectiveness of the SBM role**

*Common understanding/acceptance of the role*

The headteacher pointed out that a number of the more experienced staff members were less understanding or appreciative of the SBM role and its status within the school. However, he dismissed this as a ‘professional leftover’ and has clearly not let such opinions hinder his own perspective that the SBM should play a pivotal role in the strategic leadership of the school. As such, those who have yet to fully appreciate or accept the SBM have not unduly affected the effectiveness of her role.

**Facilitators to the effectiveness of the SBM role**

*Professional ambition*

The SBM at Fernbrook is clearly a very ambitious and driven individual as illustrated in the growth and developed of her role over the years she has worked at the school and the additional roles she has undertaken both with other schools and in the wider community. She has also completed a number of professional qualifications including those related specifically to business management. While this aspirational nature and associated intense work ethic are common to many of the SBMs in this study this perhaps explains why these individuals often find themselves with unmanageable workloads and unbounded roles.

**SBM Impact**

*Headteacher*

According to the headteacher at Fernbrook, his SBM has had a considerable influence on the volume and diversity of his workload. In essentially handing the SBM responsibility for all non-educational aspects of the school operation, the headteacher has been able to realign his priorities and spend more time focusing on the teaching and learning agenda. Similarly, the SBM’s work with the feeder
school headteachers has also saved them time on tasks that they would have had to undertake themselves had it not been for the SBM.

Students
The SBM provided a number of examples of ways in which she has been able to make a positive impact to the educational experience of the students at Fernbrook. Indirectly, she has secured grants and project managed the modernisation of different areas of the school infrastructure such as a new school hall and gym. This has not only benefitted the students but also the local community who can also use this space. She has also had more a direct influence on the students such as her negotiation of a free European camping trip for some students as part of a contract to lease the school mini-bus to the company running the camp. She also regularly sits in on student council meetings to offer guidance on how they can spend their budget.

Educational change
Inter-school collaboration
This case study highlights the benefits of collaboration and how, given the right circumstances and ethos, larger schools can genuinely assist smaller schools and share business management provision in meaningful and effective ways. The headteacher's collaborative philosophy is shared by the SBM and underpins much of their work from the Inset event organised and managed by the SBM to foster collaboration between the primary schools in the region to the partnership work between Fernbrook and their feeder schools based around shared business management. As with Case Study C, this case illustrates how the SBM can provide a key means of inter-school collaboration across a range of different areas of provision.
6.1 Introduction

The following chapter draws together and begins to explore in greater detail the key themes that emerged from the case studies presented in the previous four chapters. The chapter is structured thematically to allow for a cross-case analysis of the data. Each key theme is introduced followed by the associated sub-theme(s) and the case study sources from which the themes emerged (including, where relevant, references to the two case studies that were removed from the final analysis). Evidence is also presented to juxtapose with the supporting cases to facilitate a balanced argument. Finally, implications for discussion arising from each of the sub-themes are highlighted. These implications are then considered in greater depth and in the context of the existing research literature in the next chapter.

The aim of the thesis has been to explore the emerging practice of SBMs in England. In order to achieve this aim, the study focused on four research questions:

**RQ1:** What roles and responsibilities are SBMs undertaking within, between and beyond schools?

**RQ2:** How do school business managers exercise leadership and management within, between and beyond schools?

**RQ3:** What types of impact are SBMs having within, between and beyond schools?

**RQ4:** What are the facilitators and barriers associated with the development of successful models of school business management?

The following key themes are those that have emerged predominantly from the data collected at the four case study sites discussed in the previous sub-chapters
though, where relevant, evidence from the two case studies that were removed from the main body of the thesis is also drawn upon.

6.2 SBM Role

The evidence presented under this key theme relates to the composition of the SBM role at each of the case study sites, specifically the level of leadership and management they enact, the areas of the school they are responsible for and the ways in which the role differs according to the characteristics of the settings in which they operate.

6.2.1 Leadership and management

All of the SBMs in this research have at least some management duties while some also have leadership responsibilities. Some operate predominantly at an operational level while others have elements of strategic planning as part of their role. However, across the study there is significant variability both individually and between the SBMs in terms of the status, influence and level of responsibility of the role.

For example, the FBM at Case Study A (Ridge Lane and Carrbrook Federation) operates very much at a strategic level across the two schools in the federation. She is a member of the Federation Leadership Team alongside the executive headteacher and executive deputy and, in their absence, is the most senior staff member at the federation. Much of her role is made up of strategic planning with regards to finance, resource, buildings and premises and even student data. At this case study site, much of the operational business management duties are fulfilled by the single school SBM at Carrbrook and the additional team of administrative staff that Ridge Lane have funded allowing the FBM to focus on the strategic financial and business planning for the federation.

At Case Study B (Cross Vale), the SBM operates at a strategic level for a portion of her role and is positioned alongside the headteacher and deputy headteacher on the SLT to discuss long-term business and organisational planning for whole school issues. She is also the line manager for all non-teaching staff in the school
and, as such, has been able to establish and implement some large-scale initiatives such as improving the employment conditions for the TAs and other support staff to whom she is line manager. However, the budgetary constraints associated with being a single primary school mean Cross Vale have only been able to fund an administrative assistant for the SBM on a part-time basis. Consequently, the SBM, unlike her counterpart at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, must spend a reasonable amount of her time on operational duties.

At Case Study C (Crane Street Federation) the SBM works across four schools coordinating all their business management provision. As the most senior SBM in the federation she line-manages a team of administrators and finance assistants who each take care of the operational duties in their respective schools. She is also the SBM for one of the secondary schools in the federation where she is a member of the SLT. As such she has a high level of management responsibility and a role to play in helping to guide the strategic direction of her secondary school (e.g. by providing financial advice and expertise to the executive headteacher). However, the executive headteacher has been unwilling to relinquish too much strategic leadership to her SBM who subsequently wields less influence than the FBM at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook and the SBM at Cross Vale do at their respective sites.

The SBM at Case Study D (Fernbrook) has been afforded the freedom to develop her role from a largely operational to a more strategic position over a number of years. She functions at an influential level in her school alongside the headteacher who refers to her as ‘his equal’ and ‘advisor’ in the areas of school practice for which she is responsible. She also spends a significant amount of her time working outside of the secondary school advising the large group of feeder schools on their own business management provision and leading on projects within, between and beyond her school. As with Ridge Lane and Carrbrook Federation, and to a lesser extent Cross Vale, this has been possible as Fernbrook have employed a full-time finance assistant to take on the operational business management duties essentially freeing up the SBM to focus on her strategic financial planning and the partnership work with the feeder schools.
Implications for discussion

In this study, the level of leadership and management responsibility the SBM has is linked to their associated status and influence. It is also dependent on their headteacher’s perspective on and level of advocacy of the SBM role and the size and organisational capacity of the school. As such, the evidence from the different cases in this study highlights the wide range of leadership and management responsibility that the SBM can encompass between different schools.

6.2.2 Breadth and depth of the SBM role

The range of duties carried out by the SBMs at each of the case studies is wide and varied. Their responsibilities cover numerous areas including the school budget/finance; human resources; health and safety; buildings and premises; contracts; support staff; fund raising and; community links. Such is the scale of the role that many of the SBMs at the case study sites have support staff to assist them in their duties.

For example, the SBM at Fernbrook spends a good deal of her working week outside of her school visiting the 25 small schools in the local area to which she supplies business management support and training. Despite her receiving support through a full-time finance assistant, the SBM still has duties at Fernbrook to which she must attend meaning a 50 hour working week is not unusual. Similarly, the SBM at Cross Vale has gradually taken on more responsibilities since took up her position at the school. In addition to her regular SBM duties she has also taken on line management responsibility for all support staff including the TAs, 26 staff members in total. Her headteacher has raised concerns about the amount of work her SBM continues to undertake and the volume of unpaid overtime she does in order to fulfil her role. At Ridge Lane and Carrbrook Federation the FBM had taken on an additional post working as a Regional SBM Advocate which has meant working outside of her setting for two days a week. As with the SBM at Fernbrook, this has been made possible by the full-time support staff provided by the federation to cover her duties. However,
the FBM voiced concerns about 'losing the feel' of her schools and the future direction of her career.

In many ways, the composition of the SBM role depends on the size and phase of the organisation in which it is based. Those SBMs working in the primary sector settings (i.e. at Cross Vale and at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook) have a much more hands on role interacting with students, staff, parents and visitors on a daily basis compared to the SBMs working in the secondary or mixed-phase school sector (i.e. at Fernbrook and at Crane Street) who are less visible around their schools and tend to work in a more isolated environment with support staff to conduct their operational duties. In the case of the cross-phase model at Crane Street, the SBM has dedicated business management support responsible for each of the schools in the federation whilst she works in an overarching role essentially coordinating all federation business management provision.

**Implications for discussion**

A key factor emanating from this sub-theme is the scale of the role SBM role. When one considers the long and often unsociable hours they claim to be working for no extra pay the combined issues of workload, sustainability and potential burnout emerge as very real concerns. Furthermore, the diversity and variability of the role is also a prominent theme with some business managers combining administrative and operational duties with high level decision-making and strategic planning depending on the organisational characteristics of their school (see below). Furthermore, two of the participating SBMs spoke of studying for the NPQH and the possibility of leading a school outright which poses interesting questions about future models of school leadership and management.

Additionally, the size and phase of the setting in which the SBM operates can also have considerable influence on the composition of the role. Put simply, the larger and more complex the organisation, the more diverse and voluminous the business management operation often necessitating the requirement for teams of staff to support the SBM in their role.
6.3 Barriers to the effectiveness of the SBM role

Of the many barriers to the effectiveness of the SBM role highlighted by participants in this study, the one most commonly cited related to the lack of understanding and acceptance of the SBM role and its purpose in school.

6.3.1 Common understanding/acceptance of the role

At Ridge Lane and Carrbrook the FBM had faced cultural barriers from certain staff members who were seemingly unable to comprehend a non-QTS staff member being elevated to a position of such status and influence across the federation. At the Cross Vale the SBM had similarly struggled against attitudinal barriers of staff members, an issue that was compounded by her occupying a role that was new to the school and also being the first non-teaching member of the SLT. The SBM at Fernbrook had faced challenges from some of the more experienced staff members who, according to the headteacher, still perceived her position as menial and peripheral, showing little regard for the crucial role the SBM played in the operation of their school or an understanding of her role outside of the school. Though the SBM at Crane Street did not report the same kind of challenges as her counterparts in the other three case studies her executive headteacher raised concerns about the growth of the SBM role citing it as a serious threat to the role of the headteacher in relation to the level of responsibility some SBMs were now being handed in schools.

At Ainsworth, a lack of a shared vision and understanding of the purposes of the role created significant barriers that the SBM was unable to overcome. Many of the headteachers within the cluster could not agree how to utilise their SBM with each having different ideas as to what their role should encompass. As such a stalemate ensued whereby the SBM struggled to get the headteachers to even meet as a group. Subsequently, his productivity was very low and the model ultimately failed. At Hamley, the SBM one of the smaller schools pulled out of the shared business management arrangement after just one year as their governing body felt the financial contribution their school was making toward his services would be better spent on extra teaching provision.
Implications for discussion

A shared understanding of and commitment to the school business management model being employed, at least between the key stakeholders such as senior leaders and governors, is crucial to the effectiveness of the SBM role in this study. At some case study sites there was a lack of understanding of the SBM role and the extent of its contribution to the effective operation of the school. In such cases the SBM has taken longer to embed their role and subsequently make a positive impact in their school(s) or, in the case of Ainsworth, leave their position before they had made any meaningful impact. This suggests that there is work to be done in educating school stakeholders as to the specifics of the SBM role and the potential benefits to schools that employing a qualified SBM can bring.

6.4 Facilitators to the effectiveness of the SBM role

Findings from this study indicate a number of facilitating factors to the effectiveness of the SBM role, most notably the working relationship between the SBM and the headteacher, the profile of the SBM in their school(s) and the professional ambition of the SBM.

6.4.1 Working relationships

A key facilitator to the effectiveness of the SBM role and a crucial factor in the alleviation of the challenges associated with the SBM role is the working relationship between the SBM and headteacher. This is particularly true of the FBM at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook who enjoys a very close relationship with the executive headteacher having worked alongside one another for a number of years. The SBM at Fernbrook School is also very close to her headteacher having spent much of the last decade of her working career under his leadership. The SBM and headteacher at Cross Vale also highlighted their strong and productive working relationship, sentiments that apply to the SBM and executive headteacher at Crane Street.
A key ingredient to these working relationships is the level of trust the headteachers have in their SBM’s ability and judgement. The headteachers at Fernbrook and Cross Vale Schools and the executive headteacher at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook all spoke of being comfortable with their SBMs making decisions based on their professional knowledge without having the need or desire for micro-management. At Fernbrook the headteacher describes the SBM as his advisor in the non-educational areas of the school function. The executive headteacher at Crane Street was more inclined to monitor high level financial decision-making or simply take ownership of such tasks herself, however she also admitted that this was not to infer any mistrust in her SBM whom she had the utmost respect for, it was simply her style of leadership.

At the Ainsworth Cluster it was an acute lack of faith from several of the headteachers in their SBM that ultimately contributed to the failure of the model of shared business management.

**Implications for discussion**

The strong, positive and productive relationship between the SBM and the headteacher is central to those case studies where the SBM has been effective in their role, has been able to make a significant impact in their school(s) and has risen to an influential position in their setting. Furthermore, the knowledge they are trusted by their superiors affords the SBMs a level of confidence to fulfil their duties efficiently and effectively.

**6.4.2 SBM profile**

Raising their profiles within their settings was an important tactic employed by some of the SBMs to increase their effectiveness. At Ridge Lane and Carrbrook the executive headteacher described the efforts made by her FBM to be visible in and around the schools in the federation so that students and parents could become familiar with her role and begin to understand its importance to their school. She had also endeavoured to interact and, where possible, collaborate with teachers to the extent that they were now approaching the FBM with issues they would traditionally have gone to the executive headteacher with
demonstrating how her role was becoming more widely understood across the federation. The SBM at Cross Vale had also worked hard to increase her profile both inside the school and within the wider community taking a lead on a number of projects and initiatives and interacting with a range of school stakeholders to increase understanding of her role. This was particularly important given the school had never previously employed a SBM meaning the role was new to everyone at the school. At Fernbrook the SBM had taken ownership of a number of projects involving students with successful outcomes and positive feedback from the students themselves regarding her impact. This was also the case at Case Study E (Hamley Cluster – see Appendix X) where the SBM had also lent his expertise to projects involving teachers and students, again with positive results. This suggests developing a strong and visible profile in and around the schools in which they operate increases the impact of the SBM role.

Conversely, at the Ainsworth Cluster the SBM was kept in a more peripheral position and, for example, not invited to SLT meetings of any of the smaller schools who he was tasked to work with. As such, his struggle to build a meaningful profile for himself and his role across the cluster was cited as a key reason for the ultimate failure of the shared model of business management at this case study site.

**Implications for discussion**

As discussed in sub-section 6.3.1, a clear understanding of the SBM role and its purpose and potential is key for the SBM to be accepted as a valued member of the school workforce and to be effective in their duties. For many SBMs in this study, a key means of achieving this has been to raise awareness of their role by increasing the profile within the schools in which they operate and with the colleagues whom they work alongside.

**6.4.3 Professional ambition**

This theme relates to the ambitious and aspirational nature common to many of the SBMs in this study and characterised by their desire for continuous professional development and learning. Such ambition has been a key driver to
the success the SBMs in this study have enjoyed in their careers to date. For example, the FBM at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook had already completed the full suite of SBM qualifications at the NCSL (and signed up for the pilot of the new School Business Director Programme) before taking on an additional post with the NCSL as a Regional School Business Management Advocate requiring her to work outside of her setting for two days a week. She also talked of her intention to study for the NPQH in the near future so that she could enrich her knowledge of educational leadership with a longer-term ambition of one day leading a school. Similarly, the SBM at the Hamley Cluster, having completed the full suite of NCSL school business management courses had also been appointed as a SBM Regional Advocate and talked about his career ambitions outgrowing what he could achieve in his current setting while the SBM at Cross Vale voiced similar claims of moving on to a bigger school to satisfy her aspirations. At Fernbrook, the SBM has been steadily moving up the career ladder over the last few years from her initial role as a school administrator to her current role as a secondary school SBM operating across 25 schools and having completed the full suite of professional training programmes offered by the NCSL.

**Implications for discussion**

These findings highlight the ambitious nature of the SBMs in this study and how this drive and determination for continuous professional learning and development has facilitated their professional achievements. However, while the strong ambitions of the SBMs in this study are a positive sign of a burgeoning profession, the aspirations of some SBMs in the study to lead a school outright might be perceived as somewhat radical and unrealistic given the cultural barriers that still exist towards the role from some educational stakeholders.

**6.6 SBM impact**

The evidence presented under this key theme relates to the main areas of the school in which the SBMs in this study have been able to make a tangible positive impact, most notably the workload of the headteacher, the school finances, the support staff and the students. There is also evidence to suggest a wider cultural
impact being made by some SBMs through changes to attitudes and behaviours in their schools as a result of the work they have done.

6.6.1 Impact on headteacher

Such was the impact, a number of the headteachers from the case study settings spoke of not being able to fulfil their own roles effectively without the services of their SBMs. The executive headteacher at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook believed she would be ‘totally and utterly lost’ without her FBM whilst the executive deputy said that ensuring a qualified SBM was in place would be the first thing she would do on appointment to her first headship post. For the headteacher at Fernbrook the role was ‘invaluable’ and ‘essential’ in the secondary school sector but he also felt strongly that schools in the primary sector should have access to the services of a SBM (hence the model of shared business management provision he had established with the smaller schools in the local area).

More specifically, the workload of the headteachers had been realigned by their SBMs so that they were able to focus more of their attention on the educational agenda. The headteacher at Cross Vale talked of being able to heighten and narrow her focus on the teaching and learning agenda, spending more time in the classroom observing lessons and talking to students, now she had a SBM in place. Previously, much of this time was spent in the office working on administrative tasks. The headteacher of the secondary school at the Hamley Cluster made similar comments. He explained that his teaching responsibilities meant he could only spend two days a week in the office catching up on administrative tasks therefore having an SBM there to support him relieved a great deal of this non-teaching workload.

Implications for discussion

These findings suggests the headteacher role is a more attractive and manageable proposition if there is a qualified SBM in post to alleviate the administrative and bureaucratic burden and allow the headteacher to devote more time to leading the teaching and learning agenda. The SBM role might therefore be perceived as a means of addressing issues surrounding headteacher
workload and burnout, often associated with increases in headteacher retirement rates and decreases in the numbers of people aspiring to lead a school.

6.6.2 Financial impact
The SBMs in this study can point to considerable financial impacts they have made in their schools through both cost cutting measures and income generation. For example, the SBM at Fernbrook had saved money by securing a contract with a cheaper transport operator for the school mini-bus while the SBM at Cross Vale switched their catering supplier, thus making a substantial financial saving. She had also made some tough decisions to lay off surplus support staff yet, in the process, had managed to reduce the schools significant budget deficit. Through her prudent and effective financial management, the FBM at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook had transformed the federation finances from dire circumstances four years previously where they were facing staff redundancies and were operating in a substandard physical environment to the current situation being able to recruit new staff and having a rolling programme of refurbishment in both schools. At the Hamley the SBM won a £27,000 grant to refurbish the secondary school kitchen and a National Lottery grant to renovate a gravelled area into a landscaped garden.

Implications for discussion
The financial benefits of employing a SBM are tangible much of which are achieved through more efficient financial and budgetary management and shrewdness in relation to contracts and sourcing of services and resources. Furthermore, the evidence suggests that many SBMs can comfortably cover their annual salaries through monetary savings and income generation. However, as many of the participants in this research were keen to explain, the work of the SBM should not be couched exclusively in terms of financial benefits but rather understood and appreciated as a role that encompasses responsibility across a range of different areas of school provision.
6.6.3 Impact on support staff

Many of the SBMs in this study have placed improving the working conditions of the school support staff at the forefront of their change agenda and have positioned themselves as the champions of this sector of the workforce. At Cross Vale, one of the first priorities of the new SBM following her appointment was to set up a system of appraisals and professional development for all non-teaching staff members to give them a voice and make them feel valued while facilitating career development opportunities. Similarly, the SBMs at both Hamley and Crane Street, having taken over line-management of support staff, also introduced regular appraisals and professional learning opportunities for the support staff in their respective settings. According to the executive headteacher at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook the FBM had created a positive culture surrounding her team of support staff so that they were no longer perceived as ‘the ladies on the school desk’ but as an integral part of the school operation.

Implications for discussion

For many of the SBMs in this study, there is a moral imperative to improve the working conditions of the support staff in their schools whereby they have almost become self-appointed champions of this section of the school workforce. Furthermore, the actions taken by the SBMs to address this issue have resulted in the establishment and implementation of new systems and processes and changes to existing ways of operating within their schools. This can be interpreted as further evidence of SBMs exercising leadership in their roles.

6.6.4 Impact on students

There are numerous examples of the SBMs in this study making a positive impact on the students in their schools. For example, the SBM at Crane Street instigated the introduction of Montessori teaching methods at the nursery in one of the primary schools. The nursery subsequently saw their Ofsted grade improve from ‘satisfactory’ to ‘good’ the following year. At Cross Vale the SBM pursued Healthy School status for their school and also improved the catering facilities so that students had the option of a healthy meal at lunchtime. She had also successfully bid for funding to build an outdoor classroom for the students to stimulate
learning (by being taught in a different environment). At Fernbrook, the SBM had negotiated places for four students to join a Euro Camp basketball trip, free of charge as part of a contract for a mini-bus lease over the summer break. The SBM at Hamley had secured funding for a brand new suite of computers at the secondary thus improving IT provision for the students.

In a more indirect way the SBMs have contributed to the improvement agenda at their schools by freeing up their headteachers to focus more time and attention on the leadership of teaching and learning. For example, since the SBM’s appointment at Cross Vale, Ofsted had inspected the school and upgraded their ‘notice to improve’ rating to ‘satisfactory’. According to the headteacher, such an improvement could not have been possible without the SBM’s impact.

**Implications for discussion**

The findings illustrate the many ways in which the SBMs in this study are impacting positively on the students in their settings, both indirectly and directly. Further, all the SBMs who were involved in this research are passionate in their beliefs that the work they do is ultimately concerned with improving the educational experience, and raising the standards of achievement, of the students in their schools. As such, the animosity towards this burgeoning profession from those who perceive SBMs as a threat to education would appear, in this study at least, misplaced.

**6.6.5 Cultural impact**

There is evidence to support a cultural impact being made by the SBMs in this study. For instance, at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, the FBM has contributed towards a shift in the way support staff are perceived with their role more widely appreciated across the federation as a result of her work to raise the profile of this section of the workforce. The FBM has also strived to increase her own profile and helped engender a broader understanding of the purpose and benefits of a SBM amongst her colleagues. At Cross Vale, the SBM has played a key role in changing the attitudes of school stakeholders towards her role. As the first ever SBM at the school she has worked tirelessly to generate a school-wide
understanding of school business management and what it entails. Furthermore, the new systems and processes she has implemented to help improve the school, many of which were initially eyed with suspicion and animosity, have begun to reap positive results and a subsequent respect and appreciation amongst stakeholders for her role and the work she is doing for the school. According to the headteacher, the SBM has made a considerable contribution to the transformation of the collective mind-set at Cross Vale from one of negativity and failure to one of optimism and receptivity to change.

**Implications for discussion**

The evidence from these case studies suggests that some of the SBMs have influenced the organisational cultures of the schools and settings in which they operate. In particular, the positive and tangible impact they have made has helped shift attitudes towards their own role from colleagues who were initially unsure of its purpose while the actions taken by the SBMs to improve the working conditions and increase the profile of support staff in their schools has also led to changes both in the ways in which the support staff themselves understand their role and how this section of the school workforce is perceived by other stakeholders.

**6.7 Educational change**

There are numerous examples of educational change at the school-level within this research, resistance to which has created significant barriers to the effectiveness of the SBMs across many of the case studies, perhaps most prominently at Ainsworth and Cross Vale. These issues have been largely covered in sub-section 6.3 of this chapter during discussions of the barriers to the effectiveness of the SBM role. As such, this theme refers to the broader, system level educational change that is reflected in the findings, most notably the increase in inter-school collaboration, and the role of the SBM in such arrangements, and the changing role of the LA and subsequent implications for SBMs.
6.7.1 **Inter-school collaboration**

A number of schools within this research have entered into collaborative arrangements with other schools. While there are varying degrees of formality across such partnerships a common characteristic is the central role of the SBM in their inter-school collaborative arrangements. Ridge Lane and Carrbrook provide an example of a formal inter-school collaboration where the business manager has a key role, in this case the FBM is positioned on the FLT, alongside the executive headteacher and executive deputy, in a strategic leadership role operating across both schools in the federation. The schools at Crane Street had also decided to enter into a formal federation centred on shared governance, educational leadership and business management provision. Subsequently, the SBM in this case was now leading, managing and coordinating business management services across the schools in the federation. At Fernbrook, while their inter-school collaboration is more informal than the two federations, it is focused entirely on their SBM whose services they are providing to the smaller schools in their local area, schools that would otherwise be unable to afford such provision. The schools at the Hamley cluster share their SBM in much the same way.

**Implications for discussion**

These cases demonstrate how a SBM can provide a key means of inter-school collaboration and support schools to work together while saving money, streamlining operations and providing essential services to smaller schools. Yet effective collaboration requires conditions that were unfortunately lacking in the case of Ainsworth where attempts to establish a shared business management model were negated by a lack of coherence, shared understanding and a common purpose, essential elements of any collaboration.

6.7.2 **Changing role of the Local Authority (LA)**

This sub-theme relates to the role played by the LA, or middle tier of government, and the implications of its declining influence for some of the SBMs in this study. Towards the very end of this study the schools within the Crane
Street Federation were embarking on conversion to academy status effectively becoming financially autonomous and removing themselves from LA control and management. Subsequently, the SBM was setting up a new accounting system for the schools in the federation as they would now be responsible for all their own accounts, including HR, employment/recruitment and payment of salaries. In addition the SBM and her team would become responsible for sourcing the services previously provided by the LA. However, the SBM also voiced concerns over their preparedness for such financial and organisational self-sufficiency and the additional workload it would entail.

Conversely, many of the schools at both the Ainsworth and Hamley were resistant to the idea of a formal inter-school collaboration (e.g. academy trust, federation) with the secondary schools in their clusters as they still depended heavily on their LA for a significant number of services and were therefore reluctant to enter into a new arrangement that might potentially leave them more self-reliant.

**Implications for discussion**

In those areas where the middle tier has been gradually dismantled, or where a school decides to convert to an academy, it becomes the responsibility of the school to source the services previously provided by the LA. In such circumstances, the requirement of a qualified SBM to facilitate the provision of these services becomes crucial to a school or group of schools. While there remain some areas where the LA has a strong presence and a considerable influence over local education it remains a key priority of the current government to continue dismantling this middle tier of government creating conditions in which SBMs, and the financial, business and organisational acumen they provide, are increasingly in demand. But how prepared are schools and SBMs for such changes?

**6.8 Summary**

This chapter has provided a cross-case analysis of the findings that have emerged from the six case studies in this thesis. In doing so it has identified a
number of key themes that have arisen from the data as central influential factors surrounding nature and effectiveness of the SBM models in this study. The following chapter provides a deeper examination of these themes by exploring the implications for discussion in more detail and in the context of the academic research literature. It will also explore how far the evidence presented in these findings chapters has addressed the research questions guiding this thesis before offering some thoughts on possible avenues of further research in this area.
CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a deeper discussion of the key themes that have emerged from the findings in relation to the concepts discussed in the literature review and the research questions guiding the thesis. The chapter takes each of the four research questions in turn to consider the extent to which they have been addressed by the key themes and to also interpret these findings in the context of the existing academic research literature discussed in Chapter 2. A heuristic model that has been developed from on the findings is then presented as a means of stimulating further reflections on the implications of the study. The chapter then concludes by considering the implications of the findings for policy, practice and further research in the field of school business management.

The overarching aim of this thesis has been to explore the emerging practice of SBMs in the English school system. In order to achieve this aim, the study has been guided by the following four research questions:

RQ1: *What roles and responsibilities are SBMs undertaking within, between and beyond schools?*

RQ2: *How do school business managers exercise leadership and management within, between and beyond schools?*

RQ3: *What types of impact are SBMs having within, between and beyond schools?*

RQ4: *What are the facilitators and barriers associated with the development of successful models of school business management?*

In response to these questions the research has drawn on data collected from six case study sites encompassing background and contextual information and interviews with a range of stakeholders across a number of schools. The following sections discuss the key emerging themes from the findings chapters in
relation to each of the research questions guiding the thesis and interpret these themes in relation to the academic literature discussed in the second chapter.

7.2 Research Question 1

*What roles and responsibilities are SBMs undertaking within, between and beyond schools?*

7.2.1 *Breadth and depth of the SBM role*

There are areas of responsibility common to all of the SBMs in this research yet the role also varies considerably between case studies. Essentially, all the SBMs in this study have some level of responsibility for what might be considered fundamental aspects of school business management such as school finances; buildings, premises and site management; human resources; health and safety and; general clerical/administrative duties. However, the complexities of the role become evident when these responsibilities are explored in more depth across each case study site. For some SBMs, responsibility for school finances involves monitoring and managing the school budget whereas others are tasked with long-term financial planning, in some cases for a number of schools. While some SBMs spend a significant portion of their working day undertaking operational duties, others lead teams of support staff that cover such responsibility allowing them to play a more strategic role preparing financial and business plans, managing projects and sourcing additional funds and resources. A number of the SBMs in this research also have line-management responsibility for other staff members (i.e. administrative/finance assistants, lunchtime/catering staff, premises/site teams and, in some cases, TAs). Some work in a single school, others operate across more than one setting with one SBM lending her support to over 20 smaller schools in the surrounding area. Furthermore, their sphere of activity can also encompass projects and initiatives in the wider community while one SBM has even taken an additional regional advocacy post with the NCSL.
Aside from classroom teaching and the leading of the teaching and learning agenda, the SBMs in this study could collectively claim to have at least some involvement in virtually every aspect of the school operation. Such findings are in concert with those of Southworth (2010) who describes the ‘portfolio of responsibilities and skills’ held by SBMs ‘that supplement and complement those of other school leaders’ (pg. 3) and Coulbeck (2006) who also highlights the range of administrative, management and leadership responsibility now associated with the SBM role. The exponential growth of the SBM role is perhaps unsurprising given the steady increase in the diversity and volume of operational management responsibility associated with the headteacher role since the late 1980s (Bush, 2008), much of which has now been transferred to the SBM as a means of alleviating this administrative burden from headteachers thus allowing them to focus more of their attention on teaching and learning.

While there are discussions in the existing literature on the indirect influence of SBMs on school improvement (i.e. by alleviating and realigning headteacher workload) there is no mention of the more direct involvement that some SBMs are having in the teaching and learning agenda as is evidenced in this study. For instance, the FBM at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook had shadowed teachers during lesson observations and pupil progress reviews and had also been monitoring pupil data in a bid to increase her knowledge of classroom and teaching practice. This individual, along with her counterpart at Fernbrook had also talked about studying for the NPQH and the possibility that they might one day in a position to lead a school outright. On the one hand, while such a model may seem radical, it could also make sense from an organisational perspective given the increasing scale of the school operation and the need for headteachers to have the necessary time and space to focus primarily on the leadership of learning. On the other hand, from a cultural perspective, such a model may pose more of a challenge, particularly given the existing tensions between teachers feeling undermined by what they perceive as an increasing influence of non-teaching staff members on their profession (Woods, 2009). Such barriers would need to be addressed before an alternative school leadership model with a SBM at the helm could be initiated. Yet the very fact that such ideas are being proposed
illustrates the considerable breadth and depth of the SBM role as one that is not restricted to administrative and financial responsibility.

One possible explanation for such diversity could be the relative infancy of the role whereby SBMs are still trying to establish and position themselves within a rapidly shifting school system. As such, they are eager to prove themselves as key members of the educational workforce and are reluctant to apply boundaries to their role (Armstrong, 2012b). Whilst it is encouraging to see members of this fledgling profession playing a central role in their schools there are concerns regarding workload, work/life balance, sustainability of the role and possibly burnout. A recent survey of SBMs in England found the top three concerns of those working in this profession to be workload and associated stress (including issues related to work/life balance); demands of the job and; pay and conditions (including long and unpaid hours) (UNISON, 2012). The long, unsociable hours that some of the SBMs in this research claim to be working (for no extra financial remuneration) are not only worrying for them but also tinged with irony considering one of the key drivers behind the central government initiative to develop, professionalise and dramatically increase the numbers of SBMs was to help alleviate headteacher role strain (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2001). There is little doubt that the strong work ethic and commitment to the role provides the impetus for many of the SBMs in this study to work as hard as they do and in this sense the role is comparable to that of a headteacher. Yet, like a headteacher, if SBMs are working long hours in order to address their growing workload, this raises questions about succession planning and the sustainability of a role which might not be such an attractive proposition for an aspiring SBM. This is an area that has not been discussed within the existing research literature.

Another key influential factor relating to the breadth and depth of the SBM role is the phase and size of the organisation in which the SBM operate. Logically, those SBMs working in the secondary sector have a wider remit than their primary sector counterparts mainly because they are serving a larger organisation with more staff, more premises and buildings, more pupils and a bigger budget. Similarly, and unsurprisingly, SBMs working across more than
one school have more responsibility than those employed in a single setting. Furthermore, the large and/or multiple school settings often employ SBMs in high-level leadership positions and managing teams of business management staff to support them in their work. These individuals also have alternative positional labels such as Federation Business Manager or School Business Director. McKinsey and Co (2007) point out that the size and type of school in which a SBM operates is likely to strongly influence the composition of their role. They also outline four levels of school business management from a lower level administrative/operational role moving up to a SBM then Advanced SBM (ASBM) and finally SBD. Within the descriptions of the higher-level roles (ASBM and SBD) are the line management of support staff and operating across multiple sites (e.g. federations, academy Trusts), which is consistent with the roles occupied by the higher-level SBMs in this study.

Of course, the breadth and depth of the SBM role depends on a number of other factors (many of which will be explored throughout this chapter) yet it is clear even from the small sample of cases in this study that it varies substantially between schools.

7.2.2 Inter-school collaboration

There are examples of inter-school collaboration at all but one of the six original case studies within this research. While the nature, structure and formality of these arrangements differs between the case study sites, one characteristic they all have in common is a shared model of school business management albeit with varying degrees of success in relation to the effectiveness of such models. While some of the cases provide evidence of how a SBM can act as a conduit through which inter-school collaboration can be effectively achieved (e.g. Fernbrook, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, Crane Street), the Ainsworth cluster of schools demonstrates how the absence of important factors such as a coherent plan of action, a common understanding and shared purpose can be detrimental to inter-school collaboration. For example, the participants interviewed at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook highlighted the importance of having a collective agreement and shared vision for the leadership of the federation (including the key role of
the FBM) as being a vital ingredient to the effectiveness of their model. In contrast, the senior stakeholders at Ainsworth could not find a common agreement as to how their shared business management model would be structured or establish a shared understanding of the central purpose of their SBM. This proved disastrous for the model and highlighted the problems associated with inter-school collaboration where underlying tensions between such schools (and their leaders and governing bodies) exists. Inter-school collaboration is not a simple endeavour, its success depends on certain key conditions such as pre-existing collaborative cultures, well-defined structures, clear roles and expectations for all those involved, and strong leadership; conditions that take time to nurture and establish (Ainscow et al., 2006; Atkinson et al., 2007). Similarly, from an educational change perspective, Fullan (2001) underscores the importance of addressing cultural barriers (i.e. existing relationships and values) before reform initiatives can be successful. At Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, Fernbrook and Crane Street many of these conditions were present. Sadly, it appeared they were lacking in abundance at Ainsworth much to the detriment of their shared business management model. Ainscow et al. (2006) differentiate between voluntary, incentivised and forced (by way of circumstance) inter-school collaboration. The more successful collaborative arrangements in this study came together voluntarily and were based on existing relations between schools that had been fostered and strengthened over time. At Ainsworth, they were incentivised by a governmental initiative that provided a financial reward for their collaboration yet their existing relations were weak, based on a history of mistrust and animosity.

There is emerging evidence to suggest that school-to-school collaboration can have a positive impact on student outcomes (Chapman and Muijs, 2013) while current government education policy, designed around the development of a self-improving system with an expectation that schools will increasingly work in partnership with one another, implies that inter-school collaboration will become a prominent feature of the English school system. As such, SBMs may well have a central role to play in such partnerships as they have done in many of these case studies. Furthermore, as Muijs et al. (2011) suggest, schools facing
challenging circumstances such as those in rural areas with fewer pupil numbers and lower organisational capacity are increasingly looking to enter into partnerships with neighbouring schools to facilitate sustainability. Such situations are compounded in those regions where LA capacity has decreased and schools are effectively left to source for themselves the services previously provided by this middle tier of government (see 7.2.3 below). In these circumstances, access to shared business management expertise can be crucial for schools to continue operating effectively, as the evidence from this study illustrates. In this sense at least, the current educational policy landscape can be viewed as one that is favourable to the on-going growth of the SBM role and profession implying that the role will continue to develop beyond the confines of a single school to one that is increasingly operating between groups of schools. These findings are aligned with those of Woods et al (2013) who highlight the benefits of school-to-school business management partnerships as an alternative to models of inter-school collaboration based on educational expertise and Mertkan (2011) who sees the SBM role as a potential means of inter-school collaboration and partnership between schools and other agencies. However, while the majority of cases in this study highlight the benefits of shared business management within an inter-school collaborative arrangement the Ainsworth case also illustrates that such partnerships should not be entered into lightly. Rather, the key conditions for successful collaboration suggested by Ainscow et al, (2006) should be heeded to ensure any collaboration is sustainable, meaningful and mutually beneficial to all partners.

7.2.3 Changing role of the Local Authority
The means by which the school system in England is being re-structured has direct consequences for the SBM role. In particular the erosion of the middle tier of government across many regions has left many LAs with reduced capacity and unable to offer the previous level of financial and organisational provision to schools (Gunter, 2011). Simultaneously, the expansion of the academies programme under the current government has led to an exponential growth in the number of schools in England converting to academy status (DfE, 2013a). Having become an academy, schools have the freedom to set their own pay and
conditions for staff members; have more flexibility around the curriculum they deliver and; can alter the length of the term and school day. Academies are also effectively removed (or freed) from LA management instead receiving their funding directly from the government’s Education Funding Agency (EFA) (DfE, 2012c) meaning they are increasingly reliant on the services of suitably qualified staff members to manage their finances and operations effectively and source the services and provision previously supplied by the LA. Yet there are question marks over how well prepared schools and SBMs are for these changes. Following analysis of SBM recruitment advertisements Lester (2012) suggests that, as schools have increased their financial autonomy, accountancy has become a more central element of the role and that this could have implications for many existing and aspiring SBMs whose skill set may fall short of such expertise. Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that workload has both increased and become more complex for SBMs operating in schools that have converted to academy status (UNISON, 2012). Indeed the SBM at Crane Street, the only one of the case study sites to have converted to an academy, highlighted the potential challenge of establishing new accounting procedures and the extra work this would involve for herself and the other members of the business management team following their federation-wide conversion to academy status. The smaller schools in the Ainsworth cluster were resistant to the idea of a formal collaborative arrangement (e.g. academy Trust, federation) with the secondary schools in their cluster. One of the reasons for this was a reluctance to leave the control and ‘comfort blanket’ of their LA and the services it provides. Similarly, at Hamley the SBM explained that the schools in their cluster still relied heavily on their LA for a significant number of services and were therefore reluctant to enter into a new arrangement that might potentially leave them more self-reliant. As more schools convert to Academies and the role of the LA continues to decline one would expect the demand for SBMs to increase and the role to develop further into one that is central to schools becoming more financially and organisationally autonomous. As such, it will be necessary to ensure that current and aspiring SBMs have the capacity and knowledge to assume these new responsibilities effectively, an issue also highlighted by Lester,
(2012), but one that has been paid little attention in the academic research literature.

7.3 Research Question 2

RQ2: *How do school business managers exercise leadership and management within, between and beyond schools?*

7.3.1 Leadership and management

The ways in which the SBMs in this study exercise leadership and management is linked to the status of their role and level at which they operate in their school(s). Those SBMs in higher status positions tend to have more leadership responsibility than counterparts in lower status positions whose responsibility is more management oriented. However, the level at which the SBM role is positioned is also dependent on other factors such as the extent to which the headteacher advocates for the SBM role and the organisational capacity and size of their school.

Kotter (2013) describes management as a collection of processes such as planning, budgeting, resourcing, measuring performance and problem solving that support an organisation to operate predictably. This description of management is consistent with others (Grint, 2005; McKay, 2006) and encompasses, quite accurately, much of what constitutes the role of the SBMs in this study, most of whom are tasked with managing and maintaining established processes and systems to ensure the smooth and effective operation of their schools. As such, it is clear that the SBMs in this research are all exercising management as part of their role which ‘in organizations of any size and complexity ... this is an enormously difficult task ... management is crucial’ (Kotter, 2013, p. 1). The fact that these SBMs all have management responsibility is also consistent with the notion that management in schools has increased exponentially over the last 25 years as schools have become more operationally independent (Bush, 2008), a point discussed in more detail in sub-section 7.2.1.
According to McKay (2006), where management concerns ‘controlling complex processes, leadership is about challenging the existing ways of doing things and setting new directions for the organisation’ (p.1). Others such as Glatter (2004) and Hazy, Goldstein and Lichtenstein (2007) also underscore the enactment of change as a central component of leadership whereas management is more synonymous with maintaining the status quo. In this sense there is evidence that the SBMs in this research are also exercising leadership in their roles. For instance, the SBM at Cross Vale has introduced a range of new systems and processes to improve areas of the school operation from their accounting procedures to their catering arrangements. She had also established new performance management structures and professional development arrangements for the support staff in her school, comments that also apply to the FBM at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook and the SBM at Fernbrook. In relation to the changes to systems and structures for support staff, there is evidence to suggest that the SBMs are enacting moral leadership (Sergiovanni, 1992; Greenfield, 2004) driven by their values and beliefs surrounding this section of the school workforce (see sub-section 7.4.3). According to these understandings of leadership, by establishing and initiating such changes based on their own professional experience and knowledge these SBMs are exercising leadership across those aspects of the school for they are responsible.

Aldridge (2008) identifies three levels of SBM seniority according to the nature of management responsibility and which are helpful when thinking about the responsibilities of the participants in this study. For instance, the single school SBM at Carrbrook is perhaps most junior of all the SBMs in this study yet she has line management responsibility for a small number of support staff, what Aldridge terms ‘operational supervision’ (e.g. overseeing people working on a task). The SBM at Cross Vale also has line management responsibility but for a much greater number of personnel equating to all non-teaching staff members at her school while managing many different areas of provision in the process. Aldridge refers to this as ‘tactical management’ (i.e. actively managing one or more specific areas of provision). The SBMs at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, Crane Street and Fernbrook have staff members who undertake their ‘tactical
management’ enabling them to operate at a more senior level, overseeing the operational management of the school whilst focusing their attention on strategic planning (e.g. of finances, projects etc.). While Aldridge labels this type of work ‘strategic management’ (i.e. focusing on strategy only), the SBMs and their headteachers certainly also see it as leadership. For example, the headteacher at Fernbrook believes his SBM ‘represents my equivalent in terms of a number of areas of school practice’ (p. 194) while the executive headteacher at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook describes her FBM as being ‘strategic in thinking about the future, the vision, the direction, not only of the business functions but how that benefits and impacts on the teaching and learning’ (p. 128). It is also noteworthy that, aside from the single school SBM at Carrbrook, all the SBMs in this study are full-time members of their SLTs suggesting they are playing a more active role in the leadership of the schools in which they operate.

Rost’s (1998) interpretation of leadership and management provides an alternative lens through which to understand how much and in what ways the SBMs in this study are exercising these two concepts. According to Rost, leadership and management can be distinguished via the nature of the relationships between the individual in question and their colleagues. On the one hand, leaders exert influence and are also influenced by their colleagues in a unidirectional relationship. On the other hand, managers exert authority over subordinates in a one directional relationship. Many of the SBMs in this study exert authority through their line management of non-teaching staff members ensuring these individuals fulfil their duties as expected which, by Rost’s interpretation makes them managers rather than leaders. However, these SBMs are all members of their respective SLTs and subsequently exert varying degrees of influence over their headteachers and fellow senior leaders who seek their non-educationalist, business management perspective and advice on issues surrounding the organization and operation of their school(s). By Rost’s definition, these SBMs are therefore also exercising leadership through the influential nature of their working relationships with the other senior leaders. To date, there have been no attempts within the exiting literature to explore the ways in which SBMs are exercising leadership in their schools.
Where there is evidence to suggest that the SBMs in this study are exercising leadership there are also some common contributory factors that are worthy of further discussion. For instance, those SBMs who occupy higher status positions or are afforded more influence within their settings are all fully supported by a headteacher who is a keen advocate of the SBM role and profession viewing it as central to the effectiveness of their school(s). This is demonstrated and emphasised further through the models of distributed leadership under which these SBMs are operating whereby the headteacher has taken a ‘collective approach to capacity building’ (Harris, 2005, p.7) by handing leadership tasks to several staff members including, in the case of this study, handing responsibility for non-teaching aspects of the school operation to their SBM. Many of the headteachers in this study such as the individuals at Cross Vale, Fernbrook and Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, are in accord with Spillane et al (2001) in the sense that the volume and diversity of their own role and the complexity of their school’s operation has increased and diversified to the extent that they freely admit they are unable to function effectively without the presence of a SBM to whom they have subsequently and willingly distributed leadership responsibility. The headteachers at these three case study sites in particular are also keen advocates of the role and its place in the school system, something they expressed explicitly throughout the interviews. At Crane Street, the executive headteacher understands and appreciates the worth of a qualified SBM. Yet, she was more cautious when asked about the continued growth of the role and less willing to relinquish some of the business management decision-making that her contemporaries at some of the other case studies have done. As such, her SBM has less influence within her setting than the FBM at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook and the SBMs at Cross Vale and Fernbrook. Within the literature, no attention has been paid to the link between the level of headteacher advocacy for the SBM role and the level at which SBMs are operating. Although it is difficult to imagine a scenario where the SBM could occupy a high-level position without the support of their headteacher, the findings from this study suggest the level of such support can dictate the status and influence of the SBM role.
The evidence from these case studies suggests that headteacher advocacy for the SBM role is not the only factor in the level at which the SBM operates, the status and influence of their role and the extent to which they can exercise leadership. The school must also have the organisational capacity to justify a high-level SBM. At the single primary school case study, Cross Vale, the headteacher may be a strong advocate of the SBM and the SBM herself may have the opportunity to exercise some leadership, but because of the size and capacity of their school, they do not require her to operate at the same level as the SBMs at the larger secondary or multi-school case study settings. As such, despite being handed a certain degree of strategic leadership responsibility, the SBM at Cross Vale must also spend a considerable proportion of her time fulfilling operational duties whereas the larger case study sites have more of a requirement for, and more capacity to support, a high-level SBM position. Such findings are aligned with Aldridge (2008) who conducted research to explore how SBMs might compliment distributed leadership. He identified a higher percentage of SBMs working at a strategic and distributed/outsourced level in the secondary sector where schools are larger operations with more pupils on roll and more resource to manage. However, his findings also suggest that the number of SBMs in the primary sector operating at a strategic level is increasing ‘reflecting the scope to reorganise the senior roles in primary schools’ (p. 16). This is consistent with the SBM at the primary setting at Cross Vale who is a member of their SLT.

Related to the last point is the capacity of the school to support the growth and development of the SBM role. The establishment of the federations at both Ridge Lane and Carrbrook and Crane Street created space for their SBM to operate at a strategic leadership level. Similarly, the on-going and increasing inter-school partnership work between Fernbrook and their local primary schools has enabled their SBM to develop her role from a single site SBM to one that operates across a number of schools. Conversely, the smaller operation at Cross Vale has restricted the level at which they are able to position their SBM, a point raised by their headteacher who acknowledged that her SBM might have to move on to another setting in order to fulfil her professional ambition, comments echoed by the SBM herself. Similarly, the SBM at Hamley made reference to the paucity of
strategic leadership opportunities associated with working in a relatively small secondary school of around 700 pupils. As with the SBM at Cross Vale, he felt he would eventually have to move to a larger setting to fulfil his professional ambitions. Again, there is little in the way of exiting literature surrounding the capacity of schools to support the growth and development of the SBM role.

In short, it appears that the SBMs in this research are exercising both leadership and management to varying degrees in their roles while the extent of this responsibility is influenced considerably by the size of their school and the attitude of the headteacher toward the SBM role (and the amount of responsibility they are subsequently willing to relinquish and distribute to their SBM).

7.4 Key themes addressing RQ3

RQ3: What types of impact are SBMs having within, between and beyond schools?

7.4.1 Impact on headteacher

The findings from this study highlight a number of ways in which the SBM can have a positive impact on the role and workload of the headteacher. Consequently, it could be argued that SBMs are providing a means of alleviating recurring concerns over the recruitment and retention and possible future shortages of headteachers as it was hoped they would back in 2001 when the New Labour Government first initiated a national training programme for bursars (BBC, 2001). Across the case study sites, the headteachers interviewed describe the role played by their SBMs in reducing their bureaucratic and administrative workload and allowing them to focus on their core purpose of leading teaching and learning. Even the headteachers from the smaller schools at the Ainsworth Cluster, who could not agree on the best way to utilise their shared SBM and who were also unsure as to the potential of the role, admitted to being appreciative of the support of an individual who undertake some of the organisational management tasks within their schools. Other research has
identified that a suitably qualified SBM can save up to 31% of headteacher time by taking on administrative tasks, financial management and long-term strategic planning (McKinsey and Co, 2007; PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2010) though it ought to be pointed out that none of the headteachers in this study claimed to have had their workload reduced by their SBM, rather they felt it had been re-aligned and re-prioritised. Conversely, research by Oplatka (2004) suggests that some headteachers are actually reluctant to relinquish their operational management duties as this can often provide a welcome distraction from their teaching and learning responsibilities. This is consistent with evidence from Ainsworth cluster whereby the SBM felt that some of the headteachers were quite happy to retain the administrative elements of their role rather than delegate this to another staff member. This would suggest that the level of impact and influence a SBM can have on the headteacher role is again related to the organisational capacity of the school, a factor that also influences the breadth and depth of SBM responsibility (see 7.2.1) and the level and status of the SBM role (see 7.3.1).

Nevertheless, what is clear from the majority of these case studies is that the volume and diversity of work associated with leading a school, particularly the larger and/or multi-site settings, has become too much for a single individual (see also Gronn, 2003; Bristow et al, 2007; Thomson, 2009). By their own admission, the headteachers in this study do not possess the requisite financial or business acumen to effectively manage these aspects of their school operation. As such, the services and support of a qualified SBM is of significant benefit not only to the headteachers themselves but also in relation to succession planning and the attractiveness of the headteacher role for aspiring leaders. As the executive deputy at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook explained, she would not be willing to take on a headship in the future unless there was a qualified SBM in post. This is consistent with research by Woods et al (2012) who identify evidence of the positive influence of SBMs on school leader succession planning in making the headteacher role more appealing to future school leaders.
7.4.2 Financial impact

The financial impacts made by the SBMs in this study have been manifested in various ways. They have made monetary savings through sourcing improved contracts with suppliers of existing services such as catering (e.g. Cross Vale) and grounds maintenance (e.g. Crane Street). They have taken advantage of economies of scale to source shared services between schools (e.g. Fernbrook). They have also generated resources through bidding for grants to secure funding for different areas of provision such as IT suites (Fernbrook) and a new outdoor learning environment (Cross Vale). Perhaps the largest financial impact in this study has been made by the SBM at Cross Vale who, according to the headteacher, had generated and saved more than enough money to cover her own salary in her first year in post whilst restructuring the school finances so that the school was on target to move out of the negative deficit they were in before she was appointed and regain control of their budget from the LA. The financial impact that SBMs can make in schools has been well documented in the literature and has been a key driver and justification for successive government support for the growth and professionalization of school business management via national initiatives and training and development programmes (see DCSF, 2009; Southworth, 2010; PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2010). However, the headteachers and SBMs in this research were keen to underline that the main beneficiaries of the financial impact made by their SBMs were the pupils through improvements to school facilities and an increase in resources as a result of the work of the SBMs. Yet, while such financial benefits are clearly positive and welcome there is also ‘an inherent danger that school business management comes to be understood solely as a means of cost reduction and income generation’ (Woods et al, 2012, p. 3), sentiments also echoed by Wood et al (2007) and Woods (2009). This was certainly the case at Ainsworth Cluster where some of the headteachers and governing bodies of the smaller schools had a rather narrow conception of the SBM role believing it to be chiefly concerned with accessing funds and bringing money into the school therefore failing to grasp the wider potential and purpose of a SBM. Indeed, as Southworth (2010) explains, the title of School Business Manager was introduced as a more accurate reflection of a role that was no longer chiefly concerned with financial
monitoring and management as the previous moniker of school bursar had depicted.

7.4.3 Impact on support staff

A common theme running through the cases in this study is the SBM taking a wider responsibility for the support staff in their settings. While at most of the case study sites, the SBM has assumed line management responsibility for non-teaching staff members as a normal part of their role they have also voluntarily widened their responsibility to champion this section of the school workforce. For example, the SBMs across all four of the case study sites described in Chapter 5 have established systems of performance management, appraisal and professional development for the support staff in their schools while the SBM at Hamley reviewed the contractual arrangements of the support staff at the secondary school to improve the terms and conditions under which they had previously been employed (terms and conditions described by the headteacher as unacceptable). Moreover, the SBMs have taken such steps via their own initiative and in addition to their obligatory support staff line management responsibility. As a result, the members of support staff across the case study sites have seen improvements to their working conditions, an increase in opportunities for professional learning and a heightening of their profile within the workplace. As the executive headteacher at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook explained, her FBM has worked tirelessly to raise the profile of the school office staff so that they are no longer regarded as ‘the ladies on the front desk’ but appreciated for their role in the wider operation of the federation.

Examining these findings through a leadership lens, allows the action taken by the SBMs in this study to improve the working conditions of support staff to be interpreted in a number of ways. For example, as discussed in sub-section 7.3.1, by introducing new systems and structures for the benefit of support staff the SBMs in this study are exercising leadership by changing existing processes and challenging the status quo in their schools (McKay, 2006; Kotter, 2013). Also, research by Day et al (2009) highlights the establishment and implementation of performance management systems as a key leadership strategy undertaken by
successful headteachers, particularly in the early phases of school improvement. When applied to this study, the similar actions of the SBMs could also be interpreted as leadership strategies. Furthermore, the fact that improving the working conditions of the support staff has been a key priority for the SBMs in this study and something they have strived to address independently of their core duties suggests they feel a moral obligation to support this section of the school workforce. The reasons for this are not entirely clear though many of the SBMs in this study have followed a career path starting out as support staff in schools and rising through the ranks to their current positions. As such they perhaps feel a responsibility to use their status and influence to improve the working conditions and provide opportunities for this section of the workforce whose position they were once in. Whatever their motivations, the SBMs clearly have strong principles surrounding the support staff and feel a duty of care to ensure they are supported professionally, have access to the same developmental opportunities as other members of the school workforce and that their role in the school operation is understood and appreciated. In this sense, they are exercising leadership from a moral perspective, whereby their principles are providing a key source of motivation for their actions and are enacted through the systems and structures they have established for the support staff in their schools (Sergiovanni, 1992; Greenfield, 2004). The existing literature on SBMs pays little attention to their impact on support staff in schools or their motivations for championing this section of the school workforce, focusing instead on their influence on headteacher workload and school finances.

7.4.4 Impact on students
All the SBMs involved in this research study felt strongly about their role in improving the educational experience and helping to raise standards of attainment of the students in their schools. While they understand that a great deal of this impact is indirect (e.g. reducing the headteacher’s administrative workload or saving the school money which could then be spent on resources) they nevertheless believe they are playing a key role in supporting the core purpose of their school to provide the best possible education for their students.
The findings suggest that their impact on students is not unsubstantial. For instance, the headteacher at Cross Vale, who had appointed her SBM as part of a drastic school improvement plan following a poor Ofsted rating, was in no doubt as to the impact her SBM had made in helping to turn around the fortunes of the school. In her first year in post, the SBM had improved the catering provision, restructured the school accounts system (reducing their deficit significantly) and successfully bid for a number of grants to spend on school projects and resources. Following a subsequent inspection and an improved Ofsted rating, the headteacher credited a substantial portion of this improvement to the work of her SBM suggesting she had changed the negative culture of the school and allowed her to spend more time in the classroom improving teaching and learning. Evidence of similar impacts can be found across other case study sites in this research, some of this indirect such as sourcing funds to have a classroom roof fixed (Hamley) and some direct such as negotiating a placement for pupils to attend a summer sports camp (Fernbrook). There is little evidence in the research literature relating to SBM impact on students, though findings from the large-scale evaluation of a national initiative to develop the SBM role (SBMDPP discussed in Chapter 3) highlighted the positive impact made by SBMs on student outcomes albeit indirectly through reducing the administrative workload of the headteacher (University of Manchester, 2010). The fact that any impact the SBM is able to have on the students within their school is likely to be indirect is not surprising given their role is not directly concerned with teaching and learning. Nevertheless, the evidence from these case studies highlights that a qualified SBM can have a tangible positive impact on students in a plethora of ways and further underscores the importance of the role in the wider educational agenda. Furthermore, as highlighted above, there was a strong sense from all the SBMs in this study that they were motivated by the same beliefs as their teaching counterparts, namely to improve the educational experience and outcomes of their students. This then suggests that the animosity felt by some of the SBMs from stakeholders wary of a perceived threat to their profession (e.g. Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, Fernbrook) is misplaced. Woods (2009) draws similar conclusions from her own interviews with SBMs concluding that ‘the two stereotypical perspectives of teachers defending their privileges versus that of
business management as destructive of professional cultures’ was wholly inaccurate, rather SBMs perceived their role ‘working ‘alongside and behind’ the headteacher, rather than in front’ and were ‘not in favour of schools being taken over by ‘pen-pushers’’(p. 11).

7.4.5 Cultural impact
Collectively considering these different areas of school provision within which the SBMs in this study have made an impact, is it feasible to argue that they have influenced the organisational culture of the schools in which they operate? According to Schein (2004) at the surface level of an organisations culture sit the artifacts, the visible structures and processes that ensure the organisation operates effectively. While one cannot infer a great deal about the culture of an organisation from such surface level procedures they do influence how members behave. For example, the findings from this study suggest how the ways in which the SBMs have changed existing processes and established new systems of operating have influenced, to a certain degree, the behaviour of their colleagues and the ways in which their schools operate. For example, through introducing new pathways for professional learning and performance management and updating contractual arrangements for support staff (see 7.4.2); restructuring accounting procedures; sourcing new catering providers (e.g. Cross Vale) and relieving the headteacher of their administrative burden allowing them to realign and reprioritise their workload (e.g. Cross Vale, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, Fernbrook). While the procedural changes described do not singularly account for cultural change, it can be argued that the behavioural shifts resulting from these new processes have become embedded and gradually led to deeper cultural shifts in attitudes and beliefs across the case study sites. Change at this level, what Schein (2004) refers to as basic underlying assumptions and what Owens and Steinhoff (1989) label norms and assumptions, is harder and takes longer to achieve yet is ultimately more meaningful, sustainable and cultural. This is because such norms represent the shared beliefs of the organisational membership and dictate what is deemed acceptable and appropriate. The assumptions then underpin these norms and constitute what is held to be true and false by members (Owens and Steinhoff,
1989) which, in essence, is the heart of organisational culture (Schein, 2004). For instance, in the process of making a positive and tangible impact across their schools, many of the SBMs have altered perceptions of colleagues from initial uncertainty of their role and scepticism of their status and responsibility to acceptance, understanding and appreciation of their important function in the school (e.g. Cross Vale, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook), issues qualified by O'Sullivan et al (2000). They have also changed inaccurate perceptions of support staff by raising the profile of this section of the workforce so that their role in the school operation is more widely appreciated and understood (e.g. Ridge Lane and Carrbrook). Moreover, they have changed the ways in which the support staff see their own role in school, providing them with better contracts, structured career and professional development opportunities and regular meetings to provide them with a louder voice in the running of the school (e.g. Cross Vale, Crane Street, Hamley). Consequently, the both support staff themselves and the other members of the school workforce have a greater awareness of the importance of their role. In both instances, what was previously held to be appropriate and acceptable, true and false (i.e. the norms and assumptions held by organisational members) have been altered by the SBM and work they have done. In this sense, they have influenced the organisational culture of their schools. The notion of SBMs contributing to cultural change in their schools is one that has not been discussed in the wider research literature.

The role of the headteacher, as the school leader, in this process should not be underplayed as in every case it is they who have facilitated cultural change by employing their SBM, handing them enough autonomy to create meaningful change and, perhaps most importantly, supporting them through this process which, for many of the SBMs, has been challenging (e.g. Cross Vale, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook). This is consistent with the work of (Peterson and Deal, 1998; Schein, 2004; Sashkin and Wahlberg, 1993) that recognises the role of the headteacher in shaping the culture of the school and Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) who describe the school leader as an 'initiator' that works collaboratively with their staff and other school stakeholders to support, monitor and reinforce cultural change.
7.5 Key themes addressing RQ4

RQ4: What are the facilitators and barriers associated with the development of successful models of school business management?

7.5.1 Working relationships

A key component in the facilitation of effective models of school business management in this study is the nature of the relationship between the SBM and the headteacher. As discussed in the sub-section on cultural impact (see 7.4.5), the support of the headteacher for the SBM is particularly crucial in alleviating some of the challenges associated with the acceptance and embedding of the SBM role in schools. At Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, the FBM and executive headteacher enjoy a very close relationship having worked with one another for a number of years. Similar, sentiments also apply to the SBM and headteacher at Fernbrook while the SBM and headteacher at Cross Vale, despite both having been in post for a short time, had clearly developed a strong and healthy working relationship during that time. Again, there is little in the way of existing literature that draws attention to or attempts to explore the working relationship between the headteacher and the SBM.

Rost’s (1998) perspectives on leadership are helpful in interpreting these relations in the context of the effectiveness of the SBM. As highlighted earlier (see 7.3.1) a leadership relationship is multi-directional and based on mutual influence (rather than coercion which characterises management) whereby leaders influence their followers but also influence, and are influenced by, other leaders in an organisation. For example, the headteachers at Fernbrook and Cross Vale and the executive headteacher at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook all spoke of being comfortable with their SBMs making decisions based on their professional knowledge without having the need or desire for micromanagement. Moreover, the headteacher at Fernbrook describes the SBM as his advisor in the non-educational areas of the school function. In this sense, the mutual regard and respect that characterises the professional relations between
the SBMs and the headteachers in this study serves to strengthen the claim that the SBMs are exercising leadership. Furthermore, by trusting in the expertise and knowledge of their SBM, the headteacher is not only breeding confidence in them but also sending a strong message to the other school stakeholders that the SBM has a crucial role to play in the operation of the school and that they are fully supported by the headteacher in doing so. In turn, these factors serve to facilitate successful models of school business management. Conversely, at Ainsworth an absence of faith and confidence in the SBM from many of the headteachers and senior stakeholders would turn out to be key contributory factors to the failure of this shared business management model.

7.5.2 SBM profile
Findings from these case studies suggest that for the SBM to be able to fulfil their potential, become accepted as a valued member of the school workforce and to be effective in their duties, the other school stakeholders must have a clear understanding of the SBM role, its purpose and potential. Many of the SBMs in this research have sought to achieve this by focusing on raising their profile within, between and beyond their schools and taking steps to break down any cultural barriers such as a lack of understanding, or appreciation of the merits, of the role (see also 7.5.4). This has been achieved in a number of ways. For instance, the FBM at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook ensures she is present at the start and end of the school day so as to interact and maintain a visible presence with the parents and pupils at the federation who have subsequently become more familiar with her and her role. At Fernbrook, the SBM has taken the lead in the inter-school collaborative arrangement working across several schools in the community to provide them with business management support while at her own school she has worked with a range of stakeholders on different projects including students and teachers. As such, she is a well-known figure within her school and between other schools. At Cross Vale, the SBM perhaps had to work hardest to build her profile being the first SBM at the school and having been appointed at a difficult time. As such, she has had to make to tough decisions and bring about considerable change, much of which was initially met with animosity. However, despite this she has endeavoured to work with all
stakeholders and the wider community to help improve the school and turn around its fortunes. As her role has become more widely understood and her profile has risen, her job has become easier as she is now supported rather than challenged. While some of the SBM literature highlights the lack of a wider understanding of the role within schools (Wood, 2006; Woods, 2009; Southworth, 2010) there is no discussion raising the profile of the SBM amongst other school stakeholders.

A key factor in the raising of the SBM profile for the majority of participants in this study has been their membership of the SLT and status and influence of their role within their schools. Aside from the single school SBM at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook and the SBM at Ainsworth, all the SBMs in this study have a presence amongst the senior leaders at their respective schools and all have a relatively high status position in terms of responsibility (see 7.3.1). This has helped substantially as they build their professional profiles amongst the other influential members of the school leadership team. As with the cultural influence discussed previously (see 7.4.5), the role of the headteacher is important here as it is they who have taken the decision to appoint their SBM to the SLT and position them in a senior role, sometimes, as in the case of Cross Vale and Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, in the face of opposition from other stakeholders. From an educational change perspective, the elevation and rise to prominence of the SBM role in schools is symptomatic of wider shifts in the ways in which schools are structured and operate. As they become larger and more complex operations with increasing financial and organisational capacity and responsibility so the role of the SBM has become more crucial to schools. Many of the headteachers in this study realised this and consequently employed a SBM and handed them decision-making responsibility highlighting the important role of the headteacher in initiating and leading change (Griffiths and O’Neill, 2000). However, the headteachers must also manage this wider change in the context of the other staff members, some of whom, in this study, have taken a little longer to understand the rationale for appointing a SBM particularly at such an influential position. According to Fullan (2001), such cultural barriers (i.e. existing values and beliefs) can inhibit the process of change in schools.
Similarly, James (2009a) highlights social defences, the protective behaviours assumed by organisational members in response to undesirable feelings that threaten their identity and values. These cognitive obstacles must be addressed before the change initiative is fully effective, as was the case at Cross Vale where the SBM has only began to fully realise her potential once her colleagues began to understand the purpose of her role and witness the positive impact she was able to make. As Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) assert, generating a critical mass of school stakeholders who support the change is vital to its success and continuation which leads us back to the importance of the SBM profile amongst their colleagues. This also illustrates the inter-connectedness of change and culture in schools whereby any successful change initiative must account for the culture of the organization to understand, infiltrate and alter the behaviour of its members (Lieberman, 1998).

7.5.3 Professional ambition

Many of the SBMs in this study are ambitious individuals who have worked very hard to reach their current positions but who also believe they can continue to improve, develop and expand their roles. For instance, the SBM at Cross Vale spoke about extending her work across other schools in the locality whilst the FBM at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook suggested she would like to study for the NPQH in the near future (with a view to one day leading a school outright). The headteacher at Fernbrook made similar comments about his SBM and the notion that he would be receptive to an alternative model of school leadership with both an educational and business manager at the helm. According to Coulbeck (2006) the number of SBMs completing professional training is a sign of a growing profession. It might also be argued that this is compounded by the fact that school business management is still in its relative infancy whereby one might expect a considerable volume of individuals quickly working their way through this newly established professional pathway. Another related factor is the notion that the role of the SBM, at least from the findings in this study, appears to be one without clear boundaries. Being a relatively new role in schools and considering the wide range of responsibility that the role can encompass (see 7.2.1) there is a sense that it is almost a role without limits.
whereby schools and SBMs have yet to fully comprehend the outer limits of the SBM sphere of activity (see also Armstrong, 2012b). This has created conditions where ambitious SBMs can almost create their own roles based on the diversity and volume of responsibility they are willing and able to undertake. Yet for all the positive aspects associated with this growing profession, this also raises serious questions surrounding sustainability. When the work ethic, drive and ambition of a SBM allows them to develop their role into one which involves working long, unsociable hours and taking on more work than they can be paid for (e.g. Cross Vale, Fernbrook), what happens when they decide to leave their post? Is it realistic to expect a new candidate to work in the same way? This also relates to the breadth and depth of the SBM role and the implications for workload, burnout and sustainability (discussed sub-section 7.2.1), an issue also raised by Armstrong (2012b) and UNISON (2012). Moreover, it is the strong view of the executive headteacher at Crane Street that the SBM role is in danger of growing too large, certainly in terms of the level of responsibility that is implied by the more advanced SBM qualifications offered by the NCSL, and that there is neither space or requirement in the school system for such roles given that much of this responsibility is, and should always be, the headteachers.

7.5.4 Common understanding/acceptance of the role
The main barrier to the effectiveness of the models of school business management to emerge from this study is a lack of understanding and acceptance of the SBM role. As highlighted in sub-section 7.52, there remain cultural barriers to the SBM role from some school stakeholders, some of whom do not fully understand the function of the role and others who perceive it as a peripheral position, what the headteacher at Fernbrook referred to as ‘professional snobbery’. At Ridge Lane and Carrbrook, the FBM had faced animosity from some colleagues who were uncertain of her status in the federation given her non-teaching background while the SBM at Cross Vale had faced similar attitudinal challenges from staff members, an issue reinforced by her occupying a brand new role in the school and also being elevated to the SLT. At Ainsworth, the absence of a shared vision and common purpose regarding the ways in which they would utilise their shared SBM and the purpose of the role
created barriers that could not be addressed and a stalemate ensued whereby headteachers could not even be persuaded to meet for discussion. As a result the SBM was unproductive and eventually the model failed resulting in him leaving his post. This lack of a common understanding and acceptance of the role was cited as a source of frustration by many of the SBMs in this study who reported feeling under-appreciated by colleagues for the work they do in schools. This is an issue substantiated in the school business management literature suggesting it remains a relatively widespread concern (Woods, 2009; Southworth, 2010; UNISON, 2012; Woods et al, 2012; Woods et al, 2013). This lack of recognition and understanding of the SBM role can also extend beyond the school as in the case of Ridge Lane and Carrbrook where their LA do not formally recognise the FBM role as a leadership position equivalent to that of a qualified teacher and which has subsequently led to a dispute over salary. Southworth (2010) points to the inconsistencies between LAs in their understanding and recognition of the SBM role as a barrier to its implementation and effectiveness.

As with discussions surrounding inter-school collaboration (7.2.3) and the SBM profile (7.5.1), one of the key factors in the successful establishment, implementation and sustainability of a change initiative (be it a process, structure or role) is the collective support and understanding of the stakeholders involved (Fullan and Stigelbauer; 1991) and a clarity of purpose surrounding the initiative (Ainscow et al, 2006; Atkinson et al, 2007). In those cases where this was achieved, at least by the majority of stakeholders, the model of school business management tended to be more successful. Conversely, where there has been a lack of understanding and acceptance of the SBM role, it has taken the SBM longer to embed their position and subsequently make a positive impact in their school, or in the case of Ainsworth, struggle to make any impact at all. While many of the SBMs in this study addressed these challenges by raising their profiles in their schools (see 7.5.1), the evidence from this study suggests there is still a way to go before the SBM role is fully and comprehensively accepted and understood in the school system and that there remains work to be done to educate stakeholders as to the benefits of employing a SBM.
The previous sections of this chapter have discussed the key themes to emerge from the findings of this study and how these themes have addressed the research questions guiding the thesis. The concepts and research literature considered in Chapter 2 of the thesis have also been discussed to provide a deeper analysis and interpretation of these findings.

The next section presents a conceptual framework of school business management models informed by the findings of this study.

7.6 A conceptual framework of school business management models

The conceptual framework presented in Figure 8 has been developed as a tool to visualise different approaches to school business management. Consistent with the interpretivist perspective from which this study has been approached and the work of Weber (cited by Crotty, 1998), one of the pioneers of interpretivism (see sub-section 3.3.1), the framework constitutes four models of school business management that are presented as ‘ideal types’. That is, they are a ‘pure case’, one that does not exist ‘in reality but can serve as a useful model to guide the social inquirer in addressing real-life cases and discerning where and to what extent the real deviates from the ideal’ (Crotty, 1998, p. 70). It is important to underscore that this model is meant as a heuristic to develop thinking and stimulate further reflection on the implications of the findings. Furthermore, given the limitations of the data (see sub-section 4.8) the model is at a developmental stage and should therefore be interpreted as a work in progress.

The external horizontal arrows represent the positioning of the SBM role, from a managerial role with mainly operational duties to a leadership role with more strategic responsibility. The external vertical arrows indicate whether the SBM is operating within a single school or between multiple schools. The smaller internal arrows indicate the direction in which the SBM is being pulled by contextual circumstances within their setting.

Each of the participating SBMs have been located within the framework, including the single school SBM at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook and the SBMs from
both Hamley and Ainsworth. The latter two are distinguishable by a dotted line as they were removed from the main body of this thesis. The following subsections describe the four SBM types\(^{28}\) and their location within the framework discussed.

**Figure 8: A typology of approaches to school business management**

![Diagram of school business management typology](image)

**Legend**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case A</th>
<th>Case B</th>
<th>Case C</th>
<th>Case D</th>
<th>Case E</th>
<th>Case F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ridge Lane and Carrbrook Federation</td>
<td>Cross Vale School</td>
<td>Crane Street Federation</td>
<td>Fernbrook School</td>
<td>Hamley Cluster</td>
<td>Ainsworth Cluster</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{28}\)The spectrum of SBM role and responsibilities developed by McKinsey and Co (2007) was used as a reference point alongside the data collected in this study to inform the descriptions of the ideal types presented.
7.6.1 Type A: ‘The Company Director’
Type A individuals operate at the highest level in strategic leadership roles over more than one school. They also have full responsibility for all non-teaching provision within their school and require minimum input from the headteacher. They typically manage business management teams, including lower level SBMs, administrators and other support staff, who take responsibility for the individual schools in their setting leaving Type A SBMs to focus on long-term planning of finances and resourcing. They will manage large projects (e.g. major building works) and multi-agency relationships and also lead the exploration and realisation of formal collaborative arrangements such as federations or academy Trust partnerships. Type A individuals tend to have different labels that reflect their status (e.g. School Business Director) (McKinsey, 2007). Like a director of a company, they provide executive leadership at a strategic level leaving the operational responsibilities and ground-level decision-making to those operating at individual sites (schools).

7.6.2 Type B: ‘The Area Manager’
Type B individuals may operate over more than one school though they have less leadership responsibility than their Type A counterparts. They will typically have line management responsibility for business management teams (including lower level SBMs, administrative and support staff that work in the individual schools in their setting) and will have some strategic planning responsibility though this will be in collaboration with their headteacher who retains strategic control and decision-making responsibility for all non-teaching provision. As such they have a more managerial function. They are responsible for writing grants and sourcing funds, performance management for support staff, marketing and non-education policies (e.g. health and safety, risk management). They also manage any extended and shared services and liaise with other schools on business management issues. Type B individuals may have an alternative positional label such as ASBM (McKinsey, 2007). Like an area or regional manager, they have managerial control over and decision-making responsibility for each of their constituent sites (schools) under the direction of their company director (e.g. headteacher or Type A SBM).
7.6.3 Type C: ‘The Unit Manager’
Type C individuals tend to operate in a single school. They have responsibility for budget preparation and monitoring (including report preparation for governors), HR, non-education policies (e.g. health and safety, risk assessment). They manage the school support staff (e.g. catering/lunchtime staff, administrative/clerical staff, caretaker/premises staff) and also deal with contractors and other external stakeholders (e.g. LA personnel) on non-educational matters. Some Type C’s may have fund raising responsibilities and more strategic control over resourcing and finance (depending on their capacity, the willingness of the headteacher to relinquish such responsibility and the size of their school). The positional label for Type C individuals tends to be SBM. Like the manager of a single business unit they have managerial responsibility for the operation of their site (school) including resourcing and finance. Depending on their circumstances they may also have some strategic responsibility (e.g. if they are a single school rather than part of a multi-site arrangement such as a federation or chain).

7.6.4 Type D: ‘The Ground Level Operative’
Type D individuals operate at the most basic level and tend to be reactive in orientation. Their responsibilities encompass order stock, banking (e.g. cheques, lunch money); managing payroll; updating staffing and pupil records; general secretarial duties (e.g. greeting visitors, answering the phone) and; office management (e.g. filing, photocopying, emailing). Type D individuals have positional labels such as office manager, finance officer or administrator though they may also be referred to as the SBM (McKinsey and Co, 2007). Like a ground level operative of a business unit they tend to operate at the front of house (i.e. school desk) and are the first port of call for customers (i.e. pupils, parents, visitors). They may have some managerial responsibilities but often operate under the direct management of a superior staff member (e.g. Type C individual).

As discussed, the SBMs within this study do not necessarily fit neatly into these four types, indeed many can be said to be operating within more than one type.
The FBM at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook is categorised as a Type A individual as she operates at a very influential level, with strategic leadership and decision-making responsibility for the two schools in their federation. At this site the executive headteacher has relinquished decision-making responsibility for all non-teaching provision and takes a strategic view of the business management function. Conversely, the single school SBM at Carrbrook has a very different role to her higher status colleague. This individual operates at one school under a Type D model, her role comprising mainly operational duties associated with the day-to-day running of the school although she does have some line-management responsibility for a small number of support staff. Furthermore, the presence of her more influential colleague is perhaps an inhibiting factor in the status of her own role as the federation only comprises two schools meaning there is little space for more than one high-level SBM.

The SBM at Cross Vale is categorised as a Type C individual as she operates in a single school with strategic leadership responsibility over much of the non-educational provision in her school. She also line manages all the support staff (26 in total including the TAs), is involved in leading projects with the wider community and has a Type D individual supporting her. But for her situational circumstances (i.e. operating in a single primary school with associated budgetary constraints and low organisational capacity) she would perhaps be considered a Type B. The headteacher certainly takes a strategic view of school business management but their organisational capacity is not able to support a Type B or Type A role which would perhaps be more suited to the knowledge and experience of this particular SBM.

The SBM at Crane Street can be considered to straddle two different types. She operates across multiple schools in an overarching management role overseeing a federation business management team. As such, her role encapsulates many of the characteristics of a Type A individual. However, her executive headteacher take a more managerial view of the business management function and thus retains strategic decision-making responsibility for all aspects of the federation (including non-teaching provision). Moreover, the SBM, by her own admission,
does not consider herself a leader. Considering these factors, this SBM is also categorised as a Type B individual (with the executive headteacher occupying the Type A position at this case study site).

The SBM at Fernbrook is situated with the Type C category as she operates within a single school albeit in a strategic leadership position with responsibility for all aspects of the school operation not directly related to teaching and learning. The headteacher at this school takes a strategic leadership view of the business management function and this is reflected in the status of this SBM. Like the SBM at Cross Vale, she also has a Type D individual supporting her. The vertical arrow represents her increasing partnership work with the large number of smaller schools in the surrounding area, which has facilitated her operating across multiple schools.

The SBM at Hamley is categorised as a Type A as this is the level at which his role was originally planned to operate when the schools in this cluster agreed to a shared model of business management. However, a combination of the large number of schools in the cluster and a lack of business management capacity due to budgetary constraints associated with small, rural schools has meant this SBM is increasingly pulled into operational duties. As the SBM at Hamley explained, he felt grossly overpaid for much of the work he was expected to do.

The SBM at Ainsworth has been located at the cross-section of the framework because of the vagueness of his role. Due to a lack of consensus and a collective understanding as to the purpose of his role, the SBM was being pulled in several different directions by the headteachers of the various schools in their cluster, each of whom had different ideas about what his role should be. This lack of collaborative culture led to disagreements between key stakeholders and an eventual failure of the SBM model. As the headteacher of the secondary school at this case study site explained, the SBM was given an ill-defined role.

While acknowledging the rudimentary nature of this model it is a helpful tool to develop further reflections surrounding the contextual and situational factors
that influence the model of business management employed by a school or group of schools. Of course, this framework is limited in being developed solely from the findings of this study whereas there are almost certainly a variety of other SBM models employed in schools across the country.

7.7 Conclusion
To conclude, I return to the research questions guiding this research to provide a summary of how far each one has been addressed by the findings. A statement of the original contribution to knowledge made by the thesis then follows.

**RQ1: What roles and responsibilities are SBMs undertaking within, between and beyond schools?**

In summary, the findings from this study suggest that SBMs are undertaking a wide range of roles and responsibilities in their work within, between and beyond their schools. Together with the areas of provision typically associated with school business management, and which might collectively be labelled as organisational management (e.g. finances, premises, human resources, health and safety, contracts), the SBMs in this research have become involved in a variety of other areas from classroom observations and monitoring pupil data to organising community projects. They are also working in partnership with other schools providing business management support and advice or working with other agencies in their wider school communities while two of the SBMs have been appointed to additional, external roles with the NCSL. The composition of the SBM role and the range of responsibilities they undertake is also influenced by the organisational characteristics of their schools with the larger, more complex school settings, such as those with multiple schools, requiring SBMs to operate at a higher, more influential level often with their own teams of support staff. In this sense, the increase in inter-school collaboration has implications for SBMs who will be increasingly expected to operate across more than one school in the future. Furthermore, the declining function of the LA also has consequences for the SBM role as schools become more reliant on their SBMs to...
undertake the areas of organisational management that were previously covered by the LA.

**RQ2: How do school business managers exercise leadership and management within, between and beyond schools?**

The level of leadership and management exercised by the SBMs within, between and beyond schools in this study varies and is influenced predominantly by the level of support, or advocacy, of the headteacher for the SBM role and the business management requirements and organisational capacity of their school. Furthermore, the means by which the SBMs exercise leadership and management can be characterised by the nature of work they undertake as part of their role and the nature of their relationships with their colleagues. As such, all the SBMs in this study can claim to exercise management for at least a portion of their role as indicated by their maintenance of the systems and processes at their respective schools. Others can also claim to exercise leadership via the changes they have made to existing processes and the implementation of new systems to improve their schools. Their leadership is also characterised by the level of influence they have over the headteacher and their membership of the SLT in their schools.

**RQ3: What types of impact are SBMs having within, between and beyond schools?**

Findings from this study identify that the SBMs have made a positive impact on the headteachers, the finances, the students and the support staff across their schools. Almost every headteacher spoke of their administrative burden being lifted by their SBM and a subsequent realignment of their priorities to enable a heightened focus on the teaching and learning agenda. The financial impact of the SBMs in this study has also been evident in terms of income generation and monetary savings. These impacts have consequently been passed on to the students through improved services and provision and an increase in resources. The SBMs have also impacted on the students in their schools in other ways such
as managing structural improvements to the physical environment and sourcing additional learning resources together with the indirect impact achieved by allowing the headteacher to spend more time on teaching and learning. The other main area of impact has been on the support staff whose working conditions have been improved considerably by many of the SBMs via the implementation of new appraisal systems, negotiation of improved contracts and generally raising the profile of this section of the school workforce. These impacts have mostly been achieved within and between the schools at each of the case study sites though some of the SBM have undertaken projects across the wider school communities.

It is also argued that the impacts made by the SBMs in this study have led to cultural change in the schools in which they operate. By changing and improving systems and establishing and implementing new processes, some of the SBMs have altered the behaviour of their organisational members. This, in turn, has led to changes in attitudes and beliefs, particularly surrounding support staff and the SBMs themselves and the ways in which they are perceived and their roles understood by other members of their school community. Furthermore, the self-perception of the support staff in a number of the case study sites has been altered positively as a result of the professional learning opportunities and performance management structures introduced by the SBMs.

**RQ4: What are the facilitators and barriers associated with the development of successful models of school business management?**

The findings from this study point toward a number of factors that can both facilitate and inhibit successful models of school business management. Key facilitators include the profile of the SBM within their schools and wider setting whereby the greater the level of understanding from stakeholders of the SBM role and its purpose in school, the more effective the SBM is likely to be. The SBMs in this study have taken steps to raise their professional profile amongst colleagues while the majority have also been placed on their school’s SLT highlighting the enabling role of the headteacher in helping to establish the SBM.
Another key facilitating factor to the success of the SBM is the working relationship between themselves and the headteacher. Those SBMs in this study that have overcome barriers and are operating effectively in their schools tend to have a strong and healthy professional relationship with the headteacher based on mutual trust and respect. Finally, the professional ambition of the SBMs in this study is also a key facilitator to their success whereby their drive and determination to develop professionally and fulfil their potential effectively is a key factor in the success they have enjoyed in their roles.

The main inhibiting factor to the success of the models of school business management in this study is the lack of a common understanding and shared appreciation of the SBM role. While this has been a more significant barrier in some cases than others, all the participating SBMs cited this as a challenge to their role at some stage during the study. This suggests that there is still work to be done to educate the wider school stakeholder community as to the purpose and potential of the SBM role and the considerable positive impact they can bring to schools.

To summarise, the overarching aim of this thesis has been to explore the emerging practice of SBMs in England, an aim that has been addressed via the four research questions that have guided this study. In doing so, this thesis, the first independent empirical study of SBMs in England, makes a meaningful and original contribution to the existing knowledge base in a number of ways.

Firstly, in relation to the role of the SBM, while discussions in the existing knowledge base highlight the widening responsibilities of the SBM (e.g. Southworth, 2010; Coulbeck, 2006) there is no discussion of the specific additional areas of school provision in which SBMs are now operating. In particular, as discussed in sub-section 7.2.1, this study provides evidence of SBMs working directly with teachers and students on projects (Fernbrook) and even shadowing classroom observations and analysing student data (Ridge Lane and Carrbrook). Furthermore, concerns surrounding SBM workload, burnout and the related issue of sustainability and succession planning for the role are
absent from the existing literature yet highlighted and discussed in this study (see 7.2.1) as are discussions related to the decreasing role of the LA and the implications for SBM responsibility (see 7.2.3).

Second, while much has been written about the management responsibilities of SBMs in terms of their specific duties (Southworth, 2010; McKinsey and Co, 2007; Wood, 2006; O’Sullivan et al, 2000), there has been no attempt to distinguish between the ways in which SBMs are exercising management and leadership or to interpret these concepts in terms of the nature of SBM working relationships with their colleagues (see 7.3.1). Moreover, the importance of headteacher advocacy for the role as a key facilitator to the status and influence of the SBM and the level of leadership they subsequently exercise is another area that is absent from the literature, as is the capacity of schools to support the growth and development of the SBM role (see 7.3.1).

Third, the majority of the existing SBM literature is aligned with the findings from this study in highlighting their financial impact and their role in reducing and realigning headteacher workload, with some mention of the indirect impact that SBMs can make on student attainment (see University of Manchester, 2010; Southworth, 2010). What is absent from the literature is the role of the SBM in developing and improving the working conditions of the support staff (see 7.4.3) or the influence of the SBM on the culture of the school via shifts in attitudes and beliefs of stakeholders as a result of the changes they have made (see 7.4.5). This is also related to the leadership role of the SBM and their capacity to enact change in their schools (see 7.3.1), another area absent from the research literature.

Finally, there is very little in the current literature that explores the ways in which SBMs raise their professional profile, the important role of the headteacher in enabling this process and the means by which this facilitates the success of the model of school business management as evidenced in this study (see 7.5.1). Furthermore, the importance and nature of the relationship between the headteacher and SBM as a key facilitator to successful models of school
business management is a key finding in this study and another issue that is absent from the current literature.

7.8 Further research
A number of implications for further research have arisen from the outcomes of this study. These are outlined below.

7.8.1 Diversity of the SBM role
Firstly, it might be interesting to further explore the diversity of the SBM role with a larger sample of participants. The composition of the role varied quite significantly between the small numbers of SBMs in this research so one might expect this diversity to increase across a larger sample. Related to the diversity of the role is the issue of SBM workload and sustainability, which might warrant investigation in greater detail, perhaps quantitatively using a survey instrument to gather data on the actual hours being worked by SBMs. The evidence from this study, albeit with a small number of participants, raises concerns as to the long and unsociable hours some SBMs are working and the implications this might have for the sustainability of the role. Further research into the potential for SBM burnout and how to make the role more manageable would be worthwhile both for the SBMs themselves and for the schools in which they operate.

7.8.2 Contemporary models of school business management
Further research might also consider how models of business management are being utilised in contemporary school settings such as academy chains particularly given the autonomous nature of such schools and the implications of, for example, financial autonomy for the role of the SBM. For example, is the current training for SBMs sufficient within this new educational landscape? Similarly, what does the SBM function look like in a chain of academies? Are there models similar to those in this study or have these larger organisations found alternative strategies to managing their finances and resources?
7.8.3 SBM role in the development of support staff

The emerging findings surrounding the impact of SBMs on the support staff within this study warrant a deeper exploration of this relationship to seek out the motivations that SBMs have for improving the working conditions of school support staff and giving them a voice. Are the SBMs driven by their values based on their past experiences as junior support staff members? What about the motivations of SBMs who have entered the profession from other sectors? Following the workforce reforms of the last decade non-teaching staff members now represent the larger percentage of the school workforce (Southworth, 2010) and are playing an increasingly important role in the functioning of the school system. As educational research so often focuses on the teaching staff it would be interesting to investigate the role of the SBM as the leader of this somewhat silent majority.

7.8.4 SBM resilience

The issue of SBM resilience is one worthy of consideration for future research particularly in light of the cultural barriers they can encounter when establishing themselves and the fact that, like the headteacher, the role of the SBM can often be a lonely position with no equivalent colleagues or peers to consult in times of adversity. Much of the school business management literature makes reference to the cultural tensions felt by many SBMs in trying to gain acceptance and professional respect (O'Sullivan et al, 2000; Coulbeck; 2006; Woods, 2009; Southworth, 2010) but there is currently little discussion of the resilience required by SBMs in establishing themselves as valued members of the school workforce.
CHAPTER 8

REFLECTIONS

Following over two decades of educational reform, instigated largely by the LMS policy, increased demands on schools and school leaders have coincided with a restructuring of education to adopt more business-like approaches. This has generated significant challenges to educational leaders whose workload has expanded in both volume and diversity with a range of pressures, in addition to the teaching and learning agenda, (e.g. financial, legal, technical) which have become impossible to deal with individually (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2007). As the system has been rearranged this has created new spaces that have been populated by non-teaching professionals with different skill sets to support and compliment the work of educational leaders.

The election of a new coalition government in the United Kingdom in 2010 has intensified the pace of school reform. Previous governments had tinkered with deregulation and market forces but the new government has freed up the system to previously unseen levels (Hatcher and Jones, 2011). Initiatives such as the academies programme have removed significant numbers of schools from the control of their LAs which has had a profound impact on the nature and capacity of this tier of educational governance, rendering it obsolete in some regions (Chapman, 2013).

This shifting landscape has impacted on the work of SBMs. For example, schools converting to academy status must find alternatives to the services their LA once supplied, the responsibility of which usually falls to the SBM. Furthermore, the regulations surrounding the requirement for academies to employ a qualified accountant were recently relaxed thus creating opportunities for SBMs to take on the financial management of schools without the need for accountancy qualifications (Carter and Coley, 2012). As schools and educational settings move forward and are increasingly self-reliant for funds, services and resources in a competitive and increasingly business orientated environment there is an expectation that the SBM role will not only become a necessary requirement but...
a vital component of the modern educational school system in England (DfE, 2010). Furthermore, as academy chains expand, SBMs will be increasingly required to operate across organisational boundaries in multi-school sites to an extent not previously seen adding new dimensions to what could already be considered a complex and multi-faceted role.

This thesis has highlighted the multifaceted nature of the SBM role and its importance within the English school system. Given the current educational reforms taking place in England it is likely that the SBM role will evolve into a more complex and challenging one. If we are to develop SBMs that are fit for purpose in such a dynamic landscape, further research will be required to understand how best SBMs can contribute to school and system improvement.
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APPENDIX

Participant information pack

and consent form

Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form

A multi-perspective study of school business management in England

You are being invited to take part in a research study as part of a PhD research degree. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

Who will conduct the research?

Mr Paul Armstrong
Room C3.5
Ellen Wilkinson Building
School of Education
University of Manchester
Oxford Road
Manchester
M13 9PL
Tel - 0161 275 3334

Title of the Research

A multi-perspective study of school business management in England

What is the research about?

The research is an investigation into school business managers (SBMs) and how their emerging profession is impacting on organisational culture and distributed leadership in schools. In order to investigate this I have designed a survey and accompanying interview schedule which will draw upon the issues raised by the research topic.

The central aim of the research is to explore the emerging practice of SBMs in England. In order to achieve this aim, the thesis will focus on four research questions:

1. What roles and responsibilities are SBMs undertaking within, between and beyond schools?
2. How do school business managers exercise leadership and management within, between and beyond schools?
3. What types of impact are SBMs having within, between and beyond schools?
4. What are the facilitators and barriers associated with the development of successful models of school business management

There is a clear lack of academic research literature on SBMs yet their presence in our schools is growing faster than ever. I therefore hope that this research project will provide a much needed addition to the academic literature whilst contributing to the knowledge on this emerging role.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been selected to participate in this study following your involvement in the SBM Demonstration Project. In addition to your setting, I have also approached the lead schools from the seven other projects I have responsibility for. Each of these settings, including yourselves, fulfil the criteria necessary for this research project in that each employ School Business Manager or School Business Director.

What would I be asked to do if I took part?

You will be asked to complete a Q Survey which involves ordering a set of statements about the research topic into an order depending on how much or how little you agree with them. This exercise will take no longer than 15-20 minutes to complete. Following the survey you will be interviewed (either face to face or by telephone) to discuss some of the issues raised in the exercise and your opinions on the wider topic being researched. Again, this will take no longer than 20 minutes. This process will be repeated toward the end of the research project (between 12-18 months later) to explore any changes in your opinions and the situation at your school with respect to the research topic. Finally, you may be contacted by telephone at some point in between these two phases for a brief chat about the issues raised in the research. This phone interview will be informal and take no longer than 15 minutes.

What happens to the data collected?

The results from the Q Surveys will be collated with all other participants’ results then coded and analysed for common themes pertaining to the research. Similarly, the interview transcripts will be coded and analysed for the main themes and then cross examined alongside the Q Survey results to form conclusions relating to the research questions.

Participants may have access to their survey results and interview transcripts at any time should they wish to alter the content or withdraw statements.

How is confidentiality maintained?

All interview data will be recorded onto a Dictaphone then immediately transferred onto my PC and deleted from the audio device. The names of participants and their schools/settings will not be mentioned at any point during the interview and the files will be stored under pseudonyms so the interviewees and their setting cannot be identified. The Q Sorts Survey data will initially be completed by hand then immediately transferred to an electronic file where it will also be stored anonymously on my PC. At the end of the duration of the research and once the PhD thesis is complete, all participants’ data will be confidentially destroyed (January/February 2012).

What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?
It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign the attached consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

**What is the duration of the research?**

The duration of your involvement in the study is as follows:

- 2 x 15-20 minute Q Survey
- 2 x 20 minute face to face interviews
- 1 x 20 minute phone interview

**Where will the research be conducted?**

All research will be conducted in your place of work in a location convenient to you (i.e. office, staff-room, classroom etc).

**Will the outcomes of the research be published?**

It is anticipated that the outcomes of this research will be written into my thesis which will be available in the University of Manchester library following successful completion. There is a possibility that certain sections of the data collected may contribute to conference papers and journal articles during the next three years and beyond although participants’ would be informed and prior consent sought before this occurred.

**Criminal Records check**

I have undergone a full Criminal Records Bureau check.

**Contact for further information**

**Researcher**
Mr Paul Armstrong  
Room C3.5  
Ellen Wilkinson Building  
School of Education  
University of Manchester  
M13 9PL  
Tel - 0161 275 3334  
Mob - 07786 438 737  
paul.armstrong@manchester.ac.uk

**Supervisor**
Professor Daniel Muijs  
Chair of Pedagogy and Teacher Development  
Ellen Wilkinson Building  
School of Education  
University of Manchester  
M13 9PL  
Tel -0161 275 3039  
daniel.muijs@manchester.ac.uk

**What if something goes wrong?**

If, at any stage of the research, you have any queries or would like to withdraw yourself and/or any data you have provided then don’t hesitate to contact myself or my supervisor on the details above.

Further, if you wish to make a formal complaint about the conduct of the research you can contact the Head of the Research Office, Christie Building, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL.
CONSENT FORM

If you are happy to participate please complete and sign the consent form below

Please Initial Box

1. I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet on the above project and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

3. I understand that the interviews will be audio recorded

4. I agree to the use of anonymous quotes

I agree to take part in the above project

Name of participant ___________________________ Date ___________________________ Signature ___________________________

Name of person taking consent ___________________________ Date ___________________________ Signature ___________________________
APPENDIX II

UREC ethics form (with ethical guidelines)

UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

COMMITTEE ON THE ETHICS OF RESEARCH ON HUMAN BEINGS

Application form for approval of a research project

This form should be completed by the Chief Investigator(s), after reading the guidance notes.

1. Title of the research

Full title:

*School Business Managers and their effect on Organisational Culture and Distributed Leadership in Schools: A Multi-Case Study*

2. a. Chief Investigator (student)

Title: Mr
Forename/Initials: Paul, Wilfred
Surname: Armstrong
Post: N/A
Qualifications: BSc (Hons) Psychology, MSc Educational Research
School/Unit: Education
E-mail: paul.armstrong@manchester.ac.uk
Telephone: 0161 275 3334 (office) 07786438737 (mob)

b. Investigator (Supervisor)

Title: Professor
Forename/Initials: Daniel
Surname: Muijs
Post: Professor In Pedagogy
Qualifications:
School/Unit: Education, Management and Institutional Development
E-mail: Daniel.Muijs@manchester.ac.uk
Telephone: 0161 275 3039

3. Details of Project

3.1 Proposed study dates and duration
Start date: October 2009
End date: January 2012

3.2 Is this a student project?
Yes
If so, what degree is it for?
PhD in Education (3 yrs full-time)

3.3. What is the principal research question/objective? *(Must be in language comprehensible to a lay person.)*

What impact does the school business manager have on the organisational culture of a school?

3.4. What is the scientific justification for the research? What is the background? Why is this an area of importance / has any similar research been done? *(Must be in language comprehensible to a lay person.)*

The Teacher Workload Study (PwC, 2001) - which highlighted increasingly onerous workloads for headteachers specifically the amount of administrative work and lack of bursarial support - and the subsequent workforce remodelling (DfES, 2003) has facilitated a sharp increase in the number of school business managers (SBMs) employed in England. Further, as schools morph into ever more complex structures and - via Every Child Matters (DfES, 2003) - offer child welfare services far beyond the capacity of the traditional educational model we have school environments requiring leaders with high level of business management acumen (Woods, 2009). Yet, despite their forming an increasingly integral part of the English school system, there remains a paucity of academic research literature on SBMs.

By utilising a mixed methods case study design this research aims to provide a critical examination of the merits of this emergent profession and its impact on the organisational culture of schools. An initial set of 8 case study schools will be investigated (reducing accordingly after initial data collection) via interviews and surveys with the SBM, Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and two classroom teachers over an 18 month data collection period (beginning in September 2009). The research will build on an existing study of SBMs (currently being undertaken by the University of Mcr for the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) and thus aims to utilize existing participants.

3.5. How has the scientific quality of the research been assessed? *(Tick as appropriate)*

- [ ] Independent external review
- [ ] Review within a company
- [ ] Review within a multi–centre research group
- [✓] Internal review (e.g. involving colleagues, academic supervisor)
- [ ] None external to the investigator
- [ ] Other, e.g. methodological guidelines *(give details below)*

Review panel 25th June 2009

3.6. Give a full summary of the purpose, design and methodology of the planned research, including a brief explanation of the theoretical framework that informs it. It should be clear exactly what will happen to the research participant, how many times and in what order. Describe any involvement of research participants, patient groups or communities in the design of the research. *(This section must be completed in language comprehensible to the lay person.)*

The focus of the research is to investigate the emergent profession of school business management and what influence it has on the organisational culture of schools. In order to achieve this, the research will employ a mixed-methods case study design which will involve the following interviews and surveys with participants in each case study site over the 18 month data collection period:

- Two face to face interviews with the Headteacher, one at the start and one at the end of the 18 month data collection period (20-30 mins each)
- Two Q Surveys with the Headteacher, one at the start and one at the end of the 18 month data collection period (20-25 mins each)
• One telephone interview with the Headteacher at the mid point of the 18 month data collection period (15-20 mins)

• Two face to face interviews with the School Business Manager one at the start and one at the end of the 18 month data collection period (20-30 mins each)

• Two Q Surveys with the School Business Manager, one at the start and one at the end of the 18 month data collection period (20-25 mins each)

• One telephone interview with the School Business Manager at the mid point of the 18 month data collection period (15-20 mins)

• Two Q Survey with the Deputy Headteacher, one at the start and one at the end of the 18 month data collection period (20-25 mins each)

• Two Q Surveys with a further two classroom teachers, one at the start and one at the end of the 18 month data collection period (20-25 mins each)

The interview schedules for both Headteachers and SBMs are at an early stage of development but the initial drafts are in Appendix 1. Similarly, the initial drafts of the Q Survey statements (which participants will be expected to rate according to how strongly they agree or disagree with them) are in Appendix 2. I have also included, in Appendix 3, a complete version of a Q Survey with the accompanying rating scale (which is similar to the version I intend to use) to illustrate exactly what the participants will be expected to do. I would also like to point out that I have conducted this particular Q Survey with SBMs in the past without any problems. Finally, in terms of the telephone interviews, these are intended to serve as a brief ‘catch-up’ with participants to enquire as to whether any of the issues raised in the initial interviews and surveys have changed. The schedule for these interviews will be a smaller version of the face-to-face schedules covering the same areas / questions.

3.6.1. Has the protocol submitted with this application been the subject of review by a statistician independent of the research team? (Select one of the following)

☐ Yes – copy of review enclosed
☐ Yes details of review available from the following individual or organisation
  (give contact details below)
 ✓ No – justify below

N/A

3.6.2. If relevant, specify the specific statistical experimental design, and why it was chosen?

N/A

3.6.3. How many participants will be recruited?

If there is more than one group, state how many participants will be recruited in each group. For international studies, say how many participants will be recruited in the UK and in total.

It is anticipated that no more than five staff members will participate in each of the eight case study sites giving a maximum total of 40 participants.

3.6.4. How was the number of participants decided upon?

If a formal sample size calculation was used, indicate how this was done, giving sufficient information to justify and reproduce the calculation.

The researcher was already assigned the eight potential case studies as part of the original project on which this research will be based (see 3.4) therefore, after consultation with the PhD Supervisor, it was decided that the eight lead schools from each case study sites and thus a maximum of 40 participants was sufficient for a project of this size. The schools in these case studies were originally selected on their size, type, phase of (primary, secondary) and geographical location all of which are sufficiently varied for this research. However, it is anticipated that this number will reduce following the initial data collection/scoping phase to perhaps 4-6 case study schools which would then reduce the overall number of participants to around 20-30.

3.6.5. Describe the methods of analysis (statistical or other appropriate methods, e.g. for
qualitative research) by which the data will be evaluated to meet the study objectives.

Content analysis will be carried out on the interview data and will follow guidelines set out by Miles & Huberman (1994) and Yin (1994). The transcripts will be analysed for recurrent themes which will then be coded and ordered visually (i.e. in data displays). Following this, the data will be analysed in relation to its significance to the research questions and the theory behind.

The Q Sorts data will be subject to factor analysis which will isolate the factors that participants felt were important in their views on the merits of SBMs.

Together, these methods should provide a rigorous analysis of the data collected. Whilst the factor analysis will provide some quantitative outcomes to the research, it is hoped these conclusions will be supported by the qualitative themes to emerge from the interview data.

3.7. Where will the research take place?

The interviews and Q Sorts surveys will ideally be carried out in the participants’ workplace (in this case the school where they work). However, if this is not possible (i.e. inconvenient) both the interviews and Q Surveys can be conducted over the phone and via post.

3.8. Names of other staff involved.

N/A

3.9. What do you consider to be the main ethical issues which may arise with the proposed study and what steps will be taken to address these?

The main ethical issues are expected to be participant confidentiality, data protection and participant withdrawal. To alleviate these issues each participant will be given an information pack at the start of the project which will describe the research project and exactly what will be required of them. Participants will also be asked to sign consent forms agreeing to take part in the research and also explaining their right to withdraw themselves and any data they have submitted at any time during the research without question. Finally, they will also be informed of the steps taken to maintain the confidentiality of all data submitted (e.g. the use of pseudonyms so identities are never revealed and the storage of all data in a secure location where only the researcher will have access).

3.9.1. Will any intervention or procedure, which would normally be considered a part of routine care, be withheld from the research participants?

○ Yes ✓ No

If yes, give details and justification

4. Details of Subjects.

4.1. Total Number

(Up to) 16

4.2 Sex and Age Range

Both male and female and all between 35-55 yrs

4.3 Type

School Business Managers, Headteachers, Deputy Headteachers and Classroom Teachers.

4.4. What are the principal inclusion criteria? (Please justify)

That the School Business Managers, Headteachers, Deputy Headteachers and Classroom Teachers are employed at the participating case study schools as this is the population my research is focusing on.

4.5. What are the principal exclusion criteria? (Please justify)

N/A (self-defining, see above)

4.6. Will the participants be from any of the following groups? (Tick as appropriate)
None of the below

☐ Children under 16
☐ Adults with learning difficulties
☐ Adults who are unconscious or very severely ill
☐ Adults who have a terminal illness
☐ Adults in emergency situations
☐ Adults with mental illness (particularly if detained under mental health legislation)
☐ Adults with dementia
☐ Prisoners
☐ Young offenders
☐ Adults in Scotland who are unable to consent for themselves
☐ Healthy volunteers
☐ Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator, e.g. those in care homes, medical students.
☐ Other vulnerable groups

*Justify their inclusion*

4.7. Will any research participants be recruited who are involved in existing research or have recently been involved in any research prior to recruitment?

✔ Yes  ☐ No  ☐ Not known

*If Yes, give details and justify their inclusion. If Not Known, what steps will you take to find out?*

The participants are already involved in a research project entitled 'School Business Manager Demonstration Project (SBMDP)' currently being conducted by the University of Manchester for the NCSL. I am researching on this project and intend to use my case studies as participants for my thesis. The research therefore will be a continuation of the existing project and isn’t expected to become too burdensome on any participants.

4.8 How will potential participants in the study be (i) identified, (ii) approached and (iii) recruited?

*Where research participants will be recruited via advertisement, please append a copy to this application*

**Identified**

As mentioned above, whilst collecting data for the SBMDP I have built a working relationship with each of my case studies and intend to approach them for participation in this research.

**Approached**

Participants have been approached both in person and over the phone whilst collecting data for the SBMDP where I have begun with each potential participant as to the level of interest they might have in partaking in my own research. All responses have been positive so far.

**Recruited**
Once I have spoken with each participant and garnered sufficient interest I will post them an information sheet (containing an explanation of the research; what will be required of them; information on their right to withdrawal at any time; and information regarding data confidentiality) and a consent form for them to sign. Once signed, participants will be asked to post consent forms back to myself (see Appendix 4 for Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form.)

4.9 Will individual research participants receive reimbursement of expenses or any other incentives or benefits for taking part in this research?

- Yes ☑ No

*If yes, indicate how much and on what basis this has been decided*

5 Details of risks

5.1 Drugs and other substances to be administered

*Indicate status, eg full product licence, CTC, CTX. Attach: evidence of status of any unlicensed product; and Martindales Pharmacopoeia details for licensed products*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DRUG</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
<th>DOSAGE/FREQUENCY/ROUTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2 Procedures to be undertaken

Details of any invasive procedures, and any samples or measurements to be taken. Include any questionnaires, psychological tests etc. What is the experience of those administering the procedures?

N/A

5.3 Or Activities to be undertaken

Please list the activities to be undertaken by participants and the likely duration of each

Participants will be interviewed in a semi-structured manner. The exact nature of the interview schedule has yet to be finalised but the types of questions and general area it will cover are listed in Section 3.6. Each interview will be structured to last approximately 30-45 minutes.

The Q Survey (see 5.2) will take approximately 25-30 minutes for each participant to complete.

5.4 What are the potential adverse effects, risks or hazards for research participants, including potential for pain, discomfort, distress, inconvenience or changes to lifestyle for research participants?

There are no anticipated adverse effects for research participants and the themes being discussed are not of a particularly sensitive nature.

5.5 Will individual or group interviews/questionnaires discuss any topics or issues that might be sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting, or is it possible that criminal or other disclosures requiring action could take place during the study (e.g., during interviews/group discussions, or use of screening tests for drugs)?

- Yes ☑ No

*If yes, give details of procedures in place to deal with these issues:*

5.6 What is the expected total duration of participation in the study for each participant?

The interviews aren’t expected to last longer than 1 hour at a time. The Q Sorts surveys shouldn’t take longer than half an hour to complete.

5.7 What is the potential benefit to research participants?

SBMs have been seldom research by the academic community (which focuses much more on the educational side of schools) therefore it will be a new and hopefully enjoyable experience for them to have someone who is interested in their profession.
5.8 What is the potential for adverse effects, risks or hazards, pain, discomfort, distress, or inconvenience to the researchers themselves? *(If any)*

None anticipated.

6. Safeguards

6.1 What precautions have been taken to minimise or mitigate the risks identified above?

Participants will be reminded throughout the research that they are not obliged to participate in the research, that participation is entirely voluntary and that they are free to withdraw themselves (and any data they have supplied) from the research project at any time during the research without question.

6.2 Will informed consent be obtained from the research participants?

✓ Yes ○ No

*If Yes, give details of who will take consent and how it will be done. Give details of the experience in taking consent and of any particular steps to provide information (in addition to a written information sheet) e.g. videos, interactive material.*

*If participants are to be recruited from any of the potentially vulnerable groups listed in Question 4.6, give details of extra steps taken to assure their protection. Describe any arrangements to be made for obtaining consent from a legal representative.*

*If consent is not to be obtained, please explain why not.*

Where relevant the committee must have a copy of the information sheet and consent form.

I will be responsible for taking consent having already gained my MSc in Educational Research at the University of Manchester and this was covered in the programme. All participants will be given a full description of the exact nature of the research, what it will involve for them and what will happen to the data once it is collected. They will also be made aware that participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw at any time (even after they have completed interviews and surveys). Further it will be made clear that all data collected will remain confidential and that no names or settings will be referred to in any of the final documents. This information will be contained within an information sheet and consent form given to each participant prior to the research.

6.3 Will a signed record of consent be obtained?

✓ Yes ○ No

*If not, please explain why not.*

As mentioned above, participants will be asked to sign the consent form and given a copy for their records (see attached).

6.4 How long will the participant have to decide whether to take part in the research?

Approximately 2 weeks.

6.5 What arrangements have been made for participants who might not adequately understand verbal explanations or written information given in English, or who have special communication needs? *(e.g. translation, use of interpreters etc.)*

N/A

6.6 What arrangements are in place to ensure participants receive any information that becomes available during the course of the research that may be relevant to their continued participation?

Although unlikely, if any information becomes available during the duration of the study, which is deemed pertinent to the study then participants will be informed. This will be stated to participants at the beginning of the research.

6.7 Will the research participants’ General Practitioner be informed that they are taking part in the study?
If No, explain why not

N/A

6.8 Will permission be sought from the research participants to inform their GP before this is done?

○ Yes ○ No

If No, explain why not

N/A

6.9 What arrangements have been made to provide indemnity and/or compensation in the event of a claim by, or on behalf of, participants for (a) negligent harm and (b) non-negligent harm?

I will be seeking cover under the terms of University’s insurance arrangements for students conducting research.

7. Data Protection and Confidentiality

7.1 Will the research involve any of the following activities at any stage (including identification of potential research participants)? (Tick as appropriate)

☐ Publication of direct quotations from respondents

☐ Use of audio/visual recording devices

☐ Storage of personal data on any of the following:

- University computers
- Laptop computers

Further details:

All interview data will be recorded onto a Dictaphone then immediately transferred onto my office/work PC and deleted from the audio device. The names of participants, their schools/settings (or the researcher) will not be mentioned at any point during the interview and the files will be stored under pseudonyms so the interviewees cannot be identified. The Q Sorts Survey data will initially be completed by hand then immediately transferred to an electronic file where it will also be stored anonymously on the office PC. All of these actions will be conducted by the researcher and the following data protection guidelines will be followed at all times:

Data will be:

1. Fairly and lawfully processed (Data and results from the research will only be used in the way(s) for which consent has been given)

2. Processed for limited purposes (It is anticipated that the outcomes of this research will be written into my thesis which will be available in the University of Manchester library following successful completion. There is a possibility that certain sections of the data collected may contribute to conference papers and journal articles during the next three years and beyond although participants' would be informed and prior consent sought before this occurred.)

3. Adequate, relevant and not excessive (I will only report the data which is relevant to my research questions)

4. Accurate (I will endeavour to report only what I have collected and not manipulate the participants' data in any way to ensure a high level of accuracy)

5. Not kept longer than necessary (see 7.6)

6. Processed in accordance with the participant's rights (see 7.2)
7. Secure (see 7.2 & 7.3)

8. Not transferred to settings without adequate protection (see 7.3)

No private or personal data will be exchanged over the email or internet.

7.2 What measures have been put in place to ensure confidentiality of personal data? Give details of whether any encryption or other anonymisation procedures have been used and at what stage?

Any identifiers and/or participant IDs which may connect the data with individual participants will be removed. These will not be stored on the same computer as the data but on a password protected data stick.

7.3 Where will the analysis of the data from the study take place and by whom will it be undertaken?

Data analysis will be conducted in a private study area (i.e. my office or home) where no-one else will be able to view or access the data.

7.4 Who will have control of and act as the custodian for the data generated by the study?

As the student researcher I will act as custodian for the data generated by the study.

7.5 Who will have access to the data generated by the study?

Myself and my supervisor (to the anonymised data)

7.6 For how long will data from the study be stored?

Years Months

Give details of where they will be stored, who will have access and the custodial arrangements for the data:

The data will be kept for no longer than one year following the completion of the PhD. During that time it will be stored in my home and only accessed by myself.

8. Reporting Arrangements

8.1 Please confirm that any adverse event will be reported to the Committee

I can confirm that any adverse event will be reported to my supervisor in the first instance who will then inform the committee.

8.2 How is it intended the results of the study will be reported and disseminated?

(Tick as appropriate)

Thesis/dissertation

8.3 How will the results of research be made available to research participants and communities from which they are drawn?

All participants will be given the option of having a copy of the final results from the study at the end should they wish.

8.4 Has this or a similar application been previously considered by a Research Ethics Committee in the UK, the European Union or the European Economic Area?

☐ Yes
✓ No

If Yes give details of each application considered, including:
8.5 What arrangements are in place for monitoring and auditing the conduct of the research?

The supervisor will monitor the research.

Will a data monitoring committee be convened?

- Yes
- ✗ No

What are the criteria for electively stopping the trial or other research prematurely?

Any unforeseen harm that cannot be resolved.

9. Funding and Sponsorship

9.1 Has external funding for the research been secured?

- Yes ✗ No

If Yes, give details of funding organisation(s) and amount secured and duration:

Organisation:

UK contact:

Amount (£):

Duration: Months

9.2 Has the external funder of the research agreed to act as sponsor as set out in the Research Governance Framework?

- Yes  - No  - Not Applicable

9.3 Has the employer of the Chief Investigator agreed to act as sponsor of the research?

- Yes ✗ No

9.4 Sponsor (must be completed in all cases where the sponsor is not the University)

Name of organisation which will act as sponsor for the research:

10. Conflict of interest

10.1 Will individual researchers receive any personal payment over and above normal salary and reimbursement of expenses for undertaking this research?

- Yes ✗ No

*If Yes, indicate how much and on what basis this has been decided:*
10.2 Will the host organisation or the researcher's department(s) or institution(s) receive any payment of benefits in excess of the costs of undertaking the research?

☐ Yes ✓ No

*If Yes, give details:*

10.3 Does the Chief Investigator or any other investigator/collaborator have any direct personal involvement (e.g. financial, share-holding, personal relationship etc.) in the organisation sponsoring or funding the research that may give rise to a possible conflict of interest?

☐ Yes ✓ No

*If Yes, give details:*

11. Signatures of applicant(s)

.................................................................................................................. Date

Signed

.................................................................................................................. Date

Signed

12 Signature by or on behalf of the Head of School

The Committee expects each School to have a pre-screening process for all applications for an ethical opinion on research projects. The purpose of this pre-screening is to ensure that projects are scientifically sound, have been assessed to see if they need ethics approval and, if so, go to the relevant ethics committee. It is *not* to undertake ethical review itself, which must be undertaken by a formal research ethics committee.

The form must therefore be counter-signed by or on behalf of the Head of School to signify that this pre-screening process has been undertaken

I approve the submission of this application

.................................................................................................................. Date

Signed by or on behalf of the Head of School

Date
APPENDIX III

Phase 1 – Interview protocol

Interview schedule 1 – SBMs

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Opening

Introductions

Reassurances about anonymity and confidentiality etc

Permission to record

The SBM role

Briefly explain your role in the school
  • Main responsibilities

How important is your role in this school?
  • Explain

What are the main facilitators & barriers to you fulfilling your full potential?
  • Have these changed over time

How do you view the emergence of SBMs in general?
  • Is it an emerging profession?
  • Do you see this as a positive?
Would you agree that ongoing changes to schools are facilitating a requirement for SBMs?
  • Policy (ECM, Workforce remodelling etc)
  • Settings / arrangements (federations, academies etc)
  • Relevance to own context

Leadership

To what extent does the Headteacher distribute leadership of the school to other staff?
  • Members of SLT?
  • Examples

Does distributed leadership actually exist?
  • Headteacher as only true leader
  • Another term for Headteacher delegating work

How much leadership do you exercise within the school?
  • Member of SLT?
  • Strategic / operational planning?

Would you say you bring a different viewpoint to the leadership agenda?
  • Examples

Facilitators/Barriers to effectiveness of the SBM role

How would you describe the working relationship between yourself and the Headteacher?
  • How important is this?

Would you say the teaching staff are aware of the exact nature of the SBM role?
  • What it involves, responsibilities etc
  • Has this improved / got worse over time

Would you say you have a sound understanding of the role of the teaching staff?
  • Wider curriculum
  • Could / should it be improved
Do you tend to work collaboratively?
  • How do you perceive one another?

How aware are the other school stakeholders of the SBM role?
  • Governors
  • Pupils
  • Parents
  • Has this improved / got worse over time

SBM impact

How would you describe the impact you have had in this school?
  • Workload
  • Resources
  • Pupils

Do you feel you have influenced the culture of the school?
  • Do you feel you will in the future?
  • How?

The future

What does the future hold for SBMs?
  • Increased remit?
  • Leaders of schools?
APPENDIX IV

Phase 2 – Interview protocol

Interview schedule - Phase 2

FBM – Ridge Lane and Carrbrook

**You role**
- How are things going at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook? How have things changed since we last spoke?
  - Role change - increased remit, responsibility
  - What kinds of things have you been doing? Examples (new systems, projects, initiatives etc)
- How have external changes (i.e. government policies, structural arrangements) affected your role?

**Leadership/management**
- Can you describe the leadership and management structure of the federation?
- What is your role within this?
  - Management of staff
  - Leadership - you mentioned that you wanted to develop this aspect. Have you achieved this at all?
  - Examples
- Has this changed since you started?
- Do you anticipate any further progression?
- What would you say you bring to the leadership/management agenda as a non-teacher?

**Facilitators/barriers to the effectiveness of the SBM role**
- How has the profile of your role changed since we last spoke?
  - Teachers
  - Pupils
  - Parents (community group?)
Governors

- What steps (if any) have you taken to increase your profile?
- How much direct contact do you have with these groups?
  - Collaboration

Collaboration

- How do you feel you are perceived in school?
- When we last spoke you told me that you didn’t think the teaching staff were fully aware of what your role involved. Has this changed?
  - Is there a cultural shift occurring? (i.e. teachers becoming more comfortable, familiar)

Impact

- What sort of impact have you been able to make in the school?
  - Headteacher/Senior Leader workload
  - Resource generation/savings
  - Pupils (indirectly?)
  - Initiatives/projects

- Main barriers to you fulfilling your potential? Facilitators?

Looking forward

- How do you see your role within the wider school improvement and development agenda in the coming months/years?
  - Increased remit

- What's next for you?
- What's next for the school/cluster?

What’s next for school business management in general
APPENDIX V

Coded interview transcript

Interview 1

FBM, Ridge Lane & Carrbrook Federation

Your role

Briefly explain your role in the school

My role within the federation is set at a strategic level. So looking at finance, health and safety all the usual things but because Carol is here at Carrbrook I don’t have to get involved with all the operational stuff that I do at Ridge Lane but I do look at the educational business and risk assessment side of things as well as presenting financial information to governors which Carrbrook previously bought into. Over at Ridge Lane I still get involved in the more operational stuff that Carol does here but I’m training my support staff to take some of that on.

How important is your role in this school?

There are three of us in a federation post, the Executive Head, the Executive Deputy and myself so I see my role as vitally important because you’ve got that rounded view at leadership level looking at T&L but all the stuff that supports it too. To have simply had the Executive Head and Deputy at leadership level might have meant that you had loads of great ideas but not been able to execute them because you’re not looking at the whole picture so I think it’s vital that I work at the level I do.

What are the main barriers to you fulfilling your full potential?

One of the barriers is time because it’s a new role and a new post so it’ll be very time consuming in the first year to set it up and to get it into a workable fashion. The fact that we’re across two sites will also compound this because we need to ensure that at least one of the three is on site at both schools during the school day but then the problem is that we never get to see each other as a team. So it’s only a temporary barrier but I think we’ve all acknowledged that that this first year’s going to be a bit of a learning period. Another potential barrier is that I’m not sure this role is as widely accepted in this school as it is in Ridge Lane because the current SBM already has a very different role to the one I had so some of the things I do will potentially raise a few eyebrows because it’s a new role for the staff as well, particularly at strategic level.

How do you view the emergence of SBMs in general?
I think it's good and I think it's getting there. Headteachers quite often still have some reservations about them because they don't always see it as a new post rather they try and imagine existing staff in that different role and I think that's difficult for them because currently not everyone who is employed in the school office as an office manager, finance officer, bursar etc has the capacity to be a business manager. So for a lot of heads there's some rethinking to be done because they do think of it as an upskilling of an existing staff member and I think that's the message that we need to get across that that's not necessarily what we're suggesting, it could be a brand new person in your school. So in pockets it's very well received, some LAs embrace it, in others there's still a lot of hard work to get done. But I think we're getting there and it's improving, I don't feel there's anywhere where it's going backwards!

Would you agree that ongoing changes to schools are facilitating a requirement for SBMs?

I think so because the job is becoming too big. We're having a chat this morning because there's a visitor here from the local Secondary school who had their Ofsted recently and they're being encouraged to think about distributed leadership and new models of leadership and yet when Ofsted went in to the school they spoke to nobody else but the head. Now if schools are being challenged to embrace different leadership models other agencies that we're working with have to do that too because if the head has devolved responsibility to another person, even though they still have an overview, the other agencies need to realise that that's why its working so well because other staff have taken the responsibility. Business management is another one of them where the role of the SBM is becoming more prevalent because of arrangements like federations and trusts but maybe there's work to do with other agencies so if we were to have Ofsted next week but they only spoke with Janet she wouldn't be able to comprehensively discuss the areas I cover, she has an overview but not the 'nitty gritty' but if Ofsted didn't accept that that's the way the school is run then we could potentially fall down on that even though we have it covered. So that's just one area, which needs to be thought about, the way other agencies view the school and the SBM role if it's to truly flourish then the role needs to be accepted beyond the school.

Leadership

To what extent does the Headteacher distribute leadership of the school to other staff?

Janet is very good at distributed leadership and in all my employment is probably one of the best people I've worked for who is prepared to pass things on and leave people to do them. What you find is that people pass things on but don't really let go. Ridge Lane is perhaps better equipped than Carrbrook at taking on the challenge but that's perhaps part of Carrbrook's journey as they've traditionally had leadership in place which didn't really distribute so they are still in a habit of needing the head's approval before running with tasks rather than having the confidence in their own decisions. But that's just part of the culture of the school.
At Ridge Lane, if people are charged with a responsibility they will go with it, unless it's wildly out of the radar then they'll come back and double check it but within reason and that's they way the school has to work because no one person should really be checking every single thing. Whereas here the staff will still come and ask the Head if they can half an hour off, well there should be people in place who you can go and ask about that. So there's a bit more work to be done at Carrbrook I think.

How much leadership do you exercise within the school?

There are three of us over the federation so that poses an interesting question anyway in that; is my role technically higher than the deputies and assistants in the individual schools That's one thing. It's increasing because yesterday I took a phone call from a staff member here and dealt with an issue that required leadership and it was a teaching staff member too. I mean it was a health and safety issue but they rang me about it because Janet was out and Jenny was at a meeting. In my old school it's already accepted but across the federation it's now becoming apparent as well.

There are potential conflicts in that Kate was appointed as SBM around the same time Janet was asked to become Executive Head at Carrbrook and I think had that arrangement not been in place she might have looked at having just one Business Manager across the federation rather than the current arrangement. But I'm sure it will work ok in the end, as Kate will have some CPD out of the arrangement being able to work with Ridge Lane across both schools.

Would you say you bring a different viewpoint to the leadership agenda?

I think, a bit like a governor's role, what are we doing and why are we doing it this way, is it the right way to do it, will it achieve the results that we want? But often get involved in taking a lead on the learning environment like looking at pupil data and challenging trends and dips. I'd say the only thing I really don't get involved in is delivering the lessons aside from that I'd say I have a finger in most pies in school but I want to do some classroom observations to see how the teachers are using the resources.

Working relationships / understanding of SBM role

How would you describe the working relationship between yourself and the Headteacher?

Jane and I have an excellent working relationship and always have done and perhaps that's why everything's been such a success so far. Bravely, she invests a lot of trust in people. With Jenny now also involved the three of us work very well together. That wasn't always the case at Ridge Lane with their SLT, which didn't have that level of mutual trust. But when you have it, you'll cover each other's backs and you'll pick each other up. It's not a critical thing it's a genuine support of one another and a high level
of trust running through which makes the team work well. But then I think that come from the belief that we all had that the federation was the right thing to do, so there was a common goal if you like that forged us together: 'If we're going to make it work, we're going to make it work!' That's affected the working relationship we have.

Would you say the teaching staff are aware of the exact nature of the SBM role?

In Ridge Lane yes, but here it's a new role so perhaps not as much and because Kate's role is a bit different to mine I wouldn't like to answer that for Carrbrook.

Would you say you have a sound understanding of the role of the teaching staff?

Yes, not in as much as what goes on in the lessons but aware of the need of the curriculum leaders and the impact that has on their time and lesson planning and also the statutory requirements of the children. I have a basic understanding of what their job entails.

Do you tend to work collaboratively?

Yeah, an example of that would be sitting down with the foundation team who are looking to re-designing their outdoor playground where I'd be involved in the contracting and in speaking to them about what they need it for and what kind of things they would like to achieve with it. I also sit in on the sustainability and global education groups since I actually have responsibilities alongside the teacher's for leading those projects so it's pretty good at Ridge Lane, I think there has been a change which none of us has tried to engineer, part of it has been the introduction of the creative curriculum so before you might have had the History specialists having their own portion of the budget for resources whereas with the creative curriculum means that most of the topics are looked together there's been a culture change in the way we do things in school and it's much more joined up. Nobody asked for that to happen but now everybody knows what everybody needs and we buy resources together and also work more collaboratively.

Aside from that, the other thing has probably been my elevation from being an Administrative Officer to being FBM and part of the FLT has sent a message out to staff about how the school views the role. When I started it wasn't on the SLT.

How aware are the other school stakeholders (e.g. Governors, pupil's parents etc) of the SBM role?

They're all aware of it at Ridge Lane, the governors are aware of the federation role although I'm not sure the Ridge Lane parents are aware of the federation role because for them it's no different to what it was before apart from I'm not in the school every day anymore. But as regards to the day to day business manager our parents now accept it and know who to speak to and they will talk to me about issues such as behaviour and even though I might not be able to answer their queries I can pass it on.
and they feel they're speaking to somebody who knows about it. When I started it was
different but over time they've seen me out and about in school so have come to realise
the role and view me in a different way. They still know it as an office space past as it
were but they will talk to me as one of the management about issues they traditionally
would have gone to the teacher's with.

SBM impact

How would you describe the impact you have had in this school?

In financial terms, four years ago we were having redundancies and we're not now
because we manage our budget much more effectively so that's been a big impact on
the school. And we've not stopped spending, just managing better. The premises are
now on a rolling programme and things are refurbished regularly which wasn't in
place previously. I think people realise they have someone else to talk to because Janet
is busy and always has been busy but there's another voice now so if people come
wandering down and she's not here they have someone else to listen to. I think
we have a slicker operation of systems and procedures now and these haven't
all been me personally as the team I've built (a new admin officer and clerical
assistant) have been able to play a part too. It's about hiring people to do things they
are good at and allowing them to make changes without being precious about it being
done a particular way.

Do you feel you have influenced the culture of the school?

I'd like to think I have. I'd like to think that there's now a different way of doing things,
not because the old way was wrong but because it's different now. Whether it's about
buying stuff, about the communication on grievances and stuff like that, I think I
probably have but it's also down to the team because I couldn't have done it without
Janet's support and encouragement. No one person can change these things alone,
Janet had the vision for how she envisaged things would be done and from that has
been able to work it with the help of the family of schools working together, by some of
the contracts we've had with the National College who've been able to facilitate some
of the work and between us all we've hooked into different things which have made a
difference. Because of the way it's developed its sustainable because its not one persons
change, people have bought into it at different levels and brought different things to it
then we've a higher likelihood of success than if it had been a case of 'this is how we
want things done now', but Ridge Lane was a successful school already so maybe it
was easier, at Carrbrook we may not be able to wait until people buy into the new
arrangement we might have say that 'this is the way it's got to be done now'. So
context is important, at Ridge Lane there was a readiness and willingness to try new
things as Janet had been there longer and had chance to develop their culture with
distributed leadership and spreading ownership of tasks throughout the school so stuff
felt confidence in their own skills. That was apparent in simple things like performance
management systems that weren't in place at Carrbrook so they were never praised
for doing things well or told where they needed to improve. If you're told your doing

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Comment [PA45]: Fin:man

Comment [PA46]: Sys:other

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Comment [PA48]: Sys:other, PD:supp-mstf, Cop:build

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Comment [PA50]: Sys:other

Comment [PA51]: Fin:supp

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Comment [PA53]: Cult:ber

Comment [PA54]: Staff:supp
something well it encourages you and builds confidence but also if you're struggling with something you know that twice a year you have your appraisal and it serves as a forum to voice your opinion and sort any problems out, it's a better system all round where people feel valued.

The future

What does the future hold for SBMs?

Some days I would argue for people progressing up through the qualifications to be leading schools, even without QTS but in a smaller school like a primary I think you would need to have a background knowledge of teaching because your much more hands on whereas the leader of a federation there's nothing to say that a highly skilled SBM couldn't lead a group of five schools. But if we were talking about leading learning you'd have to have a very good understanding of what leading that learning really means. Alternatively you have a lead Headteacher and a SBM working side by side so that's one end of it. I think we've got a long way to go to deal with the challenges of a lot of the people who currently work in schools and their skill level because as good as the press is at getting the message out there about SBMs I think some people think they'll just change their title from Admin Officer to SBM and that's it and that can be damaging because if a Headteacher goes to a school with a SBM who isn't really a SBM then the negative PR doesn't do the profession any favours. So maybe there's some work to do there with an audit of current skills, perhaps the National College's Competency Framework will help with that. A lot will depend on the government and whether they can sustain this big push on it. It will continue to grow but perhaps slower if the National College and TDA aren't able to provide the support they are doing currently. However, the way current arrangements are developing with trusts and federations means there will remain a need for more SBMs.
APPENDIX VI

Example summary sheet

Interview 1 – summary sheet

FBM, Ridge Lane & Carrbrook Federation

Role

• Strategic role set at executive level alongside Exec Head and Exec Deputy
• Encompasses all usual SBM duties plus financial planning etc
• However, SBM at Carrbrook does operational stuff there and is training SBM support staff at Ridge Lane to do operational stuff at this site
• Leadership role
• Sees role as important – need to have ideas but also someone to be able to implement them

Barriers

• New role – take time to establish
• Less understood at Carrbrook
• Time consuming – compounded across two sites, all three members of exec team not in same place
• Lack of SBM capacity, sometimes a new staff member is needed rather than training existing staff
• Not all LAs understand role
• Cultural barrier
• OFSTED don’t speak to SBM
• Other agency view of SBM role
• Not sure they need two SBMs but lower SBM will gain valuable CPD from new arrangement

Leadership and management

• Exec distributes leadership, high level of trust and ownership of tasks
• At Carrbrook, staff still require permission to run with tasks, need to double check
• FBM role technically set above Deputies and Ass Heads
• In charge when Exec Head and Exec Dep are away
• FBM brings a different viewpoint to leadership agenda
• Involved in many aspects of school
• Wants to do classroom observations – see how teachers use resources
• FBM has management responsibilities but more leadership orientated

Working relationships
- Very strong working relationship between FBM & Exec Head
- High mutual trust, more so at Ridge Lane than Carrbrook
- Common goal, shared understanding
- Teachers understand FBM role at Ridge Lane, less so at Carrbrook
- FBM has basic understanding of teachers role
- Works with teachers on projects
- Being on SLT has promoted role to other staff members
- Governors aware of role
- Ridge Lane parents aware of SBM role
- Cultural change occurring, role slowly growing in status

**SBM impact**

- Financial impact (systems and processes streamlined)
- Cultural impact (see above)
- Support staff – appraisals, raised their profile, built confidence
- Support of Exec Head v. important

**Future ambitions**

- Difficult to lead a school without specialist teaching knowledge
- Possibly lead a federation?
- Negative PR for SBMs
  Can government sustain current push to raise SBM profile and train SBMs
## Appendix VII

### List of codes for interview data

#### Table of codes (for interview data)

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<th>Aspirations</th>
<th>Professional ambition</th>
<th>Personal ambition</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Prof-amb</td>
<td>Per-amb</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilitators and barriers to SBM implementation</th>
<th>Barriers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New role</td>
<td>Lack of understanding of role</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lack of awareness of role</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lack of collaboration</td>
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<td>Lack of agreement</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cultural barrier</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Low SBM profile</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lack of funds</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Resistance to change</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lack of support</td>
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<td>Lack of time</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New role</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facilitators</td>
<td>Lack of capacity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Headteacher support</td>
<td>Head-supp</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff support</td>
<td>Staff-supp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative culture</td>
<td>Coll-cul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared understanding</td>
<td>Shared-und</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of role</td>
<td>Und-role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of role</td>
<td>Aware-role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate funding for role</td>
<td>Fund-role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High SBM profile</td>
<td>Prof-high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBM qualifications</td>
<td>SBM-qual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBM experience</td>
<td>SBM-ex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBM knowledge</td>
<td>SBM-know</td>
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<tr>
<td>SBM on SLT</td>
<td>SBM-SLT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>Trust</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SBM Impact**

**Financial**
- Financial management
- Saved money
- Generated income
- Economies of scale
- Contract negotiation

**Headteacher**
- Workload
- Saved time
- Less administrative work

**Support staff**
- Staff appraisals
- Professional development
- Raise profile of support staff
- Capacity building

**Pupils**
- Pupil projects
- Improved learning resources

**Systems and processes**
- Accounts system
- Catering
- Other systems
- Cultural impact
## APPENDIX VIII

### Example data display

**Interview 1: FBM, Ridge Lane and Carrbrook Federation - Code locator table**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary code</th>
<th>Secondary code</th>
<th>Initial code</th>
<th>Initial code label</th>
<th>Location*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SBM role</td>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Strategic</td>
<td>Strat</td>
<td>1 top, 1 bottom, 3 top, 3 middle, 1 top</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Operational</td>
<td>Oper</td>
<td>1 top</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duties</td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Fin</td>
<td>1 top</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health and safety</td>
<td>H&amp;S</td>
<td>1 top</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Partnership work</td>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>2 middle, 3 middle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>1 top, 2 bottom, 3 top, 3 top</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Data management</td>
<td>Data</td>
<td>3 bottom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Project management</td>
<td>Proj-man</td>
<td>4 middle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collaboration with teachers</td>
<td>Coll-teach</td>
<td>4 middle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBM impact</td>
<td>Support staff</td>
<td>Professional development</td>
<td>PD-supp-staff</td>
<td>1 top, 5 middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Staff appraisals</td>
<td>Staff-app</td>
<td>5 bottom, 6 top</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Raise profile of support staff</td>
<td>Raise-prof-supp</td>
<td>6 top</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Capacity building</td>
<td>Cap-build</td>
<td>5 middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systems and processes</td>
<td>Other systems</td>
<td>Other systems</td>
<td>Syst-other</td>
<td>5 top, 5 middle, 5 middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barriers</td>
<td>Lack of time</td>
<td>Lack-time</td>
<td>1 bottom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of understanding</td>
<td>Lack-und</td>
<td>1 bottom, 2 bottom, 3 bottom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of awareness</td>
<td>Lack-aware</td>
<td>4 bottom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural barrier</td>
<td>Barr-cult</td>
<td>1 bottom, 2 top, 2 top, 2 middle, 2 bottom, 2 bottom, 4 top, 5 bottom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New role</td>
<td>New role</td>
<td>1 bottom, 4 top, 3 bottom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of capacity</td>
<td>Lack-cap</td>
<td>2 top, 6 middle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of collaborative culture</td>
<td>Lack-coll</td>
<td>3 bottom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitators</td>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>3 bottom, 4 top</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shared understanding</td>
<td>Shared-und</td>
<td>4 top</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collaborative culture</td>
<td>Coll-cul</td>
<td>4 middle, 5 bottom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SBM knowledge</td>
<td>SBM know</td>
<td>4 middle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Awareness of role</td>
<td>Aware-role</td>
<td>4 bottom, 4 bottom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Headteacher support</td>
<td>Head-supp</td>
<td>5 bottom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual characteristics</td>
<td>Aspirations</td>
<td>Professional ambition</td>
<td>SBM on SLT</td>
<td>SBM-SLT</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal ambition</td>
<td>Per-amb</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Working relationship with Head</td>
<td>Rel-Head</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive relationship</td>
<td>Rel-pos</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Denotes page number of transcript and area of page*
## APPENDIX IX

### Table of key emerging themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overarching theme (and research question they address)</th>
<th>Sub-theme</th>
<th>Evidence/source</th>
<th>Implications for discussion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SBM role RQ1 &amp; RQ2</td>
<td>Leadership and management</td>
<td>All the SBMs have management elements to their roles but some also have leadership responsibility. At the primary collaborative they have two SBMs, one holds a high-status position across the federation (FBM) the other is based in a single school and predominantly managerial with operational duties. At the single primary the SBM has elements of leadership and management but has an assistant to cover most of her operational duties, this is the same at the cross-phase collaborative and the single secondary.</td>
<td>The status and influence of the SBM appears to depend on the attitude of the principal towards the role. The more forward thinking principals appear to have SBMs working at a higher level with greater freedoms. The more traditional principals seem less likely to support the elevation of the SBM role to a high-status school leadership position as evidenced by the failed model at Ainsworth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Breadth and depth of the role</td>
<td>The SBMs at each case are responsible for a wide range of different areas in their settings including finance, HR, health and safety, premises, support staff, community links and fund raising. At the single secondary the SBM also works with the feeder schools (around 25) to provide business management support and facilitate collaborative initiatives and projects. The SBM at the single primary is responsible for the line management and timetabling of all teaching assistants.</td>
<td>There are issues surrounding burnout and work/life balance for some of the SBMs who are working very long hours. The single secondary talked of a regular 70 week whilst the single primary worked in the evenings and weekends to get tasks complete. The SBM at the primary collaborative explained that their SLT had discussions about sustainability and the risk unfair expectations placed on a new staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At both models in the appendices the SBM is working alone across 5+ schools with both complaining of not having enough time in each to be effective.

Are there an optimum number of schools a SBM can work with before they are spread too thinly?

**Differences between the roles (similar to the differences between a primary and secondary Principal)**

The role differs widely between settings. The SBMs at the primary sector settings has a much more hands on role interacting with pupils, staff and parents compared to the secondary SBMs who are less visible around the school and tend to work in a more isolated environment with assistants to conduct their operational duties.

In the cross-phase setting there are dedicated business management assistants working in each of the schools with the SBM in an overarching ‘Director’ role.

Issues of transferability as evidenced by the problems both SBMs faced at the cross-phase collaborative when the role was ‘split’ leading to one SBM leaving. The skills required to be a SBM at primary and secondary level appear very different.

In a collaborative (i.e. federation, trust) the role is too big for one person so a business management team appears to be the chosen solution.

**Internal vs. external candidate**

The SBM at the primary collaborative had worked there for a number of years and developed her role from an administrator to FBM. The SBM at the single primary was an external appointment to the role.

Culturally it seems easier for the internal candidate to embed their role compared with the external particularly as the external was the first SBM in the single primary.

**Professional background**

Not having a background in education was a barrier to the SBM at the failed model who struggled for acceptance and credibility with the school leaders. The other SBMs all have a professional history educational.

Do you need experience of the nuances of education to work as a SBM?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional development RQ1 &amp; RQ4</th>
<th>Qualification/certification</th>
<th>All the SBMs had completed some form of professional qualification or certification associated with their role. This was mainly the NCSL diplomas though other had accountancy and business qualifications.</th>
<th>Is the role a profession? Even if it is 'officially' (as registered under chartered professions) is it taken seriously by other educational stakeholders?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional/personal ambition</td>
<td></td>
<td>The FBM at the primary collaborative had taken on an additional role with the NCSL as had the SBM at the single secondary (and the SBM at one of the case studies being dropped from the main thesis).</td>
<td>What spaces exist for SBMs who outgrow their settings? Does a collaborative provide more opportunities for development?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The SBM at the primary had also expressed an interest in completing the NPQH.</td>
<td>Can an SBM lead a school?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The SBM at the single primary felt her personal ambition would outgrow her setting in time and she would have to leave to fulfil her potential.</td>
<td>If a hyper-productive SBM develops their role into one that cannot be sustained once they have left (i.e. through working long hours and taking on more than they are paid to do) is this necessarily a positive thing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical location of SBM RQ1</td>
<td>Within school vs. outside school</td>
<td>The SBM at the single primary is based in the school office at the 'front of house' whereas the SBM at the cross-phase setting is based in a separate building external from the schools.</td>
<td>The cross-phase setting is a more business like operation with strategic management taking place externally compared to the single primary, which runs a more traditional educational model.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual characteristics RQ4</td>
<td>Personalities</td>
<td>The more successful and high achieving/performing SBMs tend to be those with an intense work ethic who are willing to put in long hours and are driven to go above and</td>
<td>Despite its growth, there remains resistance to the role in some areas of education (particularly the primary school sector). Like the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ4</td>
<td>Relationships</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The SBM at the primary collaborative has a very strong relationship with</td>
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<td></td>
<td>the Executive Headteacher, as does the SBM at the single primary.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The Governors at the primary collaborative also enjoy a healthy relationship</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with the SBM.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The level of trust between the SBMs and their Headteachers is very high in</td>
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<td></td>
<td>those cases, which have proved successful. The Headteachers are comfortable</td>
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<td></td>
<td>with their SBMs making decisions based on their professional knowledge</td>
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<td></td>
<td>without having to monitor or micro-manage. This was not the case in the</td>
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<td></td>
<td>failed model where many of the Headteachers from the smaller schools felt</td>
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<td></td>
<td>uncomfortable relinquishing responsibility to the SBM.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SQ4</td>
<td>Profile</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of the SBM role</td>
<td>The SBMs at the primary collaborative and secondary had worked hard to raise their profiles in their settings. Not only with senior leaders and governors but also with teachers,</td>
<td>A clear understanding of the role and its purpose in school is key for the SBM to fulfil their potential, become accepted and work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBM Impact</td>
<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>The Headteachers at the collaborative and secondary settings felt they could not fulfil their role without their SBM. The workload of the HT has been reduced and/or re-aligned so that they are focusing on what they are trained to do (i.e. T&amp;L)</td>
<td>HT role more attractive with a qualified SBM in place. The HT role has grown too big for a single leader not only in volume but also in diversity. HTs are not financial or business professionals.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>The SBMs in each case study can point to significant financial savings and monetary generation through a range of projects, grants and initiatives.</td>
<td>Evidence suggests that, given time, an SBM can save and generate more than their annual salary.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitating support staff CPD</td>
<td>SBMs as ‘champions of support staff’ (e.g. new systems, processes for CPD at Cross Vale and Ridge Lane &amp; Carrbrook)</td>
<td>Two tier system developing with SBM ‘looking after’ non-teaching staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils</td>
<td>There are numerous examples of SBMs making both direct (i.e. securing a grant for a new IT suite, an outdoor learning area, establishing a Montessori Nursery) and indirect (i.e. through allowing the HT to focus on T&amp;L more closely, saving money in other areas which can then be put into new facilities for pupils) impacts on pupils.</td>
<td>Everything they do has some link to improving educational experience and outcomes for pupils.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration vs. Competition RQ4</td>
<td>Shared vision/understanding/ethos</td>
<td>The two case studies in the appendices both have a shared SBM model which has faced significant barriers due to the lack of shared vision as to the role of the SBM and the wider strategic direction of the</td>
<td>This seems to be a case of modernisation vs. tradition with smaller schools protective of their independence and identity and larger schools wanting to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
partnership. collaborate and share provision (i.e. Executive Headteacher and Governing Body).

Can small schools survive economically with sharing services? Is the old model sustainable long-term? Can the SBM form part of the solution?

Educational change Resistance to change from staff created barriers to the SBM at the single primary as well as the failed model.

Time, perseverance and the full support of the HT and Governors are central to success. This was present in the single primary, which has reaped the benefits of the SBM and their new systems and processes. Not so in the failed model.

Role of the LA
RQ1 & RQ4 Dismantling of the middle tier of education The cross-phase collaborative was converting into Academy status towards the end of the data collection

The smaller schools in the failed model were very resistant to the idea of a trust or federation model and reluctant to leave LA control.

In the primary collaborative, the LA would not recognise the SBM as a school leader meaning she could not be paid at the same salary scale as the educational leaders despite having the same level (or more) of responsibility.

Without a Local Authority the SBM has more responsibility to facilitate the provision of services no longer available to schools. Are they capable and/or qualified to do so?

The LA also provides a comfort blanket, which some schools are reluctant to dispose of.

Such tensions could add weight to a potential decision to become an academy.
APPENDIX X

Case Report: Hamley Cluster

Case E - Hamley Cluster

Context

The Hamley cluster is a group of small schools located in a rural community to the East of England. The cluster consists of one secondary school with just under 600 pupils, nine primary schools with pupil numbers ranging from 35 to 250 and a children’s centre. The pupils in this area tend to come from fairly advantageous backgrounds, with the number receiving free-school meal provision at the secondary school well below average. Very few pupils are of ethnic minority background or speak English as an additional language. Low pupil numbers and falling rolls combined with the isolated rural setting mean the risk of closure or amalgamation, particularly for the very small primary schools, is fairly constant. Whilst there is a history of loose and informal collaborative practice, each school in the cluster is an independent setting with its own governing body.

SBM provision

At the start of 2009 the cluster appointed a SBM to work across all ten schools and establish a shared support structure in areas such as strategic management, finance, administration and income generation. The post-holder would also work to improve links with children’s services and the wider community (in line with the ECM agenda) whilst generating enough income to cover their own salary thereby making the role self-sustaining. The new SBM would be based at the secondary school and split his time between secondary school business (three days per week) and wider cluster business (two days per week).

Prior to this appointment neither the secondary school nor any of the primary schools had ever employed or had access to a SBM with school business being covered by school secretaries or administrative staff and the Headteachers of each school. In the secondary school the Deputy Head was responsible for non-teaching aspects of the school. The incoming SBM had no previous professional experience in the education or public sector having spent 20 years working in the banking industry.
Baseline/Case visit 1

The case site was first visited in September 2009, eight months after the SBM had been appointed, to gain an insight into the specifics of the SBM role and how the incumbent had settled into their new position. During this visit, interviews were conducted with the LA Officer, the SBM and two of the primary headteachers from the cluster.

**SBM role**

Crucially, there appeared to be widespread support for the role amongst headteachers within the cluster. They were optimistic about the opportunities the role could bring viewing the SBM as a conduit through which they could channel ideas and solve problems collectively whilst also taking advantage of economies of scale:

> We do as small schools feel very isolated and although the cluster works well it's great to have a point of reference who we can ask about certain issues...somebody we can refer to and get some advice from and also the financial clout, a buying group, that gives us much better value for money.

(Primary Headteacher, Hamley, 2009)

The LA were fully supportive of the appointment and, mindful of the challenges facing schools within their jurisdiction, felt it could help provide a service that they themselves were no longer able to offer. They therefore offered to provide assistance to the schools in the organisation and management of the role across the cluster:

> In terms of deployment, if you look at this cluster, in the way numbers are going at the moment, number on roll, it could give strength if you can share staff...and we recognise that for a rural community this is the only way forward, to work collaboratively.

(LA Officer, 2009)

What was immediately evident from the interview with the SBM was the breadth and diversity of his role. This was probably a consequence of the number of schools he was working across, each with different business management requirements, whilst the Headteacher of the secondary school had placed the SBM onto his SLT, delegated him line management duties over all non-teaching staff (aside from TAs), together with his standard business management duties looking after finance, human resources and premises:

> I'm working across a cluster of schools to try to input into the strategic direction of what is happening with those schools, to be part of the SLT within the high school and also provide some additional management and support to the primary schools...within the high school there's been no business management structure, no site management so I've picked up the overall role of SBM within the high school and have the caretaker, admin and catering teams reporting to me.

(SBM, Hamley, 2009)

**Leadership and management**

During the eight months in which the SBM had been in post the SBM had played more of a managerial role amongst those he was responsible for. Yet he felt he was slowly starting to change behaviours and influence their working practices by ringing in some of his ideas from the private sector. For example, he had recently introduced a new
system of regular work appraisals for support staff who never previously received them. He also felt his presence on the SLT was allowing him to make similar inroads in terms of changing certain practices and offering a genuinely new viewpoint on certain areas of the school:

My experience in working outside of schools and certainly when we’ve done recruitment and things I’ve come at things from a different angle in terms of what we should be doing and how we should approach things. I’ve had some different views about how we should manage certain individuals in relation to things like annual leave and appraisals.

(SBM, Hamley, 2009)

**Working relationships/profile**

The SBM described the constructive and positive working relationship he enjoyed with the headteacher of the secondary school highlighting the mutual respect they had for one another’s roles. In terms of the teaching staff the SBM felt he would like to develop his knowledge of their practice more but was realistic about the level of knowledge he had been able to pick up over an eight month period. Despite his relative lack of understanding of teaching and learning he had been able to collaborate with teachers at the secondary school on certain projects requiring his input which was helping to raise his profile amongst teaching staff:

we’re doing a building project for a dance studio so I’ve had involvement with the PE department and one of the other teachers on the SLT has been working with me on CPD training so it varies across the school. It’s improved over time and gradually as things pop up that involves me then I’ve always got off to a decent relationship with somebody.

(SBM, Hamley, 2009)

He had also been raising his profile with pupils across the cluster by working on projects where his expertise was felt to be beneficial:

I’ve met with some of the pupils from the Head Team they have at the high school, they wanted to put some benches in the playground so they did a presentation to me. Also, one of the primary schools did a mock Apprentice thing and they asked me to go over and be Alan Sugar because of my business background and I’m due to talk to some of the kids about financial management...I’m always happy to interact with them given the opportunity.

(SBM, Hamley, 2009)

The governors at the secondary school were well aware of the SBM and his role mainly because he was contracted to work for three days a week at their school and also because he was based there full-time. For the same reasons the SBM thought it likely that some of the governing bodies at the smaller schools were perhaps not as aware of the specifics of his role. Similarly, he had had minimal contact with parents at any of the schools in the cluster so they too would have little understanding of his role although there was a section in the secondary school prospectus describing him and his position.

**Barriers to the SBM role**
The biggest issue facing the SBM appeared to be the sheer scale of his task in trying to spread his time across the ten schools in the cluster particularly as he was contracted to work three days a week (60% of his time) in the secondary school. This only gave him two days a week to work with the wider cluster. At the time of the case visit, the SBM seemed to be managing this as only a small number of schools were required his support. However, he remained concerned that should all the schools need his support simultaneously then he would not have the time or resource to support them.

Furthermore, each school in the cluster was totally independent from the rest with their own governing bodies, their own priorities and issues specific to their locality. Whilst they had a strong history of collaboration it was informal and on a voluntary basis. For the cross-cluster model to be effective there would have to be a more formalised and collective agreement between the headteachers and governing bodies of the schools in the cluster raising concerns about the management of the SBM role:

*From the workforce development perspective our biggest worry is governance because if every school in the cluster has got a governing body, who governs these new roles that effectively go across cluster?*

(LA Officer, Hamley, 2009)

There was also a perception that the stakeholders of the smaller, rural schools (i.e. Headteachers, Governors, local community), protective of their independence and identity, were reluctant to change and the acceptance that it was necessary for their survival in the 21st century. For the cross-cluster business management model to be effective it would have to be sensitive to the individual needs of each school yet also have the support and collective vision of all stakeholders:

*Obviously the Headteachers in all of the schools are particularly important in terms of setting direction and accepting that someone needs to be brought on board and changes have to be made ...understanding of governors is a barrier, reluctance of people in rural communities to see that their school does need to change to survive in the future.*

(SBM, Hamley, 2009)

As the SBM had only been in place for eight months (at the time of the case study visit) it remained to be seen whether these concerns would become genuine barriers to the success of the model or subside over time.

**SBM Impact**

Despite the relatively short time in which the SBM had been in post he had made some tangible impacts throughout the cluster. As an example, he had led on projects to improve IT provision, developing and initiating new systems of financial management and HR and secured a grant to improve the catering facilities at the secondary school. In such instances there was a sense that (without the SBM) these were initiatives where the headteachers felt they would not have had the time or competence to execute as effectively or at all:

*The grant bid we did for the kitchens got us £27,000 and I wrote quite a comprehensive bid and Colin [secondary headteacher] said ‘I’ve read that and its really good. If we’d have had to do that it would have been me and the*
deputy and we’d have had to find an hour to sit down and do it but it wouldn’t have been anywhere near as good as that and we might not have got the money.’

(SBM, Hamley, 2009)

The SBM has provided effective and valuable support for me as a headteacher in a small school by dealing with a number of tasks such as contracts, FMSiS support and potential building work. This has enabled me to redirect my attention towards other activities more closely connected with the teacher part of my role.

(Primary Headteacher, Hamley, 2009)

The SBM was of the opinion that he was slowly changing the systems and practices in those areas he was responsible for and that much of this could be attributed to his background, outside of the education sector:

I talk a bit differently to people who’ve spent all their working lives in education and I’ve had a lot of productive discussion with another member of the SLT about change management and things like that...I try to make sure people understand where I’m coming from and what my values are because that helps them to make their own decisions and to adapt to the culture your trying to implement.

(SBM, Hamley, 2009)

On a broader scale, he also felt that there was a cultural shift occurring in schools predicting a future with more collaboration, both between schools and with other outside agencies, thus facilitating the requirement and development of school business management as a profession:

clearly the Conservatives have a policy that encourages more collaboration with business and outside partners for schools and, if that the case, somebody needs to facilitate that which is where SBMs come in so going forward I see the role as a vital ingredient for 21st century schools.

(SBM, Hamley, 2009)

Case site visit 2

Hamley was visited for a second time in September 2010 around 18 months since the inception of the new model and the SBM taking up post. During this visit, interviews were conducted with the SBM, the Headteacher of the secondary school and one of the primary school headteachers.

SBM role

Since the previous visit there had been some significant changes at Hamley. Firstly, following a cluster-wide consultation three of the original 10 schools decided that they no longer wanted to buy into the shared SBM provision and therefore opted out of the arrangement. Secondly, the secondary school had formally federated with one of the primary schools and now shared a governing body. The SBM had also taken up a second post with the National College as a SBM Advisor. In some ways his role had become more manageable because the cluster had been reduced to seven schools yet the federation arrangement meant he was now spending more time with the federated
primary school and with no administrative support he was concerned about the
direction his role appeared to be taking:

*I'm picking up more work from Hamley Primary as well. Where I'm finding
that a little bit difficult is balancing it against trying to support the other
primary schools. I don't really think they thought through the issue of
sustainability enough and what they really wanted from the role longer
term...I'm appointed as an ASBM so technically speaking I should be doing
more strategic stuff...but I just think that there's too much practical stuff that
needs doing*

(SBM, Hamley, 2010)

Despite the increased operational aspects of the role as a result of the federation his role
at the secondary school had not changed significantly since the previous case site visit.
Rather, the role had become more embedded within the school with a number of new
systems and practices he had established earlier in his tenure starting to take effect and
the other staff in the school becoming accustomed to his presence and the purpose of his
role.

**Leadership and Management**

The new federation was still in its infancy when the case site was visited for a second
time and the two schools had therefore not fully integrated their leadership and
management structures with each still having their own SLTs. The SBM remained a fully
fledged member of the secondary school SLT along with the Headteacher and Deputy
whom he met with on a weekly basis to discuss day to day school business matters and
more strategic long term plans:

*We receive Martin’s reports and effectively the business decisions are made in
that small group. Martin’s involved in the strategic management in that
regard, he’s currently working on a strategic ICT plan for the school, doing
some future gazing to come up with a hardware plan that will ensure us for
the next ten years.*

(Headteacher, Hamley, 2010)

He also held school management meetings with the federated primary school
Headteacher but was not involved with leadership and management at any of the other
primary schools in the cluster who he tended to work with on an ad hoc basis as and
when his services were required. He remained line manager for all support staff at the
secondary school and had continued to overhaul their working conditions, particularly
contractual arrangements which had seen many support staff on temporary contracts
for several years, a situation which, according to the Headteacher, was clearly
unacceptable:

*He's made a significant difference in terms of the management of the support
staff. We have got, through ignorance and old fashioned practice to put it
nicely, all sorts of inappropriate and inadequate management of support
staff... and it was neither efficient nor, frankly, in line with statutory
requirements. We were in breach of the law in a number of areas, unwittingly
of course. He's regularized all of that and we've got staff now who's
employment conditions are appropriate and as a result are much more aware
of their role in the bigger picture.*

(Headteacher, Hamley, 2010)
For the Headteacher, the SBMs impact in leading and managing school business has been huge, not least because he is the first SBM they had employed. Prior to his arrival, non-teaching matters were the responsibility of the Deputy Headteacher, who obviously did not have the capacity or expertise to organise this area of the school effectively, therefore in many instances (as with the support staff contracts) this area became neglected:

*Before it was an area that wasn’t managed, it just happened! It’s a focus on resource management, both human and physical, making us aware of the cost of what we’re doing, enabling us to make informed decisions where, previously, things had just happened because of historical precedent.*

(Headteacher, Hamley, 2010)

**Working relationships/profile**

The SBM had continued to build his profile within the cluster although being based, and spending much of his time, at the secondary school meant it was here where awareness of his role had grown the most. For instance, the teaching staff at the secondary school had become accustomed to having someone with his expertise available to address issues efficiently where previously these might have been neglected for prolonged periods or even disregarded completely:

*I think they have appreciated the fact that he has got things done where previously there had been a lack of knowledge on how to do things, a lack of expertise, or simply that the workload has prevented anything from happening. For example, we had a problem in a science laboratory where the room was exceptionally cold so he’s had the ceiling lowered in the room at relatively low cost and various other modifications which has improved the environment enormously. That was something the school had been talking about for many years.*

(Secondary Headteacher, Hamley, 2010)

The SBM had clearly made a conscious effort to be a visible presence within the secondary school and interact with as many of the school stakeholders as possible. He had also continued his work with the pupils, liaising with the Extended School Coordinator and the building contractors currently working at the school to allow some art students to display their work on the boards around the building site.

As previously highlighted, prior to the SBM’s appointment the Deputy Headteacher was, where possible, responsible for management of non-teaching provision at the secondary school. However, the transition of this responsibility to the SBM had created some challenges particularly around the IT provision which the Deputy had evidently been reluctant to relinquish:

*It’s hot and cold I suppose, there are some things he’s very happy about when somebody approaches him and he says ‘that’s not me, you need to speak to Martin’ but the real thing he still sees as his baby is anything round ICT systems so I saw a couple of phone contractors recently which I think he was a bit annoyed about!*

(SBM, Hamley, 2010)

However, the SBM was sympathetic to the cultural change occurring at the secondary school and that changing deeply embedded practices, particularly considering the Deputy Head had worked there for over 20 years, required patience and understanding.
For the vast majority of staff there seemed to be a general acceptance that employing an SBM was the right thing to do if the school was to continue to function and move forward in times of austerity.

**Barriers to the SBM role**

One of the most significant barriers to the SBM role, indeed the whole model of shared SBM provision across the cluster, was sustainability and strategic planning. Having already seen three schools opt out of the arrangement, the SBM felt it was still unsustainable in the longer term for him to spread his time effectively across seven schools, particularly given the amount of time he was now spending in the federated schools. It also seemed that there were disparities between the schools in the cluster in terms of commitment to the shared arrangement and how requiring they were of his services and expertise which was having a detrimental effect on the effectiveness of his role the SBM model:

> Our cluster is probably more reflective of the average whereby you have some people who are positive and certain of the direction they want to go, some who aren’t sure and some who are a definite ‘no’ and what it does mean is that the decision making process and the speed of change and the ‘let’s go on this journey and be clear about how we’re going to make it happen’ becomes much harder.

(SBM, Hamley, 2010)

For the SBM, the best way forward would be for a smaller group of the more committed schools to break away and form a tighter cluster with a common purpose which would also be more manageable:

> I think there are two other schools that would federate with the High School if they were asked, now I think we should get them around the table and say ‘do you want to federate?’ If they say yes then the cluster becomes the High School and three primaries and what we might be saying then is ‘that’s the job I do, working across three primaries and the High school.’ We just get on and work towards it and because those people are of a like mind and are committing to it

(SBM, Hamley, 2010)

For some of the smaller schools whose small budgets were being squeezed there was a perception that the SBM was perhaps a luxury that they might no longer be able to justify in austere times:

> nobody knows what going to happen but if you’re going to have to make cuts then 1 day of teaching time against 1 day of Business Manager, well, you’re not going to cut the teaching time are you? The service is very good but I’m not sure it’s essential, it’s very useful.

(Headteacher, Primary School, 2010)

However, for the SBM there were other cultural issues emerging to explain why some schools were perhaps not so keen on retaining his services over the longer term with the idea that some Headteachers were quite comfortable with their non-teaching workload:

> There are a lot of cultural issues there, there’s at least one of the schools this year that didn’t purchase me because that’s the issue that was concerning
them. It’s a choice between me or teaching staff then, for that Head, it would have meant more time teaching and actually, that’s what we want to happen but from his point of view he’d rather have more time in the office.

(SBM, Hamley, 2010)

There was also an emerging issue of the SBM’s professional development and an impression that his career was perhaps developing beyond the capacity of the model in which he operated. As discussed previously, the size of the schools in the cluster and the associated lack of funds meant the SBM had no business management support and was therefore expected to cover operational and administrative duties himself. Yet having completed the ADSBM qualification and having taken on an SBM advisory role with the National College there was a sense that his ambitions were no longer being met in his current setting:

Personally, the issue I have is around my own level of satisfaction from the job and, actually, I’m not sure career wise this will give me what I’m looking for longer term because I think things that I want to do are difficult to fulfil here.

(SBM, Hamley, 2010)

**SBM Impact**

The amount of time the SBM had been able to save the Headteachers he had worked with was emphasised, particularly in the smaller schools where the Headteachers tended to have a significant teaching load meaning their time outside of the classroom was both short and precious:

I only get two days in the office and the rest of the time I’m teaching...which means that my admin time is very restricted so to have Martin to take on tasks, for example, we have a building project on at the moment to have a new classroom built and to have Martin meet with the builders, take quotes, visit the site and all that sort of thing has stopped me having to do it which has been really good.

(Primary Headteacher, Hamley, 2010)

For the Headteacher of the secondary school, it was not just the amount of time the SBM was saving but also that the school business management was being completed to a much higher and professional standard:

Before, it was very much a hit and miss with the Deputy doing as much as he could, me doing some of it and it was all very amateurish to be honest. Now there’s the clarity there and much greater efficiency as a result of that and this has saved me a lot of hassle, worry and, inevitably, time as well. I don’t have to fret about the business side of the school and sleep easier knowing that Martin is managing that.

(Secondary Headteacher, Hamley, 2010)

Project management was another area in which the SBM had made a tangible difference across the cluster, identifying areas requiring attention and implementing plans to address them then managing the projects from initiation to completion without the requirement of any significant time input from the Headteachers of the schools involved. For example, the SBM had arranged for a ceiling to be lowered in one of the secondary school classrooms to improve the learning environment and managed the project to build a new dance studio, obtaining quotes for the work and liaising with the building contractors and architects during the planning and construction phases (both
highlighted earlier). He had also identified cluster wide projects in areas where the schools could benefit significantly from shared provision and services whilst taking advantage of economies of scale:

> Little things like courses that he can run for all the cluster personnel, sometimes for all of us or sometimes it might be for Governors, updating your First Aid or Health and Safety at work etc so we can go to those. He’s also been getting contracts at a better price for the cluster than what we would pay for singly so that’s been something that worked quite well as well

(Primary Headteacher, Hamley, 2010)

Another example is the catering provision, a service supplied by the LA to the primary schools but not the secondary school who have their own catering service and manager. The SBM decided that the primary schools might benefit from moving away from the LA to use the secondary school’s catering service:

> We’ve taken over this year, and it was Martin’s idea, the operation of the Hamley Primary school kitchen which has increased massively the take-up of meals and also given us greater capacity because we also provide the meals for two other primary schools in the cluster the head Fox Street School has requested that we take over provision of meals for her school as soon as possible. Typically, where our Catering Manager has taken over contract and provision of meals from the LA, take-up of meals has increased two/three fold.

(Secondary Headteacher, Hamley, 2010)

This new arrangement has benefited everyone as the secondary school catering service increased their capacity whilst the smaller schools were clearly receiving a higher quality of service as evidenced by the increase in take-up. As the head of one primary school explained, this new arrangement would not necessarily save her school any money but would offer her pupils more choice and a higher standard of food than was previously offered by the LA supplied service.

Financially, the SBM had been able to generate income through successful bids for grant from organizations such as the National Lottery. Whilst this sort of impact was very welcome there remained a perception that it was a dispensable additional benefit rather than a necessity:

> We applied for a lottery grant to turn a graveled area into a landscaped garden and quiet area for the children and Martin applied for lottery funding for that on my behalf and we heard last week that we’d got…it’s the sort of thing I never have the time to do, the luxury extra bit of the job that you never quite get to because you’re trying to put out the fires all the time.

(Primary Headteacher, Hamley, 2010)

**Looking forward**

For the secondary Headteacher, despite this being the first SBM at his school and having been in post for just under two years, the role had become essential to the operation of the school:

> Knowing now, what he’s doing for us, I wouldn’t contemplate moving to another Headship in another school where there wasn’t a significant Business Manager presence. I don’t think the job is doable with having someone in place to take care of that side of things.
Furthermore, he felt that the financial issues of both government austerity measures (and the associated impact on LA provision) coupled with the ongoing challenge of sustainability for small schools in isolated, rural communities like Hamley meant that the role of a SBM would become even more important in the future if schools like those in their cluster were to survive. Particularly as it seemed like the only viable route to survival was more collaboration and partnership:

*With the declining influence of the LA, one scenario is that most of these schools are unsustainable and I think some of their Heads are well aware of that. If one of the Heads moved onto another school, would that school seek to recruit a new Headteacher or would it seek federation with the existing Hamley Federation. At that point, you may well retain T&L in different outposts but the school management would effectively happen from the centre both in terms of the strategic academic management and certainly the business management...If we believe there should be education provided locally in a very rural area then we need a sustainable model and the SBM is absolutely at the heart of that.*

(Secondary Headteacher, Hamley, 2010)

The SBM agreed commenting that the projected cuts to LAs could mean their prices for services to schools increasing with schools then being forced to search for better value elsewhere:

*For what the schools are paying they probably get reasonable value and if the LA isn’t in a position to do that or is forced to be more competitive they may up the prices and then schools will start saying ’let’s look elsewhere’ then you need someone to do that don’t you?*
APPENDIX XI

Case Report: Ainsworth Cluster

Case F - Ainsworth Cluster

Context
Ainsworth cluster is a single site campus of five schools: a secondary, junior, infant and two special schools all located within walking distance from one another. The cluster serves an economically deprived area situated in the South-East of England. Pupils who attend the schools in the cluster are predominantly white, working class and with low aspirations whilst attainment on entering school is below the national average. The schools also have a high percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. The secondary school is under-subscribed which is symptomatic of the challenge they face in trying to encourage primary school parents to send their children there rather than the preferred option of choosing to educate them at other schools outside of the area. This is understandable as the secondary school had been underperforming in a number of areas and was given a notice to improve by OFSTED in 2008 (just over a year before the first case site visit was conducted).

SBM provision
Despite their proximity there had been very little prolonged historical collaboration between the schools on the campus and each school was very protective of their own identity and autonomy. They also operated under a traditional educational model with their own individual governing bodies and headteachers. In an attempt to foster greater collegiality between the schools and also make financial savings the campus decided to jointly appoint a senior SBM who would act as a vehicle for closer collaboration by working across the whole campus in areas such as project development and management, resource and income generation, and economies of scale. It was also envisaged that the incumbent would manage all campus support staff. This arrangement was based on an initial 12 month agreement between the schools (funded through a national government initiative) after which it would be re-evaluated although the plan was that the role would become self-sustainable and continue beyond the first year. The SBM was recruited from outside of the education sector having spent most of his career in the military and therefore had no prior experience of working in schools. In the time between the schools in the cluster agreeing to appoint a joint SBM the secondary school had also employed their own SBM to work solely at their school.

Baseline/Case site visit 1
This case site was first visited in May 2009, nine months after the Campus SBM had been appointed. Interviews were conducted with the campus SBM, the Headteacher of the secondary school and the headteacher of the infant school.

SBM role(s)
It appeared that there had been some inconsistencies between the advertised post and what the role actually entailed when the campus SBM started working at Ainsworth in the September of 2008. What was envisaged at the interview for the campus SBM job was a strategic management role working across all five schools to organise their finances, facilities and premises collectively yet when the SBM started in his new post things had changed significantly:
When I started about 2 months later they’d had a change of heart and I’ve never been able to pin down exactly why this was but they didn’t want me to have strategic management control over the 5 schools anymore. So I concentrated on strategic planning; ‘What do you want to do?’; ‘What do you want to become?’ and all that sort of stuff…So I set up some workshops to get their visions aligned and agreed which I managed to do but then it hasn’t gone much further than that.

(Campus SBM, Ainsworth, 2009)

With the secondary school having appointed their own SBM, the campus SBM had spent most of his first year in post time working with the other schools in the cluster. The headteacher of the secondary school admitted that the first year had been a learning curve for everyone as they had entered into this shared arrangement without really knowing how it would work, particularly as the schools did not have a history of collaborating, but on the understanding that the campus SBM would be a catalyst for the schools to work together more closely:

*We appointed Steven into a campus role without really knowing what the campus could be together and what has happened subsequently is that because his role is there it has actually forced us to move at a much faster pace in defining the campus and its direction…the position has galvanised the willingness to move together so it’s been quite supportive.*

(Headteacher, Secondary School, 2009)

The medium to long-term vision for the campus, according to the secondary headteacher, was that the five schools would eventually become a single 3-19 years educational setting operating under one trust and offering a full range integrated community services. He saw the role of the campus SBM as being central to this vision:

*He [campus SBM] is the only campus person that we have got so he is very much a facilitator of this journey. I can with him and share my views but I can’t present them. Steven has got to take everybody’s views and present them in such a way that it becomes a campus voice…he has to be a political operator as well as a business operator.*

(Headteacher, Secondary School, 2009)

Despite the initial difficulties in establishing this new role the Campus SBM was convinced of its merits and the potential it could have in facilitating the cluster in moving forward more collaboratively in the future:

*I think it could be absolutely pivotal to their success, they each have their own administrative teams who report to their heads and they are five autonomous business units and I think having someone to oversee and watch all of that is pivotal.*

(Campus SBM, Ainsworth, 2009)

**Leadership and Management**

The Campus SBM had not really been afforded the opportunity to exercise any significant leadership in his first year in post beyond taking responsibility for some small scale projects, bringing in grants and arranging some group activity days and workshops for the school leaders. He was disappointed not to have been more involved with the leadership of the schools and felt it was one of the reasons he had not realised his full potential:
I can get on with certain projects such as bringing grants in and that sort of thing but I’ve not been invited to sit on any of the SLTs even though I’ve asked. I think they’ve missed a trick there really but they’re so wrapped up in their individual schools and, because they see my role as campus wide, they never drag me into any individual school decision-making or SLT meetings. That’s frustrating but that would come if they could improve their collaborative efforts.

(Campus SBM, Ainsworth, 2009)

**Working relationships/understanding of the SBM role**

Due to the nature of the role, working across five schools simultaneously, the Campus SBM had not been able to develop any meaningful working relationships with the other school stakeholders. Whilst all the headteachers were aware of his role, he did not believe any of them, apart from perhaps the headteacher of the secondary school (where his office was based), fully understood its purpose or potential. He felt this was a combination of his time being spread so thinly across each school and the fact that he had not been invited to sit on any of the SLTs and therefore raise his profile amongst the stakeholders at each school. He had worked with all five headteachers at some stage over his first year in post but believed they could have done more to raise his profile in their individual schools:

> I’m doing a project for an outside playing area with a canopy so the headteacher, deputy and the teachers affected by the building works are aware of what I’m up to and what I do but there will be other who won’t know...A lot of that is to do with the headteacher because the nature of the role and running around five schools you can’t talk to every single person but if the headteacher briefs their team about who I am and what I’m doing then they will know, if not they won’t.

(Campus SBM, Ainsworth, 2009)

**Barriers/Challenges**

Spending a substantial amount of his first year in post trying to define his role and how it could function effectively had impacted on any initial impact the Campus SBM might have had. It seemed that a clear and collective understanding of exactly how the role would function and what it would entail was lacking:

> Even though all five headteachers signed up to the role, not all of them understood what the role was about, it varied from one who thought I was just going to raise money for them to others who saw the full potential.

(Campus SBM, Ainsworth, 2009)

Linked to this was the lack of historical collaboration between the campus schools which had also created problems for the SBM. As the secondary headteacher highlighted, dealing with five very strong willed and independent headteachers, all fiercely protective of the interests of their own schools, required a great deal of political manoeuvring on the part of the Campus SBM particularly as the only staff member working across all five schools:

> What we have here is a Campus SBM working across five different schools and that is a really tough role. Getting five different Heads to agree on something is
really difficult, particularly in terms of spending money. It’s been difficult for him to pick out which projects he needs to get involved with in each school.

(Infant Headteacher, Ainsworth, 2009)

Similarly, the governing bodies were also proving to be a barrier for the Campus SBM, not only because of their traditional educational ideologies but also the personality conflicts symptomatic of the close community from which many of them resided:

Governors is another big barrier; I don’t think the model is fit for the 21st century to be honest, they are too parochial, they are too part-time, they are too insular thinking, they don’t understand the challenges of changing education systems...It slows everything down and you can imagine we’ve got five headteachers and getting them together to agree on anything is hard enough then you’ve got to go through each governing body. Then you’ve got personal conflicts creeping in, some of their partners work in the schools and they are worried about job security etc and it complicates the mix.

(Campus SBM, Ainsworth, 2009)

For the headteacher of the secondary school, the appointment of the Campus SBM signalled the first steps towards a modernisation of the cluster and the long term plan to consolidate many of the services the individual schools provide into a single learning community. However, it seemed some of the headteachers and governors of the smaller schools were reluctant to relinquish their traditional educational models:

I think some of the old issues of losing autonomy and the overall decision making for your own institution is still an issue. I think governors could be a block in terms of having their own patch that they are responsible for and I think fear of being usurped into a larger organisation where you lose the autonomy of what you are trying to achieve are all genuine concerns.

(Headteacher, Secondary School, 2009)

Overall, there appeared to be a notion that resistance (to change) and a cautious approach from some educational stakeholders within the campus was stunting the progress of their collaborative efforts. For the secondary headteacher this was a mindset which needed to be changed:

You can’t make an omelette without cracking a few eggs and I think people want to try and do this with as few cracks in the eggs as possible and that can’t happen so everyone is going to have to become more comfortable taking risks and getting out of their comfort zones.

(Headteacher, Secondary School, 2009)

The Campus SBM agreed but remained mindful that for many years the schools had been in natural competition with each other and been able to rely on their Local Authority for many of their services so it was perhaps understandable that they would be some reluctance to what was clearly a significant change:

They are very risk averse and you have to take risks sometimes to see benefits. I think they like the comfort blanket that being with the LA provides but also it’s down to trust and, to be quite frank, they don’t trust each other particularly the smaller schools who are fearful of being swallowed up by the larger ones.

(Campus SBM, Ainsworth, 2009)

**SBM Impact**
Despite the challenges he had faced in his first year in post the Campus SBM had established and managed a small number of projects which had made a positive educational impact in some of the schools across the cluster. This had saved the schools involved both money and time in the process whilst removing some of the work burden from the headteachers. He had also started to make some inroads into fostering a more collaborative ethos between the schools:

We’ve got this outdoor canopy project up and running which has saved quite a bit of money and its freed up headteachers time...The fact that they are getting these services as much as 12 months ahead of when the LA could do it is good. We also had a campus INSET day where we had a speaker and all five schools teaching staff came to the one venue and I organised all of that which was good.  

(Campus SBM, Ainsworth, 2009)

He hoped that making significant financial savings and implementing initiatives more efficiently than before would start to erode some of the apprehension of becoming more independent from the LA and raise awareness and understanding of the benefits of a SBM:

The skills of the qualified SBM are a major plus, for example we ran a project which, had we have gone through the LA it would have taken forever to implement and cost around £140,000 but instead we were able to do it ourselves for around £80,000 less and in a much quicker time and that’s been quite successful. 

(Campus SBM, Ainsworth, 2009)

Looking forward

Looking forward the Campus SBM had large-scale plans as to how the schools in the cluster should be organised moving forward, in terms of staffing and provision, if they were to become an effective and sustainable organisation:

For a start we don’t need five headteachers, there’s a massive saving straight away, we don’t need five sets of administrative officers so that’s money that could be redeployed, let’s have a Campus Facility Manager to run all of the caretaking rather than all five schools doing it independently, let’s take some of that money and have a Campus ICT Manager to do all the ICT for the entire site rather than five set-ups, one administrative team located in one school doing it for all the schools and so on.  

(Campus SBM, Ainsworth, 2009)

However, he also admitted that the schools were perhaps not ready for those kinds of conversations just yet and it would take some time for them to be persuaded that their traditional ways of operating were not suitable for the modern educational landscape:

I’m not saying let’s sack everyone and start again but you’ve got people who are going to retire in about five years so let’s be open about it and when this Headteacher does retire we should federate, when the administrative staff retire lets re-organise the model. It can be brought in gradually through natural wastage. Sadly, I don’t think they’ve quite got their heads around what is possible and the differences it could make.  

(Campus SBM, Ainsworth, 2009)
Follow-up conversation

When the Campus SBM was contacted in July 2010 to arrange a second case site visit it transpired that, following a turbulent six month period, his post had become untenable and he had subsequently left the Ainsworth cluster for a new role in the private sector. However, the Campus SBM and the headteachers of the secondary, junior and infant schools all consented to a phone interview to discuss the reasons they believed their shared business management model was ultimately unsuccessful.

Funding

The official reason for the Campus SBM post becoming unsustainable was a lack of funding. Aided by a government grant, the post was initially funded for 12 months on the basis that it would eventually become self-sustaining through the financial savings and income generation the Campus SBM would make. The challenge was the discord between the schools as to how long this would take. The secondary school were of the opinion that this was a long-term, strategic project and were willing to continue to fund the post with the confidence that it would eventually become both self-sustaining and crucial to the cluster financially. They were supported in this stance by one of the special schools whom the SBM had been working closely with on a large-scale refurbishment and which had gone some way to convincing them of the value of his role. The smaller schools in the cluster were less convinced, particularly the governors who did not share the strategic vision of the secondary school and felt that their funding would be better spent elsewhere:

We were needing to provide something from the school budget so that was the biggest difficulty we came up against, finding it difficult to release that funding when, although the role had been useful in bits and pieces it hadn’t been useful in any other outcome...It might have saved us some time but you can't get that past governors when you’re trying to get money out of them.

(Headteacher, Infant School, 2010)

This was disputed to a certain extent by the SBM who felt the biggest financial saving he had made during his time in post was actually for the infant school. Nevertheless, it was the three smaller schools in the cluster (infant, junior and primary special school) that were unable and/or unwilling to justify funding the shared SBM post beyond the initial 12 month period.

Whilst the lack of funding commitment to the shared post from some of the schools in the cluster had ultimately ended the arrangement the stakeholders interviewed felt that there were other reasons why the model failed.

SBM professional background

An issue which had caused some tension was the SBM’s professional background (he had no prior experience of working in education) creating a perception from some participants that he lacked credibility and the requisite knowledge of schools to be able to fulfil the role. However, it was unclear the extent to which this perception was attributable to the SBM’s inexperience of working in educational settings and how far it was due to misconceptions by headteachers about the SBM role:
I felt that because he had no education background - which I know shouldn't make a difference - he didn't really understand how schools work and the things you can and can't do.  

(Headteacher, Primary School, 2010)

From the perspective of the SBM, this attitude gave a feeling that he was viewed with considerable suspicion, even resentment, and that his suggestions for how things might be changed for the better were generally met with resistance from the senior leaders in the cluster:

I think they were deeply suspicious, possibly resentful that somebody was going to be telling them how to do their job in their school, didn't see the need for change, didn't want to cooperate with anybody in any other school because their way was the way and so on.  

(Campus SBM, Ainsworth, 2010)

Clarity of purpose

From the outset it appeared that there were disparities between stakeholders as to what they thought the purpose of the role would be and how it would impact on their school. As a result the incoming SBM was appointed to a role which was ill defined and seemingly meant something different to each of the Headteachers with which he was supposed to be working:

I said 'yeah, let's go for a campus SBM but what do you want them to do?' and I think that's where the problems arose. There was never a very clear understanding of what the role was because actually there wasn't a campus system in place and my big argument was that we were setting somebody up to fail which I think is what transpired.  

(Headteacher, Secondary School, 2010)

This lack of any real shared understanding of the project was evident in the narrow conceptions of the SBM role among educational leaders on the project. For example, there was a widespread assumption amongst some of the schools that the incoming SBM was simply there to generate extra revenue:

I was under the impression that his role was accessing funding and bringing money into school and that didn’t happen at all.  

(Headteacher, Primary School, 2010)

Collaborative ethos

Despite their close physical proximity the schools on the campus did not have a strong history of prolonged collaboration. Rather, these were independent settings with their own governing bodies and headteachers. As such, the shared SBM model had brought a number of issues to the fore. For example, the smaller schools in the campus were resistant to any ideas for a future formal collaborative arrangement, despite the potential benefits:

Well becoming a Trust was mooted as a potential option but war nearly broke out when I said to them that they should sit down and consider this option, not go for it but consider it...they were too busy fighting what wasn’t a threat...I even took them all up to London for a presentation by the specialist schools
and trusts group and they were very apprehensive, and that was just to go and hear about it!

(Campus SBM, Ainsworth, 2010)

One explanation for this fierce resistance was that the smaller schools perceived a takeover by the secondary school and with it a loss of autonomy and independence should they enter into a formal partnership:

I think that the identity issue is there ‘do we get usurped into something bigger and lose our independence and lose what we are?’ I would assume that the reason why we haven’t moved further forward is that, or it’s certainly playing a part. I think that’s a general thing with partnership working.

(Headteacher, Secondary School, 2010)

Personality clashes also appeared to play a central role in the failure of the shared SBM model and once again highlighted the problems associated with trying to get five school leaders each with different agendas and priorities working in tandem:

We did attempt to re-focus it but there were lots of other things going on and actually the campus collaboration between the five Headteachers was the problem with the whole power thing and everything else. Actually, I have to say that from an outsider’s point of view it was like children fighting in the playground.

(Headteacher, Primary School, 2010)

**Resistance to change**

There was a clear distinction between the schools in terms of their strategic vision for the future. The secondary headteacher felt very strongly that for the schools on the campus to survive and flourish they would have to work together, share resources and eventually collaborate into a single educational organisation possibly operating independently from local government. The SBM shared this vision though they were the first to admit that they were not claiming it would solve all the problems faced by the schools, just that they were willing to take some risks to transform the campus into a modern educational setting:

As I and the headteacher of the secondary argued, we don’t actually always have all the answers but common sense will tell you that if you’re in control of your staff and your assets, and you have more freedom to manoeuvre, then you’ve got more freedom in whatever circumstance you might need to manoeuvre. But they didn’t want to leave the LA embrace.

(Campus SBM, Ainsworth, 2010)

The entrepreneurial and risk-taking approach was not shared by the smaller schools. They were much more cautious about the prospects of large-scale structural change preferring instead to remain as independent settings operating under a more traditional model of education.

One of the things we did do during the project was look into models of formal collaboration and things like that and I think the answer is ‘no’... we looked at the models of trust schools and federations and they’re not suitable for our circumstances so there wouldn’t be any of those models we would be likely to go for. Our preference is to stay very much part of the LA and not lose that to go down the trust route and things like that.
(Headteacher, Infant School, Ainsworth, 2010)

The fear of moving out of from local government control and the relative security it provided was a step that the smaller schools were not willing with concerns as to how they would replace the services provided by the LA. There were also anxieties about potential job losses for support staff if the campus administrative was centralised, an issue the Campus SBM had faced when trying to work with staff in some of the smaller schools who perceived his role as a threat to theirs.

The governors also played a significant part in the failure of the shared model as they too were unconvinced of the merits the SBM role. For the secondary Headteacher, this was symptomatic of a larger problem with the school governance system and educational modernisation:

> The problem is the schizophrenic nature of education itself because we have this desire to push forward into the 21st century but have a 19th century framework holding that back, we have a governing system that has incredible authority and power with very little understanding...The governors can block it and, despite what the headteachers might want, the governors can turn around and say ‘no, I don’t want you to do that’ and governors were instrumental in questioning the role of the SBM.

(Headteacher, Secondary School, 2010)

Ultimately, the struggle for the school leaders to find common ground and agree on the future direction of the shared SBM model proved too big a hurdle to overcome. Unable to sustain the post without the support of all five schools, the secondary school agreed to fund the Campus SBM for a further three months to work alongside their own SBM on some projects specific to their setting and allow him time to find another post after which he left the campus altogether.
APPENDIX XII

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS: Q SURVEY

Introduction
This chapter describes the steps taken to analyse and interpret the Q survey data collected in this study. Drawing in the Q literature it begins by explaining the analytical process and justifying the means by which a final set of factors or social perspectives on the role of the SBM was established. These social narratives are then described and interpreted in more detail to establish how they correspond, how they contrast and what they suggest about the participants they represent. The chapter ends by briefly discussing the implications of these findings for the research questions guiding the thesis, a discussion followed up in more detail in Chapter 6.

Q Survey: The analytical process
The key element to the Q procedure lies in the statistical technique by which participant perspectives are assembled, factor analysis. Factor analysis offers a simplified means of interpreting the large volume of data generated in a Q procedure by isolating ideal Q sorts and then illustrating how closely each individual or participant sort resembles them. However, as discussed in Chapter 3 (section 3.5.1.2.1), though the underlying procedure is the same the objective of a standard factor analysis is very different when applied to Q data. Normally, in factor analysis the participants are the subjects and the questions (e.g. survey items) are the variables, the objective being to seek patterns in the responses across the variables for each participant. In Q the subjects and the variables are reversed or inverted so that the subjects become the Q statements and the variables are the participants or, more accurately, their Q sorts. In this instance the objective is to seek patterns across the variables (i.e. their Q sorts) for each subject (i.e. Q statement) to decipher whether what is prominent about a variable (e.g. Participant A’s Q sort) is related to what is prominent about another variable (e.g. Participant B’s Q sort). As participants sort statements according to their beliefs around a particular topic, when patterns are found
between one or more Q sorts this suggests that these participants have shared understandings. Q classifies these as social perspectives or narratives.

Specialist software, PQMethod 2.31, was used to analyse the Q data (Schmolck, 2012). Such software is more straightforward for analysing Q data than standard statistical packages such as SPSS as it has been designed specifically for the purposes of Q and produces a more coherent and interpretable output (Webler et al, 2009). In depth descriptions of the underlying statistical procedure for analysing Q data are freely available and will therefore not be repeated here (see Webler et al, 2009; Brown, 1993; Stainton Rodgers, 1995).

As discussed in Chapter 4, the headteacher and SBM from each of the original six case study sites were each asked to complete a Q survey. Each of the SBMs (including the second SBM at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook) completed a Q survey, as did three of the headteachers resulting in a total of 9 completed Q sorts. Additionally, one of the classroom teachers and two of the finance administrators at Fernbrook also volunteered to complete a survey making a final total of 12 Q sorts (see Figure 9). Whilst it would have been preferable for every headteacher in the research to complete a Q sort it was, unfortunately, not possible due to their time constraints and what some perceived as an overly onerous task (preferring instead to be interviewed). Nevertheless, the data collected was still deemed to be of significant interest to the exploratory design of this study. It is also worth reiterating that in rejecting positivism its inventor, Stevenson, developed Q as a statistical procedure that could be used in exploratory research. Therefore, the requirement for large participants numbers was negated. As such, Q lends itself more favourably towards qualitative research methods with small samples such as case studies (see Chapter 3 for a more detailed discussion).

After running the analysis, the Q software allows the researcher to decide on the number of factors they would like to output, factors being the shared understandings or perspectives of the participants. This decision is based on personal judgement and there is no ‘correct’ number of factors however Webler
et al (2009) suggest focusing on the following four areas as a guide when selecting the final number of factors to analyse:

- **Simplicity**: Fewer factors are generally better as this makes each perspective easier to interpret (though fewer factors should not sacrifice potentially interesting information about differences in participants viewpoints).

- **Clarity**: Ideally, each participant sort should load highly on just one factor. Those who load highly on more than one factor can be said to have confounding opinions.

- **Distinctness**: Lower correlations between factors are preferable as high correlations suggest that factors are saying the same things. However, factors may converge on some issues and disagree strongly on just a few points. This would also give them distinctness.

- **Stability**: When comparing different numbers of factors certain participants or sorts should group together which is a strong indicator that these respondents think similarly. A strong factor set should keep these groupings together.

  (Adapted from Webler et al, 2009, p. 31)

Additionally, Watts and Stenner (2005) suggest that in many Q studies the only factors considered for further analysis are:

- Those with a statistical significance or eigenvalue\(^{29}\) of > 1.00
- Those with more than one sort loading on them

It should be noted that these are recommendations only and there is a great deal of debate amongst Q scholars surrounding exactly how data emanating from a Q

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\(^{29}\)The eigenvalue is estimated by the sum of its squared factor loadings and represents the level of variance accounted for by that factor (Watts and Stenner, 2005).
study ought to be interpreted. Indeed, there are often justifications for retaining factors that do not meet one or both of these criteria (Brown, 1993; Watts and Stenner, 2005). After careful consideration, it was decided that three factors would most accurately represent the Q data collected for this study. Following the guidelines suggested by Webler et al, this decision was based on simplicity (i.e. fewer factors), clarity (i.e. most of the sorts loaded highly on just one factor\textsuperscript{30}), distinctness (i.e. all three factor have low correlations between one another\textsuperscript{31}) and stability (i.e. when running different numbers of factors, the same participants tended to cluster together\textsuperscript{32}). The eigenvalues of each factor were also used to inform this decision (see Figure 9).

**Figure 9: Defining Q sorts and eigenvalues for factors extracted from Q data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor number</th>
<th>Participant ID/Defining Q sort(s)</th>
<th>Eigenvalues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ham1, Ridge1, Ridge2, Ridge3, Cross1, Cross2, Fern2, Fern3, Fern4, Fern5</td>
<td>7.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Fern1</td>
<td>1.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ains1</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Figure 9 illustrates, the majority of the Q sorts are loaded onto Factor 1, which can therefore be described as a perspective shared by 10 of the participants. This factor also has a high eigenvalue indicating it is statistically stronger than the other two factors. According to the criteria suggested by Watts and Stenner this factor should be the only one considered for analysis as it has more than one sort loading on it and also has an eigenvalue > 1.00. The other two factors have only one Q sort loading on them therefore cannot be said to represent a shared perspective, rather they constitute an individual perspective. Furthermore,

\textsuperscript{30} Two of the sorts, Cross2 and Fern3, loaded on more than one factor suggesting their perspectives were not as strongly aligned with Factor 1 compared to the other eight sorts associated with this factor. See Appendix XV for full details of factor loadings for each Q sort.

\textsuperscript{31} See Appendix XV for correlations between factor scores.

\textsuperscript{32} When running either 2, 4 and 5 factors on the PQMethod software, both Ains1 and Fern1 remained isolated on individual factors whilst the other Q sorts tended to cluster together.
whilst Factor 2 has a statistically significant eigenvalue, Factor 3 falls just short (albeit by a very small margin).

However, for the purposes of this research it was decided to retain both Factors 2 and 3 as they each represent a perspective that is unique to the participant who conducted the Q sort. Further it is worth pointing out that the use of Q in this research was to offer an alternative means of gathering data on participant’s views of the SBM role. It therefore felt unnecessary to reject these individual sorts as it was thought they might could to be useful data sources to triangulate with the interview data and provide a further insight into these participants’ perspectives on the SBM role.

In order to assess whether there were any interesting patterns between the different participants and their views on the role of the SBM the profile of each participant, with regard to their role and the setting in which they work, was mapped against the factor their Q sort loaded against (see Figure 10).

The vast majority of the Q sorts are associated with Factor 1, which represents a social perspective that is shared quite strongly between these participants. However, it is interesting to note that the only classroom teacher to have completed a Q survey is associated with Factor 2, albeit individually, which suggests that she or he has a different social perspective on the role of the SBM compared to the other participants. Similar comments apply to the SBM at Ainsworth who has his an individual social perspective distinct from the other participants. This is also of interest as it was Ainsworth where the model of shared school business management failed resulting in this particular SBM leaving his post.
**Figure 10: Participant profile and factors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant ID/Q sort</th>
<th>Factor number</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Case study site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ham1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>SBM</td>
<td>Cross-phase cluster</td>
<td>Hamley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ridge1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>Primary collaborative</td>
<td>Ridge Lane and Carrbrook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ridge2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>SBM</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Ridge Lane and Carrbrook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ridge3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>FBM</td>
<td>Primary collaborative</td>
<td>Ridge Lane and Carrbrook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>SBM</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Cross Vale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Cross Vale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fern2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Administrative Assistant</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Fernbrook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fern3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Finance Assistant</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Fernbrook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fern4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>SBM</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Fernbrook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fern5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Headteacher</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Fernbrook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fern1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Fernbrook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ains1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>SBM</td>
<td>Cross-phase cluster</td>
<td>Ainsworth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Developing the social perspectives**

The data output in a Q study is lengthy and often daunting containing, as it does, a significant volume of information. Webler et al (2009) suggest the researcher focuses his/her attention on the following aspects of the output in order to generate a social perspective or narrative around each of their chosen factors:

*Normalized factor scores:* These are the scores for each statement that are merged together to create a collective or ‘idealised’ sort for the factors extracted by the PQMethod software. For the factors associated with only one sorter, the
individual sort and the ideal sort are the same. The normalized factor scores also indicate how high or low every statement ranks against each of the factors (essentially equivalent to the Q sort). Those statements ranking highly against each factor are those that the sorters (or participants) who loaded on this factor collectively agree with the most. By accumulating the highly ranked statements the researcher can develop a narrative to illustrate how the sorters associated with each factors view the topic being explored. Conversely, those statements that are ranked lowest on each factor are also useful in indicating areas that sorters strongly disagree with. Again, for the factors associated with only one sorter, these represent an individual, rather than collective, view.

_Distinguishing statements:_ These are the statements that were rated significantly different between the factors. Statements that are prominent in a factor are a good starting point for generating a narrative to describe that factor.

Using the normalized factor scores and distinguishing statements, the following three narratives were developed to represent the three factors extracted by the PQMethod software. These narratives are summaries of the most strongly held viewpoints of each factor as signified by the strength of the statements loading on that factor. The first summary can be described as a social perspective as 10 of the sorters are loaded onto this factor. The second and third summaries are individual perspectives as only one sorter loaded onto these factors.

**Factors**

**Factor 1: Strong advocate of the SBM as central to a model of dispersed school leadership**

_A total of 10 participants loaded onto this factor making it the only genuine social or collective perspective. They comprised five SBMs, three headteachers and two support staff members (an administrative assistant and finance assistant) from a cross-section of settings within the research (see Figure 9)._
Factor summary

They believe the SBM plays a central role in the operation of the school and feel strongly that the SBM should be a member of the SLT as they bring an alternative, and much needed, perspective to the leadership agenda, a perspective they deem essential to the strategic planning of the school. They consider the SBM role to be one that saves the headteacher a great deal of time allowing them to focus their attention on the teaching and learning agenda. Moreover, they attach a good deal of significance to strong working relationship between the headteacher and SBM.

These participants are also strong in their convictions that the headteacher is not the only genuine leader in the school and that leadership responsibility is dispersed more widely amongst staff members.

Factor 2: The SBM role serves a purpose but is not necessarily central to the core school priority

Just one participant loaded onto this factor: a secondary school teacher (Fern1). Incidentally, this participant was the only classroom teacher to complete a Q survey.

Factor summary

Fern1 believes that the SBM role can save the headteacher time on non-educational tasks. However, he does not think that this time is always spent on the teaching and learning agenda, rather it is simply filled up by other tasks, such is the workload of a headteacher.

He feels the SBM has an understanding of the nature of the teachers’ role in his school but does not believe that the teaching staff and SBM work collaboratively all that often. He also thinks that most pupils and their parents are unaware of the SBM role.
Fern1 thinks the SBM should be a member of the SLT although he does not think the role has much impact on the pupils. Whilst he feels that SBMs are set to play an increasingly active role in the leadership and management of schools in the future he cannot envisage a time when a staff member who was not a qualified teacher would be leading a school.

He believes that School Business Manager is simply a new label for a long established position in schools.

**Factor 3: The SBM role as superfluous and peripheral**

*Just one participant loaded onto this factor: the SBM who left his post after the model of shared business management failed (Ains1).*

**Factor summary**

Ains1 does not believe the SBM has a particularly high profile within his setting and that neither the parents nor the governors are aware of the role and what it entails. He does not think there is much collaboration between the SBM and the teachers whom he feels lead separate working lives. Moreover, he does not think the SBM has much knowledge of the curriculum in his setting.

He believes the headteacher and the school could function without the services of a SBM. Further, he does not think his setting can afford the services of a SBM.

Whilst he feels that school business management is a new and emerging profession he thinks the overall leadership of a school will always be the responsibility of a qualified teacher.

**Overview**

The majority of the participants who completed a Q survey loaded onto the first factor and can be said to be strong advocates of the SBM role. This is unsurprising considering five of these participants are SBMs themselves whilst a further three are headteachers who have a SBM working for them in their
school(s). The other two participants whose sorts are loaded onto this factor are support staff members Fernbrook where the SBM model is seemingly very effective.

For those participants loading onto this factor who were also interviewed, this data generally supports their views on the role of the SBM. For instance, the FBM (Ridge3), SBM (Ridge2) and Executive Headteacher (Ridge1) at Ridge Lane and Carrbrook Federation all spoke of the high regard in which they held the SBM role whilst the business management model they employ there has elevated their FBM to an influential and strategic position. Indeed the interview data with three of the SBMs loading on this factor (Ridge3, Fern4 and Cross1) illustrates their professional ambition to work at the highest level possible in their careers.

Participants loading highly on this factor also emphasise the dispersion of leadership as a central element. This is consistent with the headteacher (Fern5) at Fernbrook who described his SBM as ‘my equal’ in terms of her knowledge and responsibilities and the headteachers at Cross Vale (Cross2) and Ridge Lane and Carrbrook (Ridge1) who have handed over significant leadership responsibility to their respective SBMs.

Participants loading on this factor also spoke of the strong working relationships between the SBM and the headteacher, another key feature of this first factor.

The second factor is only represented by a single participant (Fern1) and therefore constitutes an individual, rather than social perspective. Unfortunately, it was not possible to interview Fern1 although his status as the only classroom teacher to complete a Q survey might explain some of the views signified by this factor. For example, his assertion that the SBM and teachers do not work collaboratively all that often might be because he himself has not worked with the SBM. When interviewed, the SBM listed a number of examples of projects where she had worked alongside the teaching staff. Similarly, he believes that the pupils and parents are not familiar with the SBM perhaps because he had not seen any evidence of this himself. This may be true in part though both the SBM
and headteacher spoke of several pupil projects led by the SBM. In general, Fern1 is not as strong an advocate of the SBM role as those participants loading on the first factor. This could be an indication of the lack of understanding from some teachers of the nature and potential of SBMs (as some of the interview data suggests). However, one must also be cautious in attempting to read too much into the views of just one individual.

The third and final factor is akin to the second factor in that it represents the views of just one participant and is therefore considered an individual perspective. That individual is the SBM from the Ainsworth Cluster (Ains1) where the model of business management proved unsuccessful and ended with a certain amount of acrimony. This is consistent with the views represented by this factor which suggest a lack of familiarity with the potential breadth of the SBM role among many educational stakeholders, such as school governors and parents and the lack of collaboration between the SBM and the teaching staff.

This factor is similar to the second factor in placing the SBM role in a more peripheral position in the school compared to the views represented by Factor 1, which see the role as more central. Yet, this factor is distinct from the previous two in the strength of opinion surrounding the worth of the SBM. Much of this could be attributed to the position Ains1 found himself in, at a setting where his role was undefined and where support for its purpose and requirement was negligible. However, it is unclear whether Ains1 feels this way about his setting or whether it is a view of the value of the SBM role for schools in general.

**Summary**

This chapter has presented the results of the Q survey and the steps taken to analyse the data and develop the narratives representative of the three factors extracted by the Q software. These narratives represent one social or shared perspective and two individual perspectives accounting for the 12 participants who completed a Q sort in this study. Whilst there are some shared beliefs across the factors there are also distinct differences. The next chapter will consider
these three factors as part of a cross-case analysis of all the data collected during this study.
APPENDIX XIII

Q survey participant instructions

Background

Q methodology was developed by William Stephenson in the 1920s. Stephenson’s mentor was Spearman, the inventor of factor analysis, which provides the statistical basis for Q. Stephenson’s interest was in subjectivity: revealing mathematically the way participants classify themselves, not according to the definitions laid down by the researcher. The Q methodology survey provides a methodical study of subjectivity or a participant’s viewpoint, opinion and attitude toward any given subject.

In Q, participants are required to rank items (eg statements, pictures, words) on a scale (eg from favourite - least favourite; strongly agree - disagree), an operation known as a ‘Q sort’. Factor analysis is then used to compare the results of each sort with every other sort to reveal the extent to which the perspectives they represent are similar to and different from one another. Typically, a number of ‘factors’ are identified: perspectives that, statistically speaking, are deemed to be sufficiently distinct as to constitute a category apart. Each of these will then usually be captured in a brief sketch summarising its main characteristics.

The Process

In side this pack you will find 44 numbered statements together with the Q Proforma. All you have to do is place the arrange the statements onto the proforma according to how much or how little you agree with them. Once you have filled the proforma, simply write the number of each statement into the box where it is placed and write you name and position on the back (though please remember your responses will remain confidential and only identifiable by myself).

Returning completed proformas

Once all completed proformas have been collected please return them to the address below.

Paul Armstrong
Room C3.5
Ellen Wilkinson Building
School of Education
University of Manchester
Oxford Road
Manchester
M13 9PL

Many thanks for your participation.
APPENDIX XIV

Final set of Q cards

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The SBM has little understanding of the role of the teaching staff in this school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Headteacher could run this school without an SBM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>SBMs are set to play an increasingly active role in the leadership and management of schools in the future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The SBM has little influence on the running of the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>SBMs are making a significant impression on the culture of schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The SBM and the teaching staff tend to lead separate working lives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The Headteacher and the SBM enjoy a strong working relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The overall leadership of a school will always be the responsibility of a qualified teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The pupils are generally unaware of the SBM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The Headteacher distributes leadership responsibility to all staff members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Our parents are generally aware of the role that the SBM plays in this school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The SBM saves the Headteacher time allowing them to focus on the teaching and learning agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The SBM has a good understanding of the curriculum in this school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>This school could function effectively without an SBM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The SBM has very little impact on the pupils in this school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>The SBM perspective has little relevance to the SLT agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>The Headteacher and the SBM don’t work well together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>The SBM influences the way the school is run</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>The SBM works collaboratively with the teaching staff to get work done in school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>School Business Manager is simply a new title for a long established role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>SBMs are having very little impact on the culture of schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>In this school, the teaching staff have little knowledge of the SBM role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>The SBM plays a significant role in the running of this school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>SBMs will exercise limited leadership and management in schools in the future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>The Headteacher relies on the support of the SBM in order to do his/her job effectively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>The pupils know who the SBM is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>The SBM perspective is important in strategic planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>In the future, schools/educational settings could be led by a staff member from a non-teaching background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>A good SBM pays for themselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Any time the SBM saves the Headteacher is consumed by other tasks and not necessarily spent on the teaching and learning agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Most of our parents wouldn’t know what the SBM does</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>The SBM is fully aware of the nature of the role of teaching staff within this school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>The SBM role should function at an operational rather than a strategic level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX XV

Factor loadings for individual Q sorts and correlations between sorts

Factor loadings

Unrotated Factor Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SORTS</th>
<th>1 ham1</th>
<th>0.8869</th>
<th>-0.0421</th>
<th>-0.0203</th>
<th>-0.3019</th>
<th>0.1627</th>
<th>-0.1581</th>
<th>-0.0149</th>
<th>-0.0620</th>
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<td></td>
<td>2 ains1</td>
<td>-0.1057</td>
<td>0.8203</td>
<td>0.4430</td>
<td>-0.1194</td>
<td>-0.1999</td>
<td>0.0342</td>
<td>-0.1948</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 ridge1</td>
<td>0.8883</td>
<td>-0.0375</td>
<td>-0.2353</td>
<td>-0.0423</td>
<td>-0.1976</td>
<td>-0.0119</td>
<td>-0.1117</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 ridge2</td>
<td>0.8655</td>
<td>-0.0368</td>
<td>0.1671</td>
<td>0.0509</td>
<td>0.1445</td>
<td>0.2925</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 ridge3</td>
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<td>-0.1449</td>
<td>0.0542</td>
<td>0.1343</td>
<td>-0.0254</td>
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<td>0.1858</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 cross1</td>
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<td>7 cross2</td>
<td>0.6759</td>
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<td>0.0233</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 fern1</td>
<td>0.0815</td>
<td>0.8142</td>
<td>-0.4375</td>
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<td>0.2912</td>
<td>0.1320</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 fern2</td>
<td>0.7588</td>
<td>0.2700</td>
<td>-0.0784</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 fern3</td>
<td>0.7746</td>
<td>0.2326</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 fern4</td>
<td>0.9016</td>
<td>-0.0946</td>
<td>-0.0934</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 fern5</td>
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<td>-0.1404</td>
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<td>0.3037</td>
<td>-0.1257</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eigenvalues 7.0966 1.5762 0.9956 0.4623 0.4034 0.3706 0.3246 0.2369
% expl.Var. 59 13 8 4 3 3 3 2

Correlations between sorts

Correlations Between Factor Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>0.0426</td>
<td>-0.1335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.0426</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>0.3814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>-0.1335</td>
<td>0.3814</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>