SMALL PRIMARY SCHOOL LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES: CHALLENGES AND EVOLUTION

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Abstract

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Challenges and Evolution by Francesca Catterson

This study addresses the professional challenge facing headteachers in small primary schools, in particular those who lack experience and knowledge of small schools and their leadership structures. The aim is to investigate these structures in the UK, and examine how headteachers use a micro-political lens to scope the landscape of the inherited school and then apply this knowledge to inform change strategies to improve school effectiveness. There is a dearth of literature in this field and this research makes a contribution to fill this gap. The research questions ask; what type of leadership structures are effective in small primary schools, how micro-political understanding and application are used by headteachers, how processes and practices of participation enable effective schools and what new theories of leadership structures emerge. Positivist and interpretivist approaches are taken, using a case study strategy with mixed methods. The sample is twenty-one schools, defined as having four or less classes. Data was collected through surveys and semi-structured interviews; using descriptive statistical analysis of the quantitative data and thematic analysis of the qualitative data, taking an inductive approach. University of Leicester's ethical code of conduct was used; informing, reliability, validity and trustworthiness of the data. Findings reveal that leadership structures have no impact on school effectiveness. High levels of participation and trust, in a 'power with' framework, underpin effective schools, where people are empowered, motivated and engaged in a shared vision for improving school effectiveness. Low levels of participation and trust, in a 'power over' framework, may produce effective schools, but stakeholders are disenfranchised, unmotivated and unable to engage with, and own, a whole school vision for improving school effectiveness. A new contribution to knowledge is made with a new theory of participation and trust.

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1.0 Background to the research

1.1 Introduction

This chapter is presented in eleven sections and begins with the aims of the study and the spark that ignited my interest in this field. Next, there is a brief review of what is already known about small primary schools, followed by an international perspective. The researchframework is presented in section five, the research questions and methodological overview in subsequent sections. The definition of 'small' in relation to this study is established in section eight, followed by a review of the importance of finance and value for money, whilst optimising pupil outcomes. The chapter concludes with the identification of a gap in the literature.

1.2 The aim of the research

The aim of the research is to investigate what kinds of leadership structures currently exist in small primary schools and to question how and why headteachers created their school leadership structures; exploring their understanding of the structures, the extent of the use of participatory processes and practices, as well as headteachers' understanding and application of micro-politics. The objective is to identify emerging principles that could support colleagues in their approaches and decisions regarding the development of leadership structures in the diverse and complex settings that are frequently found in small primary schools. A key driving factor in wanting to find answers to these questions is to find structures that improve school effectiveness, from a financial perspective through to pupil outcomes (Fitzgerald and Drake, 2013). It is a government requirement that schools have effective financial management which is monitored through the schools financial values standard and assurance (SFVS) which a school has to complete annually and return to the Department for Education (DfE). The Education Funding Agency (EFA), in the most recent guidance notes for SFVS, clearly state the importance of staff structure and effectiveness:

> **Why is it important that the school regularly reviews its staffing structure?**
>
> So that the structure matches as closely as possible to the current and future needs of the school, which will change over time. Staff are a school's most valuable resource. Regularly reviewing the staffing structure gives the head teacher and governing body opportunity to consider how they are making the most of the skills

and talents of their staff, how the curriculum can be delivered, how the needs of the pupils can be met and how best value is secured for the school. Staffing costs often represent up to 80% of a school's budget. (Education Funding Agency, 2016: 21)

Effective leadership structures contribute significantly to the development of effective schools (Abbott and Bush, 2013). These are issues that could be relevant to a wider audience of headteachers, school leaders, governors and government, both nationally and internationally.

My 'Search for Truth' (Cohen and Manion, 1994) began in 2009 as a new headteacher of a small primary school. I inherited a school without a leadership structure, due to many staff leaving the previous summer. The school had been unsuccessful in appointing a headteacher despite three attempts and I was its second acting headteacher drafted in from elsewhere. I was subsequently appointed substantive headteacher after four months. I had to build a leadership team, but experiential research, (Cohen and Manion, 1994) did not help as my previous experiences of leadership structures were in larger primary schools. With very little experience of small primary schools and their specific contextual challenges, I looked to research to develop my understanding of the context, and for potential solutions. This real life problem was the trigger for this doctoral study and throughout the thesis, it is important to remember that it is grounded in the life of the researcher and this is as much about my journey as a headteacher, as it is the story of my research. The style of the thesis, whilst maintaining an academic tone, will reflect my voice and experiences.

1.3 What is already known about small schools and why is there a need for further research?

A number of researchers have identified that theories, concepts and research material on schools are not always tailored to meet the specific needs and context of small schools. Brundett (2006: 173) clearly states that 'Small primary schools set particular challenges for their leaders, but National College for School Leadership programmes are not targeted on teachers from specific age phases or sizes of school.' The National College for School Leadership (NCSL) is now known as the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL). Clarke and Wildy (2004: 555-572), cited in Brundett (2006: 176), go further in proposing that not only is the contextual complexity of a small school leadership not addressed specifically in leadership training and provision, but it is also hampered by 'slipstream syndrome'. This term

was coined by Clarke and Wildy (2004: 555-572) and used in Brundett (2006:176), '…to indicate how policy makers seldom consider small schools to be discrete elements in a diverse educational system...' Dinham et al. (2011: 149) concluded in their review of the literature on small school leadership that, '…leading a small school is no straightforward matter: they are not miniature versions of large schools.' This is further illustrated by Mohr's work in 2000. Furthermore, 'Small schools are relatively low status institutions because in the context of schooling it is size that matters and bigger schools are usually regarded as more important than small ones' Brundett (2006: 177). The literature review from Wilson and Mcpake (2000: 119-132) picks up on some interesting work conducted by Way (1989). They note that this researcher rejects management models that are based upon large organisations because the nature of headship in small schools is essentially a very different type of organisation with different needs and dynamics.

1.4 International perspectives; small primary schools in different contexts

The leadership issues facing small primary schools are not new problems, nor are they restricted to the United Kingdom, 'small schools are not something new in the educational systems of various countries' (Tsiakkiros and Pashiardis, 2002: 72). As can be seen from the variety of distinctions on defining small, there is research taking place all across the world. Wilson (2008: 523-538) makes reference to a number of other countries with high numbers of small schools, including Wales, Northern Ireland, Norway, Sweden and Finland. Internationally, the research is frequently focused on the rural aspect; for example, Australian schools scattered across the outback (Dinhim et al., 2011), Icelandic schools four hours from the nearest town (Karlberg-Granlund, 2011) or Scottish schools in remote highlands or islands. There are a great variety of small schools, 'small schools can be found in villages or dormitory towns close to large cities' (Dowling, 2009: 133). These schools are not so remote that access to facilities is limited. These schools are not so small that they are run by one principal-teacher (Karlberg-Granlund, 2015). Dowling (2009) attempted to reconcile this issue in her research into Scottish schools by using Shucksmith's (1990) rurality typology as she had been unable to find an agreed definition of small and rural in Scotland. Shucksmith (1990) identified four types of rurality; pressured areas (including those in commuter belts), intermediate areas that are gaining in population growth, intermediate areas that are in population decline and remote areas that are sparsely populated.

1.5 The research framework

I had to review the literature in order to know and understand what had already been said about small schools and used the following four themes to form the research framework.

- Effective leadership structures in small primary schools

- How micro-politics are understood and used by headteachers to develop effective schools

- Processes and practices of participation in developing effective schools

- New theories of effective small school leadership that emerge.

These themes are elaborated upon in the literature review.

1.6 The research questions

1. What type of leadership structures are effective in small primary schools?

2. How are micro-politics understood and applied by headteachers to enable effective schools?

3. How do processes and practices of participation enable effective schools?

4. What new theories of leadership structures emerge?

1.7 Methodology

Positivist and interpretivist approaches are taken, using a case study strategy with mixed methods. The sample is drawn from the pool of small primary schools, defined as small by having four or less classes. The research design has two phases; phase one seeks to establish existing leadership structures in the sample group and phase two is designed to gain greater insight into the leadership structures and effectiveness of the schools. Data was collected through surveys and semi-structured interviews, and analysed using descriptive statistical analysis of the quantitative data and thematic analysis of the qualitative data, taking an inductive approach. The sample is drawn from the 42 schools that have no more than four classes within one county in southern England. Twenty one headteachers responded to the survey and fifteen were subsequently involved in phase two.

The research used a spiral process; it kept returning to the aims, the processes and the findings. The University of Leicester's ethical code of conduct was adhered to, informing, reliability, validity and trustworthiness of the data.

1.8 How small is small?

It is important to define the term 'small' in relation to this study and the literature. A small school has been defined as small using a variety of upper thresholds. In Hargreaves' literature review (2009: 117-128), he recorded 2586 (14.8%) of primary schools in England had 100 or fewer pupils. In 2015, there were 2144 (12.8%) schools with up to 100 pupils (DfE, 2015a), which shows there has been a reduction in the number of small schools over this nine year period. The upper threshold of 100 pupils was adopted by Hargreaves (2009: 117-128) and was, 'aligned with Carter' (2003). Dowling (2009: 133) states that, 'There is no one definition of 'small' and 'rural' in discussions about Scottish schools.' Hill et al. (2014: 4) identify that, 'there are 4000 schools in the UK with less than 150 pupils and 1,400 with fewer than 75.' Some Australian research has applied the following definition, '…a 'small school' is generally considered to be 100 or fewer primary and 200 or fewer secondary enrolments' (Dinham et al., 2011: 148). This is also supported by Anderson et al. (2007) and Ewington et al. (2008). This is not consistent, however, as Dinham et al. (20011:1148) also recognise that, 'in many parts of Australia, the term 'small school' equates to no more than one teaching principal and in many cases (e.g. Western Australia and Queensland) vast geographical distances between schools.' Please note that whilst the United Kingdom uses the term headteacher, the international community more commonly use the term principal. The term principal will only be used when in a direct quotation. Leaping across the globe, Iceland, at the time of Wildy, Sigurðardo'ttir, and Faulkner's article in 2014, had around a third of its schools deemed to be small, with less than 120 pupils. Research carried out in Thailand in 2014 (Wannagatesiri et al.:1095) identified that, 'approximately one half of the 31,116 schools in Thailand are classified as small schools - 120 students or less.' Jones (2009) in the United Kingdom also used the definition of up to 120 pupils. This broadly aligns with the notion of 4 classes, i.e. 30 pupils per class. Some definitions have suggested that the small school is one in which the headteacher has a full time teaching commitment (Davis, 1975 in Tsiakkiros and Pashiardis, 2002: 76).

This review of the different definitions of 'small schools' highlights the difficulty in attempting to make comparisons across the limited range of research material on small schools, but also clearly demonstrates the scope of the audience for this study. The definition involving the headteacher having a teaching commitment was rejected

because the researcher's knowledge of the schools meant that this would result in a very tiny sample. Using a definition with pupil number in the United Kingdom was rejected because of the researcher's own experiences of fluctuating numbers around 100. A school could be within the sample size and then not with the arrival of one child. To use the number of classes as the definition means that this fluctuation will not have an impact on sample size. For the purposes of this study, the definition used is a school with up to 4 classes, where the headteacher may or may not have a teaching commitment.

1.9 Finance and value for money

Small school leadership structures and the current issues facing their creation and sustainability sit within a historical and financial context shaped by the 1988 Education Reform Act (DfES, 1998 and Ranson, 2008) and more specifically through deregulating local government and providing schools with direct funding from the government. (Levačić, 2002). The 1988 Act brought in, 'the introduction of needs-based formula funding and the delegation of financial and managerial responsibilities to governing bodies are key elements in the Government's overall policy to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools' (Levačić & Glover 1997: 233). This was meant to provide governing bodies and headteachers with the ability to plan to use their resources to bring about the maximum effect, i.e. value for money, whilst allowing schools to be responsive to parent, pupils and the local community (DfES, 1998). Glynn (1987: 48) defines 'value for money' as a situation in which, '...those who strive to provide the service do the best they can with the resources that are available.' From 1993, the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) inspectors were required to include in their report:

> a summative assessment of the value for money provided by the
> school; this should comment in particular where value for money
> is demonstrably good or poor in terms of the quality, standards,
> efficiency and effectiveness of the school in relation to the level of
> financial resources available to it. (Ofsted, 1993: 20)

The role of finance is critically important because an effective school is now being judged as one that operates an effective business model, offering value for money whilst optimising pupil outcomes (Anderson, 2002).

For small schools, however, pupil-led funding can vary wildy year on year with only small fluctuations in numbers (Whitty, Power and Halpin, 1998 and Walker, 2010).

Financing through this system has resulted in many small schools struggling with deficit budgets and restrictions in their ability to create senior posts. The majority (90%-95%) of a school's budget is dedicated to staffing costs (Wilson and Brundett, 2005). The crude equation means that every child is counted as a 'funding unit (Southworth, 2008: 416). The main reason for small schools not having deputies or assistant headteachers is due to the cost of more senior staff being beyond the budget because of the size of the school (Southworth, 2008). This ultimately means that many headteachers of small schools have teaching commitments because they cannot afford not to. The multiple demands on headteachers (Clarke and Wildy, 2004) can lead to conflict of roles. This can be seen to be the case globally. The work in Thailand (Wannagatersiri et al. 2014: 1097) on small schools identified that the principal had to cover all the administrative, financial, secretarial and maintenance roles within the school. Research in Iceland and Australia (Wildy, Sigurðardóttir, and Faulkner, 2014: 105) also found that, 'due to low enrolments, small schools do not qualify for administrative support in the same way larger schools do, and yet the principal is required to demonstrate equal compliance to centrally mandated policies.' Furthermore, small schools have to meet the same requirements and expectations as larger schools (Jones, 2009, Starr and White, 2008), with fewer people to achieve this. Cruzeiro and Boone (2009: 6) looked at the qualities required of a rural principal as described by district superintendents in America and one participant said that the principal, '…will have to do things that aren't in the principal's job description…cut the lawns, plant flowers, help with the district banquet, help out with graduation… all in the same day.' Whilst each piece of research referenced only involves small numbers of small schools in each case and could be argued is not representative of the small school community, when the findings are so similar across the globe, it adds credence to the validity of their research. The juggling of these roles is not referenced to the existence or development of leadership structures which could alleviate the situation and this also lies at the heart of addressing this research puzzle. The issue of multiple roles could be the trigger for role creation, if workloads are unsustainable.

Adding to difficulties linked to finance, nationally, all schools are facing a leadership crisis as the current generation of headteachers reach retirement and leave a chasm of experience and candidates (Jones, 2009). Small schools, in particular, often struggle to recruit headteachers (Simkins, 2015). For many, headship has become a poisoned chalice and recruitment issues threaten small schools in particular, as they frequently reference heavy teaching commitments and no senior leadership support (Jones, 2006). This is not just an English problem, but has been identified in many other countries (Cruzeiro and Boone, 2009; Quinn, 2002; Clarke and Wildy; 2012 and Sharplin, 2002). Harris and Townsend (2007) take the view that the leadership crisis

has a positive element as it forces the focus on actual schools leadership structures for the 21st Century. More specifically, they flag up the opportunities available to examine models of vertical and lateral leadership, instead of trying to fix the current headteacher shortage with the search for more headteachers.

1.10 A gap in the literature

Initial research of the existing literature indicates that there is a small, but growing global interest in small schools (Wilson and Brundett, 2006; Leithwood and Reihl, 2003; Tsiakkiros and Pashiardis, 2002 and Ewington, 2008). The context of research is normally for schools of all sizes and neglects to explore the differences that school size context bring to the problem. Hargreaves (2009) conducted a research review on the work undertaken on small rural schools from the 1980s. She describes the current climate for small schools, with a lack of funding and inability to appoint headteachers, with government indicators, such as the formation of federations, as pointing the way to '….perhaps the revival of a recently dormant field of research' (Hargreaves, 2009:118). That was eight years ago and there is evidence of the field awakening.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Chapter one set out the case for the lack of research in this specific field and began to identify some of the factors that smallness bring to the table. The literature review is structured to reflect each of the research questions thereby providing a frame of reference for synthesis with the findings later in the thesis. Themes are presented in terms of defining effective school leadership structures, understanding people and power through a micro-political lens, and the processes and practices of participation. The final part of this chapter addresses the research framework and the chapter concludes with a summary.

2.2 What are effective school leadership structures?

There are a plethora of studies on leadership, including leadership style, (Anderson et al, 2007), understanding leadership (Bush, 2007), sustainable leadership (Hargreaves, 2006), successful leadership (Ewington, 2008; and Leithwood and Riehl, 2003), theories and models of leadership (Chapman et al, 2009; Dinham et al, 2011), leadership development programmes (Brundrett, 2006) and leadership for school improvement (Barker, 2005). Southworth has explored leadership of small primary schools over the years (1993a, 1993b, 1999a, 1999b, 2002a and 2002b), as part of his wider study of primary school leadership. His research into successful small school headteachers (1999a) involved an exploration of school leadership in 10 schools, identified as small by having no more than 150 pupils, and took in the views of other stakeholders. Whilst the definition of small is not far from the definition established for this study, leadership structures do not appear to have had a central focus, which is critical for this study. The structures are not identified or discussed in any depth.

Southworth's 2002 book on the contextual differences between leading small, medium and large primary schools was critical in identifying that size matters and small schools are unique entities, however, he said that senior management teams in less than medium size school were rare. His book devotes a chapter on the importance of structures and systems, but the leadership structures themselves received very little attention, although he made a significant point that structures play an important role in terms of culture within the school. Again, this does not help to address research question one; examining the structures themselves. Trying to locate information on actual structures; the variety of roles, or number of people involved, let alone whether they are effective structures, demonstrates that there is a gap in the literature. In searching the literature, two studies emerge that shed some light on the actual leadership structures.

Abbott and Bush (2013: 586) identified that, 'despite growing interest in the primary sector, there is still relatively little work on high-performing leadership teams in primary schools.' Their 2013 article reported upon the findings of a study of high-performing teams across a range of schools from the primary, secondary and special sectors (Bush, et al., 2012). In order to identify their sample, a definition of 'high-performing' was required, but as Bush and Glover (2012: 24) state, 'there is no widely agreed definition of 'high-performing' teams'. There are issues around terminology; outcomes versus behaviours/practices or both (Day et al., 2011 and Cawelti, 1999). Abbott and Bush (2013: 587) describe the use of Ofsted judgements as the tool to identify the sample of high-performing schools in the 2012 study:

> a basic requirement for the identification of the sampled schools
> was that they received 'outstanding' Office for Standards in
> Education (Ofsted) grades overall, and for leadership and
> management, in school inspections conducted in 2008–2009.

Bush et al. (2012) looked at nine high-performing leadership teams and in doing so, drew out various models of leadership structures. Of the nine schools, three were from the primary sector. The table below details the contextual information provided regarding each school and what is described as their leadership structure.

Table 1: Case study context and leadership structure from Bush et. al. (2012)

School L	• Located in central London • 236 pupils • Headteacher in post for 12 years • Part of a soft federation, headteacher acting as executive headteacher for both schools • There is a senior leadership team consisting of headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher, office manager and other senior teachers ,number not indicated. There is also a senior management team consisting of headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher.
School M	• Located in rural southern England • Church of England school • 72 pupils • Headteacher and a job share assistant headteacher post. The research suggests that there are other members of the leadership structure, but they are not identified. • Headteacher in post for 11years
School N	• Located in north east England • 386 pupils • Headteacher and deputy headteacher. The research suggests there are other members of the leadership structure, but they are not identified. • Headteacher in post for 20 years

The first problem in relating this study to the research questions is that only one of the schools fit the small school remit, with schools L and M being considerably larger. The second problem is that the information about the structures for schools M and N is incomplete. School M is described as having a headteacher and two colleagues job share an assistant headteacher post; the inclusion of others in the structure is implied, but not described. So, whilst this team is described as high-performing, hence effective, the composition of the team beyond these three people is unknown. School N presents a similar problem in that there are hints at additional team members beyond the headteacher and deputy headteacher, but no definition of their title or role is provided. School L does have a complete description, however, it has two teams; management and leadership. This complicates the issue because whilst, this maybe effective in that school's context, it is completely inapplicable in a school with four classes; finding the staff to create one effective team let alone two, is a challenge in many cases.

Their findings with regard to leadership structures were that they were influenced by three considerations; distributing the leadership responsibilities, determining the size of the team and allocating responsibilities to members (2012: 8). In terms of their distributive nature, this is limited by the number of people in the structure, the size of the team is limited by the size of the school and, the allocation of responsibilities is also tied to the size of the team. The limitation of this research is that for the smallest schools, the findings with regard to structure are diluted; restricted by their size. Findings around behaviours and practices, however, are a different matter; they uncover other factors that they identify from the case studies as being used to develop high-performing leadership structures.

In reporting their findings, they found that, 'a distinctive feature of the nine case study schools is the long service of most of their leadership team members' (Bush et al., 2012: 7). Alongside this, continuity, team experience and internal appointments were a key aspects. In terms of practice (Bush et al., 2012: 9):

> the overall impression at all three was of a cohesive team,
> committed to the child and the school, but inclined to look to
> the head for leadership. The heads introduced most items and
> demonstrated a firm grip on the issues. All members of the SLT
> contributed and were expected to take the lead on issues relating to
> their areas of responsibility.

They also found that:

> the three primary schools all have child-centred visions; "the vision
> is about... giving children the chance to succeed" (deputy head,
> school L). A clear purpose was articulated at school L, providing the
> basis for the operation of the SLT and the school. Clear structures
> were in place and, according to the head, "routine is important.
> Primary schools thrive on consistency. The organisation is tight".
> (Bush et al., 2012 :11)

In summarising their findings, they conclude, 'there is no straightforward 'recipe' for developing high-performance and five different factors emerge from the case study evidence:

1. shared values and a common purpose

2. role clarity

3. developing a long-term approach

4. continuity of service

5. professional development
   (Bush et al., 2012: 28)

In reviewing the structures, school L in the Bush et al. study was part of a 'soft' federation. The federation model stems from the 2006 Education Act (DfE, 2006), which began to, '…reconfigure the governance of education with 'new energies'' (Ranson, 2008: 206). Federation can be used to describe a range of collaborative relationships (Chapman, 2013). It can refer to formal, structured relationships, which are governed by legislation, otherwise known as 'hard' federations. One form of federation allows several small schools to have one headteacher and governing body, but retain their individual sites, but there are also soft federations where individual schools retain their own governing body. Davies (2001) describes federation as being managed by area, but taught locally and again refers to two or more schools with one headteacher. Chapman (2013: 49) reflects that, '…conceptual clarity over the definition about what a federation of schools is, or is not, remains problematic.' Another trigger for federation has been where there are recruitment issues for small schools (Jones, 2006), but again makes no reference to the leadership structures within the schools. There are benefits for the small rural school in terms of federation, according to Williams (2008) and Todman et al. (2009), who claim that doing so maintains the viability of small rural schools due to resource sharing and Chapman (2013) concludes that the research shows that federation can avoid school closure. In the research carried

out by Howarth (2015) for the National Governors' Association, all of the participants who went forward with federation did so with an executive headteacher model. The reasons for the federation of school L is not provided in the findings.

Howarth (2015: 21) argues that the federation agenda of New Labour, has been side lined by the coalition and subsequent Conservative government by the academies programme and she refers in her article to schools minister, Lord Nash, describing federation as being a 'second best model' in a speech he made to the Independent Academies' Association in 2013. Where federation is an external solution sought by governing bodies, possibly with local authority and diocesan support, acadamisation is a completely different animal. The stakes changed when structural change became linked to poor Ofsted outcomes. Becoming an academy was initially a choice, but it is increasingly a forced solution, where a high-performing school is brought in to support a lower performing school (Simkins: 2015). Whilst all schools are being encouraged to become academies, the choice will be out of some schools' hands (DfE, Education and Adoption Bill: 2015). The press release from the DfE in June 2015, makes this quite clear, '…the new rules also make clear that in the future every single school rated 'inadequate' by Ofsted will be turned into an academy.' This structural solution has nothing to do with funding or recruitment of leadership, but is performance related. On May 6th 2016, however, a press release for the DfE retracted the enforcement of all schools becoming academies by 2020, but has maintained the requirement for inadequate schools to convert. The most common outcome of acadamisation is that there appears to be the appointment of an executive headteacher and a head of school in each individual school and there is little, if no, further reference to internal leadership structures (Howarth, 2015).

There is one very recent piece of research on small schools in England commissioned by the CfBT Education Trust. Its aim was to, '…investigate the most effective ways for small rural primary schools to work together in order to improve provision and raise standards' (Hill, Kettlewell and Salt, 2015: 3). The research was focused on schools in Lincolnshire. Whilst the research does not directly look at the issue of leadership structures, it does offer some useful insights that corroborate other research findings around how collaboration via federation or acadamisation can relieve recruitment issues, but states that neither will solve all of the issues facing small schools. Where external solutions had been employed, the study found that there were more likely to be executive headteachers employed and they did find some evidence of joint leadership teams. One of their identified lessons for schools was that leadership of partnerships should reach down to include the middle leaders in a school.

In 1999, Wallace and Huckmann took a systematic and robust look at four primary schools and their structures. They unpicked the structures in these schools in great detail. The schools were not selected by Ofsted criteria, but Ofsted judgements are used by the researchers in their exploration of the success of the four schools. The table below summarises the contexts and structures of the four schools.

Table 2: Case study context and leadership structure from Wallace and Huckman (1999)

Winton	• Located in the outer zone of a major conurbation • 687 pupils • Headteacher in post for 3 years (second headship) • Four members - headteacher, two deputy headteachers and one teacher with three increment points.[1]
Pinehill	• Located on the edge of an inner city • 586 pupils • Headteacher in post for 1 year (second headship) • Six members - headteacher, deputy headteacher and four teachers (three with three increment points and one with two increment points).
Kingsrise	• Located in an inner city • 450 pupils • Headteacher in post for 15 years (second headship) • Seven members - headteacher, deputy headteacher, two teachers with three increment points and three teachers with two increment points.
Waverley	• Located in an urbanised village near a city • 340 pupils • Headteacher in post for 13 years (second headship) • Five members - headteacher, deputy headteacher, three teachers with two increment points.

[1] Increment points were additional pay for taking on management responsibilities. These are the equivalent of teaching and learning responsibility (TLR) points awarded today.

The roles of the teachers with increment points carried out comprised of a combination of key stage or phase leaders, special needs, assessment, class management, some subject leaders and English as a second language leader. It would be interesting to look at whether these responsibilities are similar to those in today's leadership structures. What can be concluded is that the members of the teams all have multiple responsibilities. The deputies at Winton and Pinehill do not have class responsibilities. There does not appear to be anything more recent in the literature for this comparison to be made.

There are some caveats to the extent to which their findings can be generalised; they case study only four schools and the schools are all large, ranging from 340 to 687 pupils on roll. That said, their work in this area sheds more light than can generally be found elsewhere in the literature. Interestingly, they find the schools in the study all have deputy headteachers (in one case two) and the structures are all supplemented by teachers with increment points. The four schools are predominantly urban or on the cusp or urbanity and this potentially limited the generalisability of findings. The depth of the study is a great asset because every aspect of the structures' functions, attitudes, role allocation, participatory practices and history is revealed.

In conclusion, Wallace and Huckman propose a series of linked hypotheses or 'hunches' about effective teams around three themes (1999: 199-201);

- Input: team members (individual and group)

- SMT role: process and tasks (teamwork process and team tasks and linkage subtasks)

- SMT: Direct outputs.

They present these as an 'aide-memoire' and most certainly, 'not as a blueprint guaranteeing success in every context!' (Wallace and Huckman, 1999: 201). What they suggest reflects the behaviours, attitudes, experience, knowledge and functions of the teams, but not necessarily the structures themselves.

Comparing and contrasting the two studies - Bush et al. (2012) and Wallace and Huckman (1999)

In terms of pupil numbers, only one case study in the Bush et al. research (2012) is within the remit of this study (four or less classes) and none of them are small enough

in the Wallace and Huckman study (1999). The range of the Bush et al. research runs from 72 -386 pupils and Wallace and Huckman range from 340-687. The ranges make comparisons difficult with each other, let alone with the small schools that are the focus of this thesis. Similarly, the findings from Bush et. al. indicate that school size determines the size of the structure, degree of distributed leadership and allocation of resources, therefore, in order to shed light on the structures that might be effective in small primary schools, the research needs to look at structures in their size bracket as anything bigger is not going to be helpful.

There is great difficulty in comparing the actual structures in the two studies because of the lack of clarity of the structures in schools N and M in the Bush et al. study. The structure with the most detail (school L) is completely inapplicable to the small schools in this piece of research. What is of note is that the largest school, Winton, has the smallest structure, compared to school L, with less than half the number of pupils, which has two teams.

This also causes problems in terms of comparing the roles of the members of the structures because this is very explicitly explored in Wallace and Huckman, but less so in Bush et al. It should be pointed out, however, that Wallace and Huckman dedicated a book to their subject matter and have the scope to examine the structures and people within them in great detail.

An important consideration when comparing these two studies is the difference in when the studies were carried out. The world of education does not stand still and a difference of ten years can make a significant difference in terms of how schools function. It is arguable that the roles within a leadership structure and the functions they carry out have evolved since Wallace and Huckman's research. Certainly, the administrative roles have changed, the demands from Ofsted have changed and accountability is on a whole new level. Federations and academies had yet to appear on the landscape and with them the high stakes associated with poor outcomes.

The schools in the two studies are located in a variety of settings, from rural to urban and in this sense are quite comparable, but in terms of small schools and the subject of this thesis, their applicability is questionable. Both studies refer to the appointment process for new members of the structure; particularly the inclusion of existing members in that process.

One of the findings from Bush et al. (2012) was related to the team members' experiences and Wallace and Huckman (1999) also refer to the headteachers'

prior experiences in that all of their headteachers were in their second headships. The range of a headteacher's prior experiences requires illumination in order to understand if/how these experiences impact on the decisions a headteacher makes about leadership structure. The length of time a headteacher has been at a school, or indeed in headship in a number of schools over time, might have a bearing upon what they chose to do with their leadership structure. Earley and Weindling (2007) looked at the 'shelf life' of headteachers. One of the key things they discovered in the preparation prior to headship was that:

> the NFER headteachers said they learned about headship through-
> out their career, from both good and bad headteacher role models,
> but they particularly stressed their experiences as deputies which
> provided them with a wide variety of experience, a period as acting
> headteacher, and working with headteachers who delegated and
> saw deputy headship as a preparation for headship.' (Earley and
> Weindling, 2007: 74)

This may prove to be critical in terms of what headteachers expect from their own deputies based upon their experiences and it could also sway a headteacher in terms of their leadership style.

Briggs, Bush and Middlewood's study of new headteachers going through New Visions (NCSL programme for new headteachers) identified that headteachers were impacted by their previous experiences in terms of their ability to transfer these previous experiences, how appropriate the previous experience was in a new context, the loneliness of being the sole role holder and in terms of internal promotion and changing other people's perception of them. Whilst this does acknowledge the crucial role of prior experiences, it is not specific in terms of structure, however, the place of prior experience remains relevant throughout the phases of new headship from immersion to established headship (2006: 264).

Sample advice for new headteachers from those who had taken part in the NFER study (Weindling and Dimmock, 2006: 329) was to, '…build an effective Senior Management Team but make sure it isn't separated from the body of the staff.' They also recommended that headteachers do not bring too much of their old school to the new one. The question is how that squares with a headteacher who relies on prior experiences to solve problems in their new school.

In essence, there appears to be acknowledgement that prior experiences, particularly in terms of length of service, are important, but there seems to be a gap in the literature

that links very specific prior experiences of leadership structures and size of schools and how that is utilised by headteachers in developing their own leadership structures.

In concluding this section, a definition of effective leadership structures can now be identified for use in this study. Wallace and Huckman not only took the leadership and management judgement, but combed the reports for positive and negative criteria for the judgement. Bush et al. (2012) used schools with an outstanding judgement to indicate high performance. Wallace and Huckman (1999) had also included in their research design the gathering of staff and governor perceptions of the effectiveness of the leadership structure, which was not a part of this study, but does provide some triangulation of their findings around effective leadership structures. Bush and Glover (2014: 567) referred to their 2012 research on English senior leadership teams, stating that, 'all had a shared focus on high-quality teaching and learning, underpinned by a 'no excuses' culture.' This indicates the necessity for effectiveness being focused on the optimisation of pupil outcomes via the stringent drive to improve teaching and learning. Within the Ofsted judgement, there is also reference to effectiveness being predicated by the efficient use of funds, i.e. a business model that not only achieves successful pupil outcomes, but make the best use of the financial resources available, which includes the decisions around staff structure and what is affordable.

It is important to have a definition that has been agreed and applied universally, or as universally as possible allowing of the individual natures of inspectors. Inspection reports are reviewed and moderated so decisions about the quality of leadership and management should be consistent. It must be pointed out that the inspection schedules have changed over time, but this methodology is as robust as one is likely to get for this purpose. As a result of the literature review, Ofsted judgements will be used as the measure of effectiveness. This section has also provided an over-view of the most relevant research related to the subject of this thesis and provided a clear critique of how the small school setting is poorly represented in this field.

2.3 People, relationships and micro-politics

Absolutely key to understanding leadership structures is understanding people. Research question two seeks to understand the degree to which headteachers understand relationships in a power framework.

One way of exploring the relationships between people is to use a micro-political lens. Defining micro-politics, Malen (1995: 159) said '…..if micro-politics is about

much ado about everything, is it much ado about anything?' In many respects this is not very helpful, but it does communicate the breadth of micro-politics, whilst implying that it pervades everything. Innaconne (1975) was one of the first to use the term micro-politics at a point when politics in education had previously only been used in a much broader sense (Ryan, 2010). For Innaconne (1975: 43), micro-political studies, were concerned with the, '…interaction and political ideologies of social systems of teachers, administrators, and pupils within school buildings.' Mawhinney (1999: 161) makes explicit the role of interaction, '…micro-politics is concerned with the interaction and political ideologies of social systems of teachers, administrators and pupils within school buildings.' This is important because it makes clear how embedded micro-politics are in the daily life of schools. Potrac and Jones (2009) identify politics as a fundamental part of human behaviour, that is universal and entrenched in human interaction. Ball's (1987: 18) definition of micro-politics states that the concept is only applicable in relation to three key and related fields, which are, 'the interests of the actor, the maintenance of organisational control and conflict over policy.' It is important to recognise that these interactions and interests can frequently lead to conflict as individuals and groups pursue their goals (Caruso, 2013). In 1987, Ball described these moments, or contexts as 'arenas of struggle'. That is not to say that the world of micro-politics is a 'dark place' and that is should be viewed negatively as, '…micro-political actions and processes may be cooperative and consensual as well as conflictive' (Winton and Pollack, 2013: 42). This contrasting perspective is also supported by Bjork and Blase (2009) and Blase and Blase (2002). Bush (2002: 22) clarifies the difference between macro-politics and micro-politics, whereby macro-politics is related to, 'debate and disagreement within the wider policy making process' and micro-politics, 'assumes that policy and decisions emerge through a process of negotiation and bargaining.'

Where Mawhinney (1999) is broad and sweeping in definition, Ball is specific. Hoyle's (1986) definition focuses on collective strategies that individuals and groups in organisations utilise to further their interests through their resources and/or power. In her work on principals and the politics of resistance, Starr (2011:647) identifies that, ' micro-political structures and activities involve both convergent and divergent processes, with resistance encapsulating the latter.' This is particularly relevant when thinking about the conditions for change and how a headteacher may face conflict.

None of these definitions contradict each other, and can be seen as all part of the one larger concept. For the purposes of this study, micro-politics is defined as; the interaction between individuals and groups within the school environment, as well as

with external agencies, and the collective strategies employed by individuals or groups to pursue their goals/interests through their sources of power.

Managing change successfully could be linked to the degree to which a headteacher is able to grasp and analyse the key issues; what they have inherited, engagement with the context and other influential factors, within and without the school, the power within the organisation, the school culture and their ability to manage change. In other words, the headteacher's degree of micro-politically literacy. Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002) develop the concept of 'micro-political literacy' as a means to describe and analyse knowledge and skill in the field of micro-politics. They define 'micro-political literacy' as the skill of learning to, 'read the political reality and to 'write' themselves into it' (2002: 756). Their study on career development with 'micro-political literacy', whilst not directly relevant, bears consideration because of their findings. From their analysis they identified three strands of 'micro-political literacy': knowledge, operational and experiential.

Knowledge refers to the knowledge that an individual requires to acknowledge, interpret and understand micro-political situations. Operational refers to the individual's toolbox of micro-political strategies. Finally, the experiential strand revolves around an individual's feelings about their micro-political literacy proficiency. This is a really important concept because it recognises the significance of micro-political skill in terms of the success of change management. Their study's outcomes, however, come from interpretative analysis of just one primary teacher's story. The article does not provide research methodology and as such must be treated with a degree of caution. Some years later, Vanderline and Keltchermans (2013: 36) identified that, '…micro-political literacy is a process with different stages.' This will relate to the experiences of the newly appointed headteachers and their often steep micro-political literacy learning curve.

An alternative perspective is to look to Blase and Anderson's 1995 matrix of micro-political leadership. At either end of the horizontal axis lie the open and closed dimensions of micro-political leadership. The closed dimension represents leaders who use their power in direct ways whereas the open dimension has leaders that use a more indirect approach, likely to employ a more diplomatic style. Whilst this is helpful to a degree, it polarises micro-political actions, and does not really refer to how well-versed a leader is in the micro-political arts.

Ryan's 2010 study talks about 'political acumen' in relation to how inclusive principals in Canada use this acumen to advance social justice in their schools. The

study was part of a wider piece of research and involved three phases and sampled principals with varied experience. Through the data analysis, it is some of the leaders themselves who, '… recognised the necessity of playing politics and readily acknowledged their active participation in related practices' (2010:3 64). One of the leaders is even more specific about his experiences in an urban elementary school and the skills required, 'you have to understand before you seek to change' (2010:3 65). Ryan (2010: 365) summarises what a number of the leaders were trying to tell him:

> John and his fellow participants felt that it is crucial to understand school cultures, community dynamics and the wider system idiosyncrasies. Understanding these realms requires that they come to know, or know about, the people who work in the system—teachers, parents and central office people—and their values and priorities. They speak about a number of ways of acquiring this knowledge, including listening, interacting with people and moving around.

This is what he terms 'political acumen. Arguably, this is the same micro-political literacy by another name. The above quote from Ryan (2010) makes quite explicit the critical role of micro-political literacy in how new headteachers scope of the landscape of the inherited school.

From a business, rather than educational perspective, Buchanan and Badham (1999) take the stance that upon joining a new organisation, the politically savvy executive should aim to discover; who is friendly with who, who are enemies, if there are any secret liaisons, the real agendas of key resource holders, who has control over 'discretionary' resources and who you need to know if you want something done, past and current hot issues, and who to befriend and who to avoid.

Bondy and Ross (1992) use the term 'micro-political competence' in their discussion around how new teachers can gain access to power in schools, identifying that the first step should be to getting to know how things are done in their school. The article, whilst supporting the importance of micro-political ability, is not evidence based and is somewhat dated. Blase and Anderson (1995: 12) identify that the recognition of 'political literacy' is required if we are to, '…work together authentically rather than politely tiptoe around each other.' For the purposes of this study, Kelchtermans and Ballet's (2002) term 'micro-political literacy' and their three strands will be used because, of all the alternatives reviewed, this offers distinctions within the broader concept of micro-political literacy.

2.3.1 How power is understood

A critical point needs to made at this juncture; the power framework in play within a school setting is not necessarily tied to the formal leadership structure. The structure provides accountability and job descriptions that can be mapped to external standards requirements, but it alone does not necessarily dictate the power framework. It is the people and how they operate that a headteacher needs to engage with if they are to implement change strategies successfully to improve school effectiveness. A micro-political lens offers a means by which to understand the power framework within a small school setting, as Caruso, (2013:219) put it, '… decision making in schools cannot be explained without understanding political power and the strategies used by individuals and groups to gain such power.' Furthermore, numerous authors acknowledge that it is power that defines human relationships and in particular, the relationship between 'leaders and led' (Woestman and Wasonga (2015:150), as well as the impact on individuals and groups within an organisation from the exercise of power (Fowler, 2014; Blasé & Blasé, 2003; Yamada, 2000).

According to Jarvis (2012), power is crucial for researchers to understand, but that it is difficult to define and equally difficult to identify in action. The reason for this is suggested by Ricken (2006: 542), who states that, '…power evades a simple conceptual understanding and determination because its significance is dependent on far- reaching preconceptions.' Many others disagree and have offered numerous definitions over time. Foucault (1980: 39) describes power as:

> a sinuous and insinuating mechanism that works its way in a 'capillary' fashion into the 'very grain' of individuals, inhabiting their bodies, their beliefs and their self-hood and binding them together as institutional subjects.

Taking this perspective, power can be 'cohesive and enabling' (Mifsud, 2015: 56) and it has a circulatory action.

There are a number of models/frameworks that can help to develop understanding of how these interactions/exchanges and sources of power operate. The sources of power in French and Raven's (1968) definitions are all concerned with the leader wielding power over others to bring about desired outcomes, with the exception of the referent, although it could be argued that the leader's power is such that it exerts a desire for others to conform in terms of shifting their own identity to match that of the leader. This is very relevant in the context of the research into leadership in

schools because a headteacher has access to considerable legitimate power, which could become a dominant source of power, whereby the headteacher holds all the cards – they are the expert, they have the ability to reward and punish. By stark contrast, Johnson and Short's (1998) definitions come from a completely opposite perspective – whilst using the same terms, they define each as being concerned with the leader's ability to confer onto others feelings that bring about the desired outcome, whether those are through persuasion, conveying expertise or sharing the vision for others to buy into.

Blase and Anderson (1995) separate the power into 'power over, power through and power with'. Whilst this does simplify things, it also throws up an interesting point because where French and Raven (1968) and Johnson and Short (1998) break down the five sources of power, they do not allow for any overlap. Blase and Anderson (1995) provide the opportunity for analysis of school leadership power to draw upon aspects of one or more sources of power to bring about the desired outcomes. This is more likely to be relevant in this study, as it has already been identified that the actors wear many hats, but is also more realistic in that individuals and groups are more likely to draw upon multiple sources of power when dealing with others.

All of these theories shed light upon different aspects of power in relationship to others and Blase and Anderson (1995) view them as the corner stone to the, 'tripartite structure expressed in terms of 'power over', 'power through' and 'power with'. They combine the overt and covert (Bachrach and Baratz, 1962), the observable and unobservable, formal (Dahl,1957) and informal, action versus non-action. It encompasses power by outcome (Ball, 1987), as well as the possession and exercise of power (Lukes, 1974). Blase and Anderson's model provides a framework for the analysis of power and application of micro-politics, which will structure the exploration of research question three.

Power Over

'Power over' is characterised by domination and control, where individuals are seeking to enhance their own power at the expense of others (Blase and Anderson, 1995). In this situation, power is viewed as a limited resource, which leads to competition. Leadership is assumed to be authoritarian. It could be argued that in schools where this is the default leadership style, staff, governors, parents and indeed children (stakeholders) are not fully subscribed to this leader or organisation, as they have no sense of ownership of the organisation.

Power through

'Power through' is characterised by power not being perceived as a limited resource or that there is a need for competition. In this situation, leadership is facilitative in nature, where leaders adopt a style that encourages and motivates others to reach goal achievement through a shared sense of ownership. It could be argued that this stimulates a greater degree of 'buy in' for stakeholders, which in turn creates a more forward thinking and dedicated organisation.

Power with

'Power with' is the third way, an alternative that Blase and Anderson (1995:14) propose as a means to take 'power through' to the next level. They also suggest alternative terms, 'power together' or 'power emerging'. This model presents a serious challenge to the 'power over' hierarchical domination approach to leadership because it is characterised by stakeholders being empowered, with leaders having close relationships with stakeholders and the stakeholders have fulfilled expectations of democratic participation; not as a privilege bestowed upon them by leaders, but as a right; a normalised means of school leadership and organisation.

There are hints within this definition that maybe there is a fourth aspect to this power framework; power sharing as the end game. Each of the three definitions above suggest that power is something that one person consents to allow others access to. Power sharing would suggest that no-one person or group has the ability to confer this upon others because all hold equal power. As a theory, this might cause problems, because formally the headteacher in a school is externally accountable for the school and its effectiveness and it is arguable that they could ever power share equitably in this sense as they alone would bear the ultimate responsibility for school effectiveness.

2.3.2 The actualisation of power

With a definition of power established in relation to this study, and the identification of a framework to analyse the type of power in action, it is necessary to understand how people within a school actualise power if research question three is to be fully addressed. This is a further aspect of the process of scoping the landscape of the inherited school. Busher (2006) states that all participants in schools have access to power in some form or another. His work demonstrates that schools have asymmetrical power relationships; some of the people in the organisation hold positions in the formal leadership structure that allow them access to some sources of power that others cannot access. Individuals can access personal power by way

of their personality, ability to coerce others and their own understanding of power and interpersonal relationships. Power can come in the form of asserting preferred choices and values over those of others (Busher, 2006), as well as blocking the choices of others. This is significant in the context of the third research question because it clearly reflects the way that the members of a school community have access to power of some form or another from both formal and non-formal routes.

Small primary schools and their leadership structures are, by their very nature, small, therefore, one way to explore their behaviour and actualisation of power is to use small group theory. West (1999) classifies small group theory as either being formal or informal. Formal groups carry out specific goals and tasks, which are in direct relation to the school's aims, which has a clear link to Habermas' (1987) definition of the formal arena. Informal groups have no such basis and West (1999) suggests they emerge from humans having a diverse range of social and emotional needs, fulfilled through the development of relationships with other individuals within the organisation. Where a school can control, to a greater or lesser degree, the creation and work of formal groups, informal groups are 'loose canons'. A school will find inhibiting the development of informal groups almost impossible and West expects that schools will inevitably have 'cliques'. It is important to note that West's work was undertaken in 1999 and times have changed, as well as recognising that there are gaps in his work where statements and conclusions are unsupported/referenced. This is very relevant to the research question as a means of establishing how groups within a school are functioning within the power framework. Understanding how groups as well as individuals operate is another vital function of scoping the landscape before deciding upon change strategies.

Viewing groups as cliques, West (1999: 91) contends that the leaders of these 'cliques' establish 'norms'; attitudinal, territorial and behavioural, providing this example, 'We've seen it all before, it won't work.' This group identification of the culture of the school and, 'the way we do things here' can be a huge source of power for groups within the organisation. This cynicism is, '..a customary response from the workforce during various stages of organisational change, often because of past efforts lacked vision, preparation, and completion' (Caruth and Caruth, 2013: 15). Members of 'cliques' are described by West (1999: 191) as, …followers who observe the 'norms of the group – repeating normative attitudes, acting out normative behaviour expectations…'

Handy's (1986) work on organisations is a useful work for comparison with West's (1999) position on the power of the clique. In his chapter on power and influence, he looks at methods of influence and some of these are helpful in deepening

understanding of how cliques and their leaders can actualise power in formal and informal arenas. Particularly relevant is his identification of ecology of the organisation as being key. This is important because he cites that, 'small groups are easier to participate in than large groups' (1986: 133). This links to participatory practices. This supports the relevance of using small group theory in this study. Handy also uses the example of how seating plans in the staffroom in the clique model, has an impact on interaction patterns. This could well be supported by exploring who sits where in meetings (formal/legitimate) and during lunchtime (informal/illegitimate).

There clearly are organisations where there is fierce competition between groups, those that exclude, and hold deeply entrenched ideologies that prevent the development of a homogenised forward moving organisation. West (1999) goes even further, suggesting that a variety of studies found that informal group influence is, '...most frequently used to inhibit and frustrate' (1999:193). However, West does not support this conclusion with references. Senge (1990) discusses in The Fifth Discipline, that most teams of people work at cross purposes, where individuals may work incredibly hard, but as they are unaligned, they ultimately waste energy. He asserts that where there is alignment, there is commonality of direction, shared vision and common purpose, blended with the capacity to recognise and compliment individuals' skills. The most key element to this synergy is that individual vision is not relinquished, but that shared vision becomes, 'an extension of their personal vision' (Senge, 1990: 234).

Shifting the focus from groups to individuals, Weber (1974) identified in his third base of power the charismatic leader. Weber (1974) said that power derived from charisma comes in different forms, including coercion. Ball et al. (2011: 50) identifies a new breed of charismatic leader, the hero innovator, '...Sir this and Dame that.....' Ball et al. (2011: 628) discuss 'policy actors' and the role of the power individual; describing them as being, 'charismatic people and 'persuasive personalities' and forceful agents for change.' The concept of the charismatic leader, not necessarily the headteacher, is extremely relevant to understanding how power is actualised in small schools. The power of one individual's charisma in a small school can be magnified ten fold because there are so few individuals in the setting. Handy (1986) also discusses magnetism, credibility and facets of personal power that individuals use and fall prey to in organisations. It is crucial to re-iterate that a charismatic individual wielding power is not necessarily a person of accepted authority in the formal Habermas (1987) sense, they could be the headteacher, but they could equally be the teaching assistant, the caretaker or even a governor. A headteacher needs to be able

to recognise these individuals through the micro-political lens as part of their scoping process.

Handy(1986) also describes, 'position power' citing the example of the power held by a voluntary secretary and how 'position power' also provides power through the flow of information (1986: 124). In any analysis of a school's leadership team and its effectiveness, the power of the personality should not be over-looked (Handy, 1986: 127).

Southworth's research in 1993(b) concluded that if headteachers were motivated because, "their leadership is a pursuit of individual visions," (1993b: 82) then the visions of other stakeholders are less important within their schools. This is the extension of the headteacher's vision, but assumes everyone adopts the headteacher's vision to the exclusion of their own. Furthermore, he suggests that any collaboration that the headteacher attempts is only done for the purposes of furthering their own vision. This again points to the significant contribution Southworth made to early research on headship and vision. Arguably, however, the research and language around vision has changed in the intervening years and practice in schools has subsequently moved on too and this is why Southworth's research is important, but does not have a more prominent role in this literature review. Furthermore, this shift in practice is reflected in Abbott and Bush's 2013 findings around shared vision as a factor in the development of high-performing leadership structures. This link to values and vision also connects with culture, and understanding this aspect could be critical for headteachers in how successfully they operate within the school. Finally there is a connection to participation and how headteachers extend participatory processes to engage stakeholders in vision collaboration, which is explored in greater depth in section 2.4 on page 30 and relates to research question two. Whilst Southworth explored small school leadership in depth, identifying that smallness as a context is a game changer in terms of leadership, leadership development and capacity, participation, vision, trust and power, his research does not explore how participation is developed at the grass roots level of an organisation and does not explore the spaces staff have for talking back to power. Therefore, I draw upon the following frameworks; Blasé and Anderson's (1995) for power, Kelchtermans and Ballet's (2002) for micro-politics, Heler, Pusic, Strauss and Wilbert (1998) and Somech (2010) for participatory processes to help shed light on how leaders navigate an inherited school culture, cultivate positive relationships, and engage with power to optimise participatory processes and practices and pupils' learning.

2.3.3 Scoping the landscape; the inherited school and culture

Just as Wallace and Huckman (1999) found, a new headteacher, unless embarking on the creation of a new school, will inevitably inherit an organisation that, (Ball, 1987: 213) '…will almost inevitably bear the marks of the particular history of the institution – battles lost, ambitions frustrated, alliances which crumbled and trusts betrayed.' Weindling and Dimmock's (2006: 328) research supports this, 'the new heads discovered that the shadow of 'headteachers past' hangs over and influences them for longer than they expect.' The 'inheritance factor' is increasingly considered to be part of change management (Fullan (1997). Northfield (2014: 413) found in his study of how new principals establish trust during succession that, 'they have to learn and enact a new role as well as fit into an organisation as leader while being charged with effecting purposeful and positive change within it.'

The perspective of the new headteacher was the focus of research by Mayer and Macmillan (2011) in Canada, but it is extremely relevant to this study, particularly when you explore how many of the headteachers are first timers. In this study they found that, '… issues of power and control and the negotiation of influence play an important role in the development of relationships within a school community when a new principal assumes his or her position' (2011: 2). An American study by Caruso in (2013: 222), looking at the experiences of novice middle school principals, reflects that:

> … principals face the challenge of identifying key social structures,
> such as major actors and players, within their public schools,

and at the same time,

> they also have the daunting task of managing and negotiating
> within internal micro-political structures, interactions, and decision
> making processes that include various teachers groups, individual
> teachers and the union, and parents.' The success or failure of
> Caruso's principals would seem to lie in their ability to recognise
> and act within the micro-political landscape of their new school.

In both Northfield (2014) and Caruso (2013), the purpose of scoping the micro-political landscape is linked to headteachers' drive to ensure that their new schools are effective; effective in terms of optimising pupil outcomes, economical efficiency and external accountability, i.e. Ofsted inspection criteria or the American equivalent.

The impact of these external forces is often felt by new headteachers. Briggs, Bush and Middlewood (2006, 266) found the following when reflecting upon their findings:

> difficulties over external accountability were sometimes the reason for the departure of the previous head: one respondent took over a school in serious weakness, and was faced with an HMI inspection two weeks after taking up post. Another was appointed to a school faced with possible closure, a situation which had created a 'void in decision-making'; a subsequent decision to amalgamate two schools with her as head gave her the challenge to manage the process, creating new direction for the amalgamated school, and instituting a process of change and improvement.

When Wallace and Huckman (1996) analysed four case studies of senior management teams, a key finding was that the majority of headteachers have little control over their teams due to inheritance. This means that a headteacher might decide to ensure his/her team is cohesive and shares the same values and goals. Alternatively, they may opt for an entirely different strategy; establishing their own power base by removing those who do not have their shared goals. Abbott and Bush (2013: 590) looked at high-performing leadership teams in four primary schools of varying sizes in the United Kingdom and concluded that, 'new HTs usually inherit a SLT and have to work initially with this group, although it is possible to make structural changes, for example, adding new staff to the SLT or changing the ways in which it operates.' Bush and Glover (2012: 23) discuss the golden moment when opportunity presents itself:

> if a member of the SLT departs, owing to retirement or promotion, this provides an opportunity for heads to adopt a zero-based approach, not necessarily making a 'like-for-like' replacement. In particular, it provides an opportunity to consider how the distribution of leadership might be modified, and perhaps enhanced, by the addition of a colleague with specific attributes.

The need to build up a base of support and learn how to manage those that might support or resist a new leader's agenda is supported by the work of Bolman and Deal (2008).

Another of Wallace and Huckman's findings was that, 'various constraints denied heads an unfettered chance to select their 'dream team' '(1999: 111). They elaborate

on this by stating that these headteachers had very limited opportunities to appoint new staff to their teams; they frequently had to work with what they had.

Inheritance is not just about the structure that is inherited by the new headteacher, or individuals, but it is also about the school culture. Culture in schools manifests itself in, 'custom, rituals, symbols, stories and language' (Stoll, 2003: 97). Culture is 'the way we do things here', but in the context of the third research question, it deserves re-visiting because here it is being used to ascribe a potential problem for initiating change if the culture is not fully recognised and understood by the headteacher and leadership team. Culture is 'situationally unique' (Beare, Caldwell and Millikan, 1989) and is shaped by many things, including the history of the school, its age and the members within it. Anthropologically, culture can be found in the overt nature of a school's life, but can equally be covert (Morgan, 1997), lying unseen until someone breaks from the accepted norms and unwritten rules. This could be identified as the territory of 'small culture' or sub-cultures and cliques.

Cruzeiro and Boone's work (2009: 7) on the characteristics of rural and small school principals clearly identified the necessity of, '…understanding of the the political culture of the rural school and community.' Karlberg-Granlund (2011) refers to the headteachers' need to understand both school and community culture. Whilst Wildy and Clarke (2012: 71) state, 'a prerequisite for strong leadership of small schools is an intimate knowledge and understanding of place.' By having a deep understanding of their context and its complexities, in tandem with an appreciation of the culture, a leader is better placed to address school and local issues. This ties closely with the issues around inheritance and the headteacher's ability to understand the school culture in order to effectively enable change. Wildy, Sigurðardóttir, and Faulkner (2014: 107) refer to this specifically; '…newly assigned principals who take cognisance of the prevailing school culture and build their improvement efforts within this culture, find they have fewer negative turn-over issues.' Whilst reference is made to this aspect of small school leadership, inheritance is not specifically explored in relation to the leadership structure, nor is the process of changing the leadership structure. The references tend to be with regard to school improvement or more general school changes.

If a leader seeks to change the organisational structure of a school, he/she are unlikely to be successful unless these key areas of culture are understood and engaged with by leadership structures, if a plan for the creation of the conditions for change is to be successful. The explicit connection is clear – if micro-politics is concerned with power and relationship, one must engage with culture to determine the 'way we do things here', by defining the reality for those within the school (Hargreaves, 1995).

This is of significant importance to the third research question because shifts in culture are possible only when you, 'immerse yourself in studying a culture (your own or someone else's) until you understand it ' (Senge et al, 1999: 334). From this point of understanding, you can then begin a subtle, or not so subtle, introduction of new values and ways of doing things. Turan and Bektas (2013: 157) state that:

> …even though school culture is built on the history and deep values of the school society, replacing and renovating the school culture is contributed to through the basic function of the leader. This aspect of the relationship between school culture and leadership is associated with changing the culture in a positive or negative way.

2.4 Practices and processes of participation to enable the development school effectiveness

2.4.1 Defining participation to facilitate change processes to deliver school effectiveness

This section aims to identify processes and practices of participation which are the means by which headteachers engage with others in a change process; in this case changing leadership structure and in doing so, answer research question three. Participatory processes and practices are sometimes described as participative decision making (PDM) and this has been a key theme in research, practice and policy in schools for many years (e.g. Somech, 2002; Leithwood & Duke, 1998; San Antonio & Gamage, 2007). Somech, (2010: 175) states that, 'scholars and practitioners often conclude that the problems facing schools are too great for any one person to solve alone.' There is evidence that engaging with PDM has a number of benefits for a school, which include the enhancement of teacher motivation (Taylor & Tashakkori, 1997), as well as having an impact on the quality of teachers' work/life balance (Somech, 2002). These are not necessarily aimed at the impact of using PDM with other members of school staff or their governors. Whilst there has been much research in this field, defining what is meant by PDM, however, remains a grey area (Brouillette, 1997; Somech, 2002 and Somech, 2010), but like Somech (2010) who adopted the definition from Heler, Pusic, Strauss and Wilpert (1998: 42) this is the definition used for the purposes of this study.

> Participation is the totality of forms, i.e. direct (personal) or indirect (through representatives or institutions) and of intensities; i.e.,

ranging from minimal to comprehensive, by which individuals, groups, collectives secure their interest or contribute to the choice process through self-determined choices among possible actions during the decision process.

This definition was selected because of the identification of the range of strategies and mechanisms included, and because of its clear links with power and the pursuit of interests. This defines participation, but to move forward, definitions around participatory practices are required. Exploration of the four central properties or models of PDM (Dachler and Wilpert, 1978 and McCaffrey, Faerman, and Hart, 1995) illuminate a means of analysing what types of participation might take place in schools.

There are four models which will now be described. In the first model, participation is designed as a formal intervention strategy, which does not engage with stakeholders, but with their representatives. This suggests that this is a 'done to' approach where stakeholders are informed that change is going to take place. This connects with a 'power over' model. The second model does engages with stakeholders, but the definition of the degree of participation is very broad. This suggests that discussion around a change is beginning to take place, developing some understanding about why change is required. This model connects with movement from a 'power over' to a 'power with' framework. In the fourth model, participation takes on a further dimension; discussion about the changes moves from understanding to an advisory and responsive position and connects very much with the 'power with' framework. In the fourth and final model, participation encompasses all stakeholders, engaging with all aspects of the change process. This model moves through discussion, understanding and response phases which leads to 'sign up' from all because they are now fully committed to the change to improve school effectiveness since they have been 100% involved in the process.

A cautious independent judgement emerges when critiquing these four models. As an analytical tool, the four models are absolutes and do not allow for nuance and overlap. If, however, they were positioned along a sliding scale of participatory practices, a more precise analytical tool may emerge.

It is important to be clear in any research around PDM whose perspective has been gained. What a headteacher perceives as formal participation could be vastly different to the perception of the teachers. This research only reflects the views of

headteachers. PDM was explored in schools by Conway in 1978, looking at very specific areas of decision making, such as textbook selection, general school policy and budget preparation. He was looking at the teachers' perception of participation and found that there was evidence of participation in all the schools, in varying degrees. He identified that whilst the teachers in the study indicate they are currently satisfied with their degree of participation, he anticipates that over time, with this 'taste of power' (p.228), teachers demand greater degrees of participation.

An interesting mechanism for improving processes and practices of participation was observed by Southworth in 1993, when he reports on the outcomes of headteacher undertaking a job rotation for himself, his deputy and another senior teacher. The headteacher was aware that he was likely to lose two senior members of staff who were seeking promotions and he was also looking for professional development for himself. In a quite radical move, the headteacher decided to rotate the roles in his school to provide leadership opportunities for his senior staff and get himself back into a classroom. Such a plan demonstrates extremely high levels of trust between the members of staff and considerable willingness from the headteacher to take a pay cut and go back to the coalface. It is questionable whether many headteachers would be prepared to accept this situation let alone initiate it themselves. In terms of participation, this is an interesting model, because each of the participants certainly gained a far better understanding of how things felt and operated from someone else's perspective; the difficulties of leadership, the necessary strategies to engage the whole school, the impact of positional power and the importance of the quality of relationships. The headteacher did not manage to keep both of his staff through this project, one left for promotion, but he built up leadership capacity and gained a great deal personally by stepping away from headship and heading to the classroom. He learned a considerable amount about participation from that perspective and how to maximise learning outcomes. In reality, it is unlikely that many schools would find themselves in a position where working in this way is possible, but it does offer food for thought in terms of raising the level of participation through understanding what it is like in another person's shoes. Southworth's research addresses a rotation of leadership roles as a means of addressing the creation of continuing professional development and management experiences/ opportunities for staff, retention, preparation for headship and dealing with the demands of leadership. However, this study does not focus on rotation of leadership roles to address the research questions.

With a definition of participation and models PDM established, the next step is to examine the change process, the impact of school culture and critically, the role that people and power play on the road to change.

2.4.2 Change processes

Change is inevitable in all walks of life and 'it is not easy for organisations of any kind to change, but schools have particular characteristics that mitigate against major change' (Starr, 2011: 646). This statement is also supported by the work of Evans (1996) and Hargreaves and Fink (2006). Change can involve the relinquishing of, '…feelings of comfort, long-held values or beliefs, and established routines' (Starr, 2011: 649). Furthermore, it requires people to engage in new thinking, it takes extra time and inevitably will involve effort (Strebel, 2006). Caruth and Caruth (2013: 12) suggest that:

> the thought of change creates instability and threatens the structure
> of the institution of learning. It indicates the current structure is
> somehow defective and can elicit defensive reactions in addition to
> the feelings of angst and failure. Those in the institution fear the loss
> of both meaning and tradition. This uncertainty results in resistance,
> especially on the part of individuals with insufficient coping skills.

Therefore, it is hardly surprising that, 'individuals try to retain comfort and quell confusion through practising caution, constraint and subversion, thus protecting the status quo' (Starr, 2011: 647). Abelson (1995) suggests that the resistance to change comes when the change itself challenges the attitudes, assumption or values that are held dear. However, Hodkinson, Biesta, and James (2008: 38) argue that change is in fact a choice and for the individual teacher, the impact they have is, '…the result of their presence and actions within it, whether they intend to influence that culture or not.' It is during these periods of change, that Blase (2005) and Starr (2011) identified that micro-political activity intensifies. A Greek study by Saiti (2015: 588) on conflict concluded that, '… school members – particularly school principals – must be able to understand the roots of any opposition and to confront such opposition effectively and in a timely manner.' The literature thus far implies that change is never embraced or seen as a positive step for a school.

There is a delicate balance between the need for rapid change, where a school is deemed to be in crisis and the damage that can be caused by, '….rapid cultural destruction – amid an atmosphere of crisis, with the potential for suppressed resentment and backlash' (Senge et al, 1999: 335). A crisis could be anything from

poor Ofsted outcomes to the destabilising impact of multiple resignations. This position is supported by Barker (2005), in his exploration of the human relations models in his research on Hillside, a comprehensive school located in an urban area of the Midlands. Barker (2005) reports how the new school leadership's transformational focus was not always met with positivity and acceptance. He identifies the, '…micro-political responses to each of the new heads were shaped by differing personal and professional values and past experiences' (2005: 108). Barker's analysis of those members of staff who left Hillside in the eighteen months after a crucial Ofsted, is that no matter what micro-political strategies the leadership employed, they would have been interpreted as, '….coercive and oppressive, mainly because they rejected the agenda imposed on the school by external pressures' (2005: 108). This links very closely with the impact of externally imposed structure in the previous section.

Further weight is added to this position when reviewing the evidence on how people respond to change in schools. When change is on the cards, it is more likely that teacher and leaders will be, 'more likely to be enthusiastic about change when they 'own' it' (Bush and Glover, 2014: 554). In addition, Hargreaves (2003) reported that on reviewing data from research in Canadian schools, teachers have different emotional experiences of change depending upon whether the change is self-elected or a mandated. Perhaps unsurprisingly, self-elected change was felt to be a positive experience, with mandated change associated with negative emotional experiences.

Argyris' work (1993) on 'unblocking' organisations presents a different perspective; his focus is not on actions that are preventing change, but the reasons that prevent actions 'unblocking' the situation. There is insufficient space within this literature review to adequately critique this theory. What makes it so important, however, in answering research question two is the way that Arygris uses concrete examples, drawn from both business and education, to show how it is possible to bring about profound change successfully; engaging all stakeholders (staff, governors, pupils and parents) in a positive forward thinking process, as opposed to the perceived manner in which change was 'inflicted' upon the staff at Hillside. Argyris (2010) explored the traps to which individuals and organisations fall prey. He cites dysfunctional behaviours in organisations, such as conflict, turf warfare, the inability to discuss change and resolve issues and patterns of actions that are resistant to modification. In plain terms, Arygris demonstrates how it may be possible to use micro-political literacy to identify the traps and blocks.

In contrast to Argyris, Lewin's (1943) work around small group studies refers to group processes where it is necessary to 'unfreeze-move and refreeze' the group's standards. This suggests that the status quo is stopped, a new way of doing things is introduced and then this situation is locked into place, with no room for growth or adaptation. The repetitive and ingrained nature of the behaviour and processes of groups relates to the discussion around the behavioural norms that emerge from small groups and are also identified by Parsons (1967) when he described social life distinguished by interactions that are recurrent, patterned, cooperative and stable. Whilst this was said in relation to social life, it could equally be applied to the analysis of the interaction between groups and individuals in schools. This could be incredibly supportive, but could also lead to stagnation and unwillingness to change. In examining the small school world, a world already acknowledged as ever changing, it would seem to be a backward step to re-freeze behaviours and processes; simply storing up the need to have another massive change further along the way.

In contrast to both Argyris (2010) and Lewin (1943), Stoll (2003) suggests a third way. Instead of unblocking or unfreezing, she proposes the process of re-culturing. In this process, the group/s develop new values, beliefs and norms; it is a collective process, one that does not have the negative connotations of blockage or frozen behaviours. It is also one that is cyclical, without the finality of being unblocked or re-frozen and the process is complete. In common with Argyris and Lewin, however, Stoll (2003) acknowledges that any change process is unlikely to be straightforward or pain free.

Abbott and Bush's work (2013) on high-performing leadership structures concluded that whilst they had no secret recipe for developing high-performance teams, they did identify five factors that emerged from their case study evidence. These factors are; shared values and common purpose, role clarity, developing a long term approach, continuity of service and professional development (2013). It is worth considering that these could be factors could also be a leadership structure development strategy; a mechanism through which change could be managed.

2.4.3 Strategies

Strategies that individuals or groups employ to exert influence vary enormously, sometimes consciously and at other times, unconsciously. There are many strategies that have been identified by a range of authors, (Winton and Pollock, 2013; Blase and

Anderson, 1995; Crow and Weindling, 2010; Malen and Ogawa, 1988 and Marsh, 2012). Winton and Pollock (2013: 43) suggest there are:

> additional strategies designed to influence others identified in research on school micro-politics and educational leadership include controlling meeting agendas and decision-making processes, co-optation, buffering, listening, diplomacy, humour, strategic use of data, using rewards and sanctions, and avoidance.

Fairman and Mackenzie (2014) carried out research into how teacher leaders influence others and understand their leadership. Bearing in mind that this is based in America and taking a very particular stance in terms of teacher leadership and school improvement, they nevertheless have some interesting input in this field. One of their findings indicated that an aspect of influence came about through the modelling of professional attitudes, dispositions and attributes. This could be quite key in thinking about how a headteacher might bring influence, in particular with a teacher who may not be demonstrating these behaviours. In conclusion, they state that:

> thus, teachers employed different strategies ….. professional dispositions and behaviours (e.g. honesty and openness, reflection, respect, communication, encouragement, prodding and support), and supportive conditions (e.g. trust, safety, time/scheduling and support from administrators) to establish and deepen their professional working relationships within various spheres of leadership activity.
> Fairman and MacKenzie (2014: 68)

This all appears to be very positive, and could be described as 'soft' strategies, but other research has uncovered much darker approaches to exerting influence and making feelings about change much clearer. The headteachers in Starr's research (2011) found a wide spectrum of behaviours, that ranged from the silent, passive to the aggressive and violent forms of resistance. There were examples, at one extreme, of death threats and vandalism, undermining through exclusion, confrontation, including governors and parents, right through to the level of door slamming and slander. These strategies would sit most definitely in the realm of the 'harsh' cohesive power base. It is clear that these powerful, or influential actors, '… have the potential to derail or support principals' goals and initiatives' (Caruso, 2013: 219).

In 1993(a), Southworth reflected on the Primary School Staff Research Project which found that headteachers used a range of strategies in developing their sense of whole

school. He explores a number of examples of more coercive mechanisms in play, such as monitoring the work of the teachers in a manner that could be considered surveillance, having frank conversations with staff where beliefs and behaviours differed from that of the headteacher, and occasionally being manipulative where interests were competing. Whilst this touches on micro-politics, I draw on Kelchtermans and Ballet's (2002), to shed light on micro-politics in small schools because through the three strands of micro-political literacy that they identify, it is possible to recognise the range of micro-political strategies in play, as well as ability to scope the landscape and self awareness of micro-political literacy.

Headteachers' strategies came under scrutiny in Ryan's research (2010: 43) and he reported the following strategies as being used by the principals in the pursuit of social justice goals within their schools:

> … persuading others, being honest, persisting, planning, experimenting, keeping others off-balance, playing ignorant, working the system, and quietly advocating. Strategies for persuading others include circulating information, guiding discussions, provoking, asking critical questions, encouraging discussion, preaching, using language carefully, complimenting superiors, and using government language.

It is not only teachers that can behave badly (Sasson and Somech, 2015), leaders can be just as guilty. Woestman and Wasonga (2015) explored destructive leadership behaviours in schools and Blase and Blase (2003: 9) found that, in schools, such behaviours have been found to range from '…denying resources to teachers to sabotage and public criticism, and, in its most aggressive forms, from explosive and threatening acts to forcing teachers out of their jobs.'

2.5 Research framework
The research framework outlined in the introduction has four parts:

- Effective leadership structures in small primary schools

- How a micro-political lens is used to scope the inherited school and its culture

- Processes and practices of participation to deliver effective schools

- New theories of effective small school leadership that emerge.

The literature review developed the research framework, splitting each part into sub-themes as follows:

To understand effective leadership structures in small primary schools, it is essential to search for a definition of an effective leadership structure. Whilst there is a dearth of literature in this field of knowledge, what is already known about small school leadership structures can be explored through careful review of two studies.

Using a micro-political lens to scope the inherited school and its culture requires careful definition of micro-politics. An understanding of people, relationships and micro-political literacy comes about through using the micro-political lens to reveal how power is understood and actualised.

With the landscape scoped, headteachers use this information to inform the choices of processes and practices of participation they will utilise in the change strategies they select to improve school effectiveness. Within the research framework, therefore, there is a need to define participation, by exploring the change processes and the various strategies that individuals and groups utilise.

2.6 Summary

The issue of small primary school internal leadership structures is current and important because no matter how the headship role is established, a structure has to exist around that role in order for a school to function effectively (Tuck, 2009). There is a need to understand more clearly what leadership structures currently exist in small primary schools and how headteachers understand and describe those structures in terms of power, micro-politics and participation.

This chapter reviewed the literature in relation to the research questions. It was established that whilst there is a wealth of knowledge about leadership, there is limited research around the actual leadership structures themselves. In order to answer research question one, two studies, Bush et al. (2012) and Wallace and Huckman (1999) are examined in detail. In attempting to understand the structures that are analysed in this study, key factors were identified as being critical; what headteachers inherit, what the headteachers' prior experiences bring to the school and the impact of external triggers for structural change.

Research question two is addressed by arriving at an understanding of power through a micro-political lens and a critique is presented of various frameworks that could offer a basis for analysis. Blase and Anderson's 1999 model of 'power over, 'power

through' and 'power with' is identified as being the most helpful tool for this study. Alongside this analytical tool, the actualisation of power by groups or individuals is critical to adding more detail to the findings of research question three.

In order to explore effectively research question three, the literature presents participatory decision-making as the analytic tool of choice for understanding the different levels of participation within each school. This is the mechanism by which it is possible to understand the extent to which headteachers engage with their stakeholders to bring about change.

In conclusion, a four part researchframework has been refined and through which it is possible to examine leadership structures and investigate all four research questions.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Thus far, the research has been located in the context of UK small primary schools that face particular challenges; performativity, finance, accountability and recruitment. The literature around small primary schools has been explored, in terms of what is an effective small primary school leadership structure. The review identifies that there is a lack of literature around what an effective leadership structure looks like. The use of a micro-political lens as a means for headteachers to scope the culture of their inherited school and the location of power has been investigated. The way in which headteachers might use this knowledge to inform participatory change practices and processes to deliver school effectiveness, as defined by the Ofsted framework and UK external accountability, is presented. This chapter presents the research design, which enables the research questions to be addressed.

3.2 Approach

A problem has been identified and research questions formulated to get to the heart of the problem. Creswell, Hanson and Morale (2007: 238) suggest the researcher begins the inquiry process with:

> philosophical assumptions about the nature of reality (ontology), how they know what is known (epistemology), the inclusion of their values (axiology), the nature in which their research emerges (methodology), and their writing structures (rhetorical) Creswell, (2003).

Morrow (2007) suggests that the choice of research design should be guided by the research questions themselves and it is this approach that leads the way through the sections on ontology and epistemology. To develop a process through which knowledge is constructed, in other words, to develop meaningful research, Hartas (2010a: 15) suggests that this is guided by, '…frameworks that enable researchers and communities of practices to ask questions about ontology', where ontology is defined as being, 'what is, what there is to be known, what the object of research is.' This is crucial to answering research question one because it seeks to understand **what** types effective leadership structures **are in existence** in small primary schools, with the key words being in bold. The beneath this initial 'what is' question comes the second and third questions around the analysis of power

through a micro-political lens and participatory practices and processes. Both of these questions are concerned with explaining **what** the leadership structures are and **what can be known** about the structures (Hartas, 2010) in terms of the number of people involved, their roles, the nature of inheritance, the degrees of participatory practices and the analysis of power.

Cohen and Manion (1994: 4) are clear that experience and problem-solving, as described by my initial attempts to solve my leadership structure problem, differ from research in three characteristic ways; control, empiricism and self-correction. However, they go on to state that, 'research is a combination of both experience and reasoning and must be regarded as the most successful approach to the discovery of truth, particularly as far as the natural sciences are concerned' (1994: 5). From a critical perspective, this helps to locate my own position in the research because my motivation for engaging with the research questions comes from an experiential basis. As a serving headteacher, I experienced a problem and I knew that I was not alone in my quest because of my work with other headteachers, but I had to move into a more formal research process to find my answers. The aim of this research is to offer support to new headteachers when considering their leadership structures; to enable them to think beyond the existing structure and to understand the way they operate in terms of power and participation; and how this impacts on the effectiveness of their structure and, in turn, their school. Taber (2012: 126) quite helpfully points out:

> the importance of locating yourself within a paradigmatic tradition
> as a starting point for designing a research study is often emphasised
> in teaching, but may seem challenging or even mysterious to novice
> researchers.

Epistemology is the philosophy of knowledge and the nature of knowledge, or in other words, 'what it means to know, what is knowable and the methods used for knowing' (Hartas, 2010a: 16). It can be said that, if ontology is concerned with the nature of reality, then epistemology, '…addresses how that reality is known, as well as the relationship between the knower and the known (or investigator and participants)' (Morrow, 2007: 212).

In order to address the four research questions that underpin this thesis, it was necessary to adopt two approaches, which are justified by reflecting on the work of Johnson and Christensen (2008). They identify three epistemological sources of knowledge that a researcher should be concerned with when preparing to identify their methods and strategies for investigating their phenomenon; experience, expert

opinion and reasoning. Using these three sources, it is possible to track my own initial pre-research steps to addressing my leadership problem and it also sets into context my positionality and choices of approach. I process a problem by using the framework that accesses the knowledge I have through my own experiences, investigating the experiences of others, looking to the experts (academics) and then reasoning a solution. Having recognised that this approach reflects my underpinning assumptions about the nature of knowledge, it is also the point at which two approaches converge because there is a huge element of knowledge gained via the means of interpreting how others interpret their world, or in this case, how they describe their leadership structures.

3.2.1 The positivist approach

Cohen and Manion (1994: 9) state that positivism in its current form really emerged from Auguste Comte, 'who was the first thinker to use the word for a philosophical position.' One of the key premises of positivism is that knowledge is posited as genuine only when it, 'is based on sense experience and can only be advanced by means of observation and experiment' (Cohen and Manion, 1994: 11). Critically, this supports the use of this approach because the leadership structures are are an observable feature. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004: 14) posit that positivist purists, '…believe that social observations should be treated as entities in much the same way that physical scientists treat physical phenomena.' Examining this position, it is possible to also argue that the leadership structure is a physical phenomena, further evidence supporting the use of this approach. Another crucial feature of a positivist stance is the position that 'knowledge is something external to the individual' (Creswell and Miller, 1997: 35) and perhaps more importantly is not based upon the meaning that one person assigns to it. This is very helpfully illustrated by Creswell and Miller (1997: 35) in describing a situation where:

> … a theory of group interaction that explains the group members'
> behaviour exists 'outside' the group. The positivists believe that this
> knowledge is objective; it does not depend on the perception of
> any one individual. Thus, knowledge is located outside any single
> individual and is something apart from them.

Mukherji and Alborn (2010: 23) state that positivism often involves a hypothesis which the researcher aims to prove or disprove. Furthermore, O'Leary (2004: 5) takes this a step beyond the stating of a hypothesis, suggesting that they also describe experiences, '…through observation and measurement in order to predict

and control forces that surround us.' The scientific approach aims to, 'formulate laws to account for the happenings in the world around them, thus giving them a firm basis for prediction and control' (Cohen and Manion, 1994: 13). Due to the dearth of literature on school surveys from which an hypothesis could be formed, a survey of small primary schools was selected to develop a model of effective leadership structures.

Writing style and researcher positionality have a particular place within the positivist approach; 'researchers are invisible, in the background, out of sight. Their written study uses an impersonal tone. They define terms precisely in the literature and do not mention themselves' (Creswell and Miller, 1997: 35). This is supported by Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) who state that the research should be emotionally detached and eliminate their biases and remain uninvolved with the participants in the research. It will be clear by this point in the thesis, that as the researcher, I am emotionally attached to my research and detachment may prove challenging.

When this perspective is reflected upon, as a researcher, I feel that this approach will enable research question one to be answered, allowing for a systematic recording of the structure of each school. Using a positivist approach will provide the means to answer the 'what' questions.

In conclusion, a positivist approach will be taken to address research question one. The knowledge of the structures is external to the participants in that it is not their own perception of the structure, it would not vary if any another member of the school were to be asked what it is. The question seeks to know what types of structures exist and just that; not interpretation of how and why they exist. It provides a positivist snap shot view of the leadership structures in small primary schools. Research questions two, three, and four, however, could not be addressed using this approach because to understand the how and the why, headteachers needed to be asked about their experiences. It is perfectly possible to write up the analysis of research question one in this fashion, but I would find that very difficult for the remaining questions, where my own experiences and relationships with the headteachers will be integral to the process. This being the case, two approaches were needed.

3.2.2. The interpretivist approach

Interpretivism, according to Mukherji and Alborn (2010), is more concerned with uncovering 'detailed insight into an issue' and acknowledging the possibility of

'multiple explanations for actions' (Hartas, 2010a: 23). Interpretivism is also referred to as, '…the constructionist approach' by Creswell and Miller (1997: 33). Morrow (2007: 216) supports this definition by saying that the whole point of this approach is to obtain data that are, '…rich and descriptive and illustrate the phenomenon of interest intensely' (Patton, 2002; Polkinghorne, 2005). This is important because the literature review has already suggested that there could be two issues at play; the development of the leadership structure in terms of the number of people and roles, as well as developing the agency of the leadership structure. The benefit of their position regarding interpretivism is that a more complete picture of a research issue can be obtained, with the potential to uncover more than just one perspective and one set of generalisations. This has to weighed against the reality of this approach. It is only possible to hear a relatively small number of stories in this amount of depth, so generalisations are not possible. By contrast, the positivist approach can access much larger samples of the population which does enable generalisation. In weighing up this argument, I feel that fewer participants, but examined in depth, will illuminate more and access the information that I seek to answer research questions two, three and four.

Hughes (2001: 35-6) suggests that an interpretivist approach means:

> rather than simply perceiving our particular social and material
> circumstances, each person continually makes sense of them within
> a cultural framework of socially constructed and shared meanings,
> and that our interpretation of the world influences our place in it.

The strength of Hughes' summary is that interpretivist looks beyond the individuals' circumstances for meaning and seeks to finding illumination from a shared social and cultural framework. This also connects deeply with the micro-political lens through which power and participation are going to be analysed and as such is a key driver in the identification of this as a second and crucial approach that is necessary in answering the research questions. A complexity that requires reflection is that if one is trying to make sense of someone else's perceptions of their circumstances/situation, one has to question whether they have the same shared framework. Furthermore, the interpretivist approach emphasises how the participants make meaning of the situation being studied. It is this 'meaning making' that lies at the heart of this approach, where listening and reflecting upon the voices of the participants is key, '…with the goal of empowering and giving voice to respondents' experiences' (Hesse-Biber, 2010: 455). This meaning making takes place through '…sensing their world and giving meaning to these senses through socially constructed interactions and

discussions' (Creswell and Miller, 1997: 37). In order to do this, the researcher has to get into the field and meet with participants. This is exactly what I need to do in order to answer the remaining research questions. This approach enables me to hear the voices of the headteachers in order to understand how they make meaning of their school cultures and their understanding and application of micro-politics and their processes and practices of participation, which addresses the second and third research questions.

Another perceived benefit of the depth and detail that comes through an interpretivist approach is that it may promote 'reader connectedness' (Taysum and Gunter, 2008: 190) in the sense that concrete examples presented and explored in depth may hold more resonance that more bold 'generalised truths' (Taysum and Gunter, 2008:1 90). In this case, it will hopefully resonate with other headteachers, who will hear the voices of the headteachers in the interviews and connect with their experiences and stories as I have.

The writing style of the qualitative researcher differs from the quantitative, according to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 14) in that its purists are, '…characterised by a dislike of a detached and passive style of writing, preferring, instead, detailed, rich, and thick (empathic) description, written directly and some-what informally.'

In conclusion, this second approach is exactly what is required it get to the 'inside' knowledge of how the leadership structures come into being and how headteachers understand power and participation. Their stories need to be listened to and through interaction, it is possible to learn how they construct meaning in their settings. Each approach has been critiqued and the case for needing both approaches in different ways, to answer different research questions, has been justified.

3.3 Participants

Denscombe (2003: 23) states that, 'the basic principle of sampling is that it is possible to produce accurate findings without the need to collect data from each and every member of a survey population.' In this case, the research population (every headteacher of a school with less than four classes in the UK) is beyond the scope of a study of this scale (Denscombe, 2003). Logic dictates the necessity for a sample of the research population being identified. The issue is then around how to identify a sample. As Burgess, Sieminski and Lore (2006) point out, identifying the sample depends upon whether it needs to be representational in order to make generalisations from the findings. Two main sampling strategies are possible;

probability and non-probability. Probability sampling is selected when the researcher seeks to identify a sample which is representational of the research population, thus making findings generalisable (Burgess, Sieminski and Lore, 2006). The participants in the study are headteachers and it should be acknowledged that this is a self-reported persepctive and as such could be considered a limitation of the research.

Within the non-probability typology, purposive sampling was selected because it is, 'useful with small-scale surveys where random sampling of itself might not be likely enough to include groups that occur in relatively small numbers in the population' (Denscombe, 2003: 35). Furthermore, some information was already known to me about the specific schools and headteachers in the research sample.

The sample population is defined as schools with up to four classes, which maps back to the definition of small schools that has been adopted for this project. The research sample was geographically restricted to those within one county in southern England. The reason for this was purely due to accessibility issues for the researcher; I did not have the capacity to go further afield within the constraints of being part-time student and full-time headteacher.

The idiosyncrasies of my sample (Pole and Lampard, 2002) are that I know many of the headteachers that fit the research population because I am drawing my sample from a research population from the county in which I work. Bias could enter the sampling process as both researcher and participant. I needed to be aware that I do not allow my knowledge of the headteacher to affect the sampling process. I also needed to be aware that headteachers in the sample did not feel obligated to participate because I was known to them.

In order to identify the schools which met the criteria for phase one, Edubase was utilised. Edubase (http://www.education.gov.uk/edubase/home.xhtml) is a public portal developed by the Department for Education, which allows members of the public to search for a wide range of educational establishments in England and Wales. The information on the site is provided by individual suppliers, establishments and local authorities.

Searches can be run by name, location or type and most relevant for this study, the number of pupils on roll. Whilst the selection criteria is clearly identified as schools with a maximum of four classes, Edubase only provides number of pupils. A simple calculation of 30 children per class multiplied by 4 equalling 120 pupils allows for a rough guide to the schools likely to have the maximum 4 classes.

Infant, junior, first, middle and high schools were excluded manually from the list that Edubase produced as this was not possible as a search function. The websites of each of the schools on this filtered list were then visited to establish how many classes they have. The extracted data is presented below.

Table 3: Breakdown of school data

Number of establishments found	273
Number of schools with up to 120 pupils	51
Number of schools with the maximum 4 classes	42
% of total that meet criteria	15

The table below shows the breakdown of schools by the number of classes.

Table 4: Number of schools by class number

Number of Classes	Number of schools
2 classes	1
3 classes	13
4 classes	28
5 + classes and thus rejected from the sample	5

Fourteen of the headteachers are female, with only one male participant. There was only one male in phase one. This demonstrates that the interview participants are a fair representation of the sample group. All of the schools that met the criteria were invited to participate; the survey sample is the population is 100% and therefore this is census.

Table 5: Gender breakdown for the sample, survey and interview samples

Gender	Sample group (42)	Survey participants (21)	Interview participants (15)
Female	35	20	14
Male	1	1	1

From the responses gathered in phase one, the next round of sampling was applied by using maximum variation, in that diverse variation is sought for the interviews in phase two (Cresswell, 1998). Twenty one surveys were returned in phase one. All of the headteachers were approached to participate in phase two to optimise coverage of all the leadership structures, but only fifteen consented to be interviewed.

Wherever possible, a conversation with the headteacher was sought. The purpose and and scope of the study was introduced and headteachers were asked if they would

be prepared to participate. If the headteacher agreed, the survey, consent form and information sheet were emailed to the headteacher. Where this was not possible, the consent of the secretary or office administrator was sought to send them the survey, consent form and information sheet and for them to forward them to the headteacher with a brief outline of what was involved. At this point, I did not explain about the research or compromise anonymity and confidentiality.

The date of each contact was recorded, whether contact was established, with whom, whether consent to send information was given and the email address to which the information was sent. This allowed for analysis of how successful the process was.

The table below indicates the types of contact that were made and how many surveys were returned from each type. There is quite a high response, which could be attributed to the fact that as an active headteacher in the county, the researcher know many of the headteachers already and this could be boosting access and return figures.

Table 6: Contacts and returns

Type of Contact	Contact Made	Survey Returns
Total number of schools	41	21 (50%)
Headteacher	19	19 (100%)
Office staff	8	2 (25%)
Contact was not successful	12	N/A
Telephone message left	3	0 (0%)

The headteachers were assigned pseudonyms; and this information is presented in the table on the next page, along with some contextual information about the schools in the sample population, those which participated in phase two.

Table 7: Pseudonyms and school contextual information

Pseudonym	SEN	Ethnicity	EAL	FSM	Mobility	Floor standard[1]	Ofsted rating
Diane	Average	Mostly White British	No pupils	Not included in report	Above average	N/A	2011 Good
Fiona	Above average	Mostly White British	No pupils	Average	Not included in report	Met	2014 Good
Sara	Above average	Mostly White British	Well below average	Very low	Not included in report	N/A	2010 Good
Barbara	Average	Mostly White British	No pupils	Average	Very low	Met	2012 Good
Fred	Above average	Not included in report	Not included in report	Above average	Not included in report	Too few pupils	2014 Good
Ellie	Above average	Mostly White British	Not included in report	Below average	Above average	Not included	2014 RI
Laura	Above average	Mostly White British	Not included in report	Very few	Not included in report	Met	2013 Good
Alexa	Average	Mostly White British	Not included in report	Well below average	Above average	Too few pupils	2013 Good
Caroline	Above average	Vast majority White British	Very few	Well below average	Average	Met	2012 Good
Ann	Above average	Large majority white British[2]	Not included in report	Above average	Not included in report	Met	2014 Good
Marianne	Below average	Mostly White British	No pupils	Below average	Not included in report	Met	2013 Good
Meghan	Average	Mostly White British	Below average	Below average	Not included in report	Met	2014 Good
Liz	Above average	Mostly White British	No pupils	Below average	Not included in report	Met	2013 RI
Lily	Above average	Mostly White British	Not included in report	Below average	Not included in report	Too few pupils	2013 Good
Susan	Above average	Not included in report	Not included in report	Below average	Not included in report	Met	2013 Inadequate

[1] Depending upon the year of inspection, the floor targets change   [2] with an above average number from Romany/gypsy backgrounds   SEN - Special Educational Needs   EAL - English as an Additional Language   FSM - Free School Meals   Mobility refers to the level of movement of pupils in and out of a school community

3.4 Case examples

Case examples involve the study of a particular phenomenon, where all of the cases share the same characteristic; they are all primary schools with no more than four classes. Using case examples enables the researcher to, 'provide unique examples of people in real situations' (Burgess, Sieminski and Lore, 2006: 59). Case examples are usually involved with qualitative methods because of their dependance on the interpretation of the findings. One of the advantages of using this approach is that it refers, 'to the uniqueness of that organisation or the community in which the research is located' (Burgess, Sieminski and Lore, 2006: 59). Whilst case examples can provide a thick, rich and detailed description of the phenomena being studied, the method has been criticised for not being generalisable because case examples are grounded in specifics; they are unique and interpretative in nature.

Denscombe (2003: 53) makes the point that this is not the case, stating that, 'the aim is to illuminate the general by looking at the particular.' A case example approach allowed for an in depth enquiry, which facilitated analytical (Yin, 2009) and naturalistic generalisations (Stake, 1978) to be made. I elected to use case examples because it enabled me to shed light on this specific phenomenon and I hope to find insights that might have wider implications.

3.5 Mixed methods

Quantitative methods are concerned with explaining a phenomena through the collection and analysis of numerical data that can be analysed with mathematical methods (Aliaga and Gunderson, 2002). The focus is to understand what, as opposed to how or why. 'Because quantitative research is essentially about collecting numerical data to explain a particular phenomenon, particular questions seem immediately suited to being answered using quantitative methods' (Muijs, 2004: 2). In this study, research question one is suited to this method because it seeks to describe and quantify what types of effective small school leadership structures exist.

There are a number of advantages to using a quantitative method. For example, data collection is relatively quick, it is relatively less time consuming and the research results are relatively independent of the researcher (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Speed is particularly relevant for a lone researcher, in terms of time and the collection of precise data are always a high priority. Equally, there are some disadvantages to this method; such as the concern that knowledge produced may be too abstract and general for direct application to specific local

situations, contexts, and individuals. This is particularly relevant, and of concern, because of the differences already highlighted in terms of the international perspective on the differing contexts of small schools across the globe. The quantitative method provides a snap shot view, of the leadership structures in small primary schools. It defines and measures what they are and how many types there are. It cannot by its very nature, however, address research questions two and three because these are concerned with what is happening beneath the surface; exploring the how and why.

Qualitative methods are more concerned with understanding individuals' perceptions of the world, their interpretations of phenomena (Bell, 2005). The purpose of the method is the, 'elucidation of interviewee opinions and perspectives' (Burgess, Sieminski and Lore, 2006: 57). To be able to address research questions two and three - about how headteachers use a micro-political lens to scope their landscapes and how this informs their choices of participatory processes and practice in change processes to improve school effectiveness - the researcher needs to move from the snap shot to the rich detail that lies beneath the surface. A qualitative method is, 'characterised by its aims, which relate to understanding some aspect of social life, and its methods which (in general) generate words, rather than numbers, as data for analysis' (Brikci and Green, 2007: 2).

Absolutely key to using qualitative methods are the benefits of being able to study a small number of cases in great depth, with thick descriptions, the responsive and exploratory nature of the type of research and the ability to vividly describe aspects of the leadership structure through important cases. This has to be balanced against the fact that knowledge produced may not generalise to other people or other settings (e.g., findings may be unique to the relatively few people included in the research study) and this makes it difficult to make quantitative predictions. Fundamentally, collecting data this way takes longer, as does the analysis and this is a key drawback for a lone, novice researcher.

Hartas (2010a: 27) states that 'the dichotomy between qualitative and quantitative research is artificial in that we need to combine both approaches to ask questions about 'what works', but also, to establish 'what it is'. Whilst purists may not readily accept the use of mixed methods, Symonds and Gorad (2010), note that by the 1980s many researchers had come to accept that there was merit in using both within one study. According to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), however, the purpose of a mixed method approach is not to try and replace either, but to draw from the strengths of each and reduce the weaknesses, in order to produce a

single cohesive piece of research. Moreover, using mixed methods allows for more effective research, mixing and matching to get the best opportunities to respond fully to the research questions. Engaging with the literature on mixed methods, there is excellent critical justification for using both qualitative and quantitative methods to enable the deep and full understanding of the issues involved in answering the first three research questions.

3.6 Data collection tools

The research will be carried out in two phases. A useful analogy is that phase one shines a torch across the small school population and provides a sufficiently broad view of structures to categorise the types, identify those of interest and set up the sample for the next step. In phase two, the torchlight is focused on one school at a time so that the smallest detail is illuminated (Denscombe, 2003).

The first phase is designed to gather information on types of leadership structures and primarily addresses research question one, but it also begins to collect data regarding headteachers' prior experiences. A survey was identified as the most suitable tool for this phase because it requires (Fogelman and Comber, 2007: 129), 'systematically collected and comparable data.' The word 'survey' has a raft of meanings, but for this study, Hutton's (1990: 8) description is used, 'collecting information by asking pre-formulated questions in a pre-formulated sequence in a structured questionnaire to a sample of individuals drawn to be representative of a defined population.' The decision to use a questionnaire was also supported by the fact that questionnaire by email is fast and effective, both in time and money (Cohen and Manion, 1994: 97 and Walliman, 2001).

Hartas (2010b: 262) identifies four types of questions usually included in questionnaires, 'knowledge, attitudes, behaviour and attributes.' Johnson and Christensen (2008) add a fifth; experiences. This questionnaire asks for the headteachers' knowledge and attributes of their leadership structure and asks them to describe their experiences of leadership structures in previous schools, including the size of the schools. It is important for the questions to be exploratory because if the questions were structured as a tick list, i.e. please tick the description that best fits your school, it would limit the scope of answers and also makes the assumption that the researcher already knows all the possible structures that exist. The questions must be open to allow headteachers to describe their leadership structures their way.

The survey has five parts;

Table 8: Survey outline

Part 1	Contact information; this also acts as a mechanism for indicating willingness to participate in phase two.
Part 2	1. How long have you been headteacher at this school? 2. Is this your first headship? (If your answer is yes, please complete parts 3 and 4. If your answer is no, please complete parts 3 and 5.)
Part 3	Describe your leadership structure at your current school (you may wish to provide a diagram).
Part 4	Please list your experiences of leadership structures prior to headship (type of school, number of pupils and description of the leadership structure)
Part 5	Please list up to two of your previous headships if this is not your first headship.

A copy of the survey can be located in the appendices.

The decision was made to telephone each headteacher in the belief that personal contact would result in a better response rate. This belief was based on my own experiences as a headteacher who receives so much unsolicited mail and email which I simply do not have time to process. There are, technically, no gatekeepers in this phase, as only the headteachers are required to give consent to provide this information. By making the decision, however, to telephone headteachers, I often had to deal with school secretaries and had to convince them to put me through to their headteacher!

The combined consent form/information sheet (see appendices) was used to provide an introductory text when talking to schools; this insured that the text was consistent from contact to contact.

Phase two employed a qualitative method, the semi-structured interview. It was concerned with exploring how headteachers understand their leadership structures, as well as trying to identify which factors are at play in the creation/development of effective leadership structures in small primary schools within the categories of leadership structure identified in phase one. The semi-structured interview was selected for a variety of reasons. A tool was required that would allow an in-depth investigation into the leadership structures, seeking information that is not going to be available in the public domain. Document analysis or a questionnaire would not allow for probing or investigation, whereas an interview can (Mukherji and Albon

(2010: 120) '…clarify what the interviewee is trying to say, and can investigate areas of interest as they emerge, probing and teasing out strands of thought.' The face-to-face interview has many merits. For example, the interviewer is able to access non-verbal communication, as well as verbal. The interview can take place in the school, a naturalistic settings for the dialogue. Interviews can become (Kvale,1996: 14) a 'construction sites for knowledge' providing the opportunity for the interviewee to (Robson, 1993: 227) 'tell you things about themselves,' For this reason, prompts are to encourage the interviewee to provide concrete examples to support their opinions and statements. More importantly, perhaps, is that the researcher can, 'study ways of doing and seeing things peculiar to certain cultures or cultural groups' (Van Manen, 1990: 60).

Having decided upon the interview as the tool, the type of interview utilised required careful consideration. Powney and Watts (1987) propose a way of distinguishing between different interview typologies by identifying where the 'locus of control' sits. They suggest that there are 'respondent interviews' where the 'locus of control' sits squarely with the interviewer throughout the interview process and at the opposite end of the spectrum, 'informant interviews' in which the interviewee holds the 'locus of control' both over the agenda and directionality of the discourse (Hobson and Townsend, 2010). The semi-structured interview can be located in the middle of this spectrum. The interviewer has control over the subject of the discourse via prompts shared with the interviewee, however, the interviewee has the control to lead within the subject of the discourse. They hold the knowledge/perceptions which the interviewer wishes to access, putting the 'locus of control' in their hands.

The structured interview, with its pre-determined content and procedures can be restrictive (Hobson and Townsend, 2010). Preconceived questions can imply that the researcher knows all the questions to ask, with no room for the possibility that the interviewee may have very different things to contribute beyond the given questions. An unstructured interview, however, could go completely off topic and result in very little usable data being obtained. Fontana and Frey (2000) describe the unstructured interview as a means to understand complex behaviours where there is no indication of potential categories of response. In this situation, potential factors have quite clearly emerged, thus this is not suitable. The semi-structured interview offers the ideal compromise; some structure within the questions, with sufficient scope to allow unexpected avenues to appear and be pursued (Mukherji and Albon, 2010). The semi-structured interview also provides the opportunity to establish clarification and extract more detailed data (Hobson and Townsend 2010; Fontana and Frey, 2000; Johnson and Christensen, 2008 and Kumar, 2005). Semi-structured interviews have also been described as 'structured conversations' (Cannold, 2001: 179) in which the

free flow of naturalistic conversation has the mix of open and closed questions. The process, however, needs the element of the unstructured interview that will allow the interviewer to explore the interviewees', 'beliefs, thoughts and feelings' (Mukherji and Albon, 2010: 123). The questions were devised by mapping back to the research questions, and the literature review; an example is provided below.

Table 9: Mapping back to the research questions and literature

Data Collection Tool Question and Prompts	Mapping back to themes in the Literature	Related Research Question
Question 6a If the leadership structure has changed, can you share with me what those changes were and why those changes took place. Prompts and probes Could you describe that change in more depth? Could you give me an example of what you mean?	Question 6 links to the conditions for change that are investigated in the literature review. 6a is seeking to explore the changes that headteachers make to their leadership structures and to understand the reasons for the changes. This also maps back to contextual issues of finance and inheritance as influencing factors	Research Question 3

A significant aspect of analysing judgements about the quality of the interviews arises from the amount of contextual detail that is elicited from interviewees, the pursuit of exemplification when general claims are professed and the the degree to which the interviewee is able to clarify vagaries or technical terms that they use. A significant aspect of making judgements about the quality of the interviews arises from the amount of contextual detail that is elicited from interviewees, the pursuit of exemplification when general claims are professed and the degree to which the interviewee is able to clarify vagaries or technical terms that they use. The transcripts and quotes provides congruence because they substantiate the interviewee's claims, as well as providing evidence that the interviewees are engaging in the interview process in a genuine fashion.

An important tool to elicit this detail is the use of prompts to 'nudge' or 'spur' (Denscombe, 2003: 183) the participant to gently reveal his/her knowledge or should the interview process falter. The use of probes is designed to get the participant to delve deeper (Denscombe, 2003: 183) and/ or justify a statement. Another key feature

is the congruence that emerges between the different segments of the interview when reviewed as a whole. For example, in one interview, the headteacher describes her school very early on in the interview as being one where people care about each other. This statement can be judged to be trustworthy because the interview is peppered with concrete examples that support this statement. In the vast majority of interviews there is congruence, which demonstrates quality. Where there appears to be incongruence, it was due to there being a gap between how the literature defined a concept, and how the headteachers defined a concept, rather than a headteacher contradicting themselves because they did not take the interview seriously. For example, in one interview the headteacher talks about how there are no cliques, but later gives an example of a situation where group behaviour is described which, is arguably a clique in action. It is important to state that the incongruences identified in a minority of interviews are not there because of a lack of quality in the research. This does not undermine the trustworthiness of the interviews or the analysis process. The characteristics described allow for a greater degree of confidence in the authenticity, credibility and trustworthiness of the content of the interviews and in turn the confidence with which they can be analysed and conclusions drawn.

During the pilot process all of the data collection tools were tested. The piloting process is a critical step in the design of the data collection tools to ensure that the tools are fit for purpose (Denscombe, 2003). Four headteachers were approached to participate in the pilot. Each received a follow up phone call to obtain feedback on the documents, in particular the format and language of the survey (Hartas, 2010b and Jaeger, 1997). All four consented to participate in phase one. Each participant indicated that completion took no more than the anticipated five minutes. All four returned by email, meaning no-one had to print anything, saving time and money. Email response also meant returned surveys could be saved directly into a specified folder for secure storage and be read directly on screen, eliminating the need to print and store physical copies. A table was devised to collate the types of leadership structure.

One headteacher was randomly selected by numbering each survey and picking a number from a hat. A digital recorder was used to record the interview, which lasted just over 45 minutes. The interviewee felt this timing was acceptable. Before transcription, a contact summary sheet was devised (Miles and Huberman, 1994) providing an over-view of the interview for future reference. I made no changes to the interview schedule as a result of the pilot.

3.7 Data Analysis

Once the surveys were returned, they were sorted into loose categories, based on responses and not pre-determined. The analysis was concerned with identifying patterns (Burgess, Sieminski and Lore, 2006) and the decision made with regard to this analysis was to allow to the data to provide the categories, rather than make the structures fit predetermined structure types. A table was devised to collate the types of leadership structure.

Table 10: Initial categorisation of leadership structures

Headteacher and Senior Teacher	Headteacher, Senior Teacher and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo)	Headteacher and Teacher in Charge	Headteacher, Teacher with a Teaching and Learning Responsibility (TLR), Office Manager and Foundation Stage Leader
✔	✔	✔	✔ (provided diagram - see next page)

The table develops in response to the surveys, adding categories as required. One of the participants chose to provide a diagram, which was interesting because it implies hierarchical position.

Figure 1: Diagram from survey
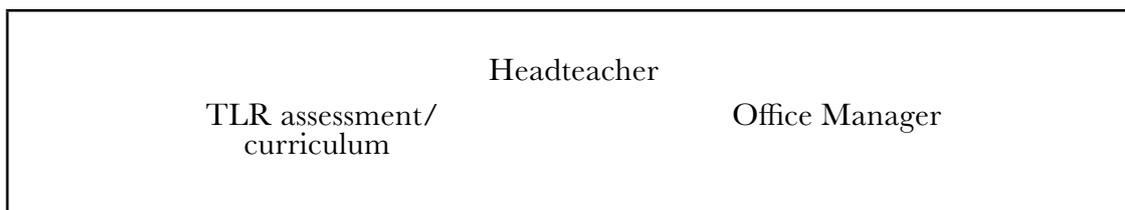
The leadership experiences were also collated in table form in the same data led manner.

Documentary analysis was conducted on the schools' Ofsted reports to access and validate key contextual information regarding the schools, including their inspection judgements. These documents are official published sources of information (Duffy, 2009) and are available via the internet. The analysis processes involved the extraction of the contextual information about the school which was directly compared to the information given by the headteachers in table form. The overall

effectiveness inspection judgement and the leadership and management judgements were also extracted for information purposes only. There was no further analysis of the reports.

The analysis of the interviews took a thematic approach, which was described by Miles and Huberman (1994) in that it was not an 'off the shelf' design, but was custom built for this study. The data analysis spiral that Cresswell (1998) describes provides the framework. In the early stages of the process, the interviews were transcribed. This was done manually rather than by the use of a dictation programme. This method was deliberately selected to allow total immersion in the interviews; every word, every nuance, every pause became as familiar to me as a cherished song. As recommended by Ager (1980) and Cresswell (1998), the transcripts were read through many times to ensure that a sense of the whole data set was gained, not just of the individual interviews. When using quotes from the transcripts, the only changes made to the direct transcription were the removal of 'um, agh and repetition of a word or phrase.

Following this, the transcripts were coded and a lengthy cut and paste exercise took place. The first round of coding was derived from spiralling between reading and note taking, 'describing, classifying and interpreting' (Cresswell, 1998: 144). This evolved into lengthy descriptions of the categories and accompanying interpretations. In the following round, I looked at the transcripts by question and proceeded with further lengthy descriptions of the categories and interpretations. As new themes emerged at every stage, it meant returning to the literature and the researchframework, followed by more coding, all of which developed reflexively and iteratively during the analysis process. After months of doing this, eventually four themes emerged; effectiveness, participatory practices and process, power, and micro-politics. I had arrived at the stage Cresswell (1998: 145) describes as stepping back and being able to, 'form larger meanings of what is going on in the situations or sites.' From this point, it was possible to go back to the literature, solidify the researchframework and arrive at tools with which I would finally analyse the findings. This inductive analysis sometimes felt untidy, meandering and painfully protracted, but it was a very necessary process that eventually helped me to make sense of the data.

The themes that emerged during the analysis then informed the literature review and I am initially using the researchframework to read these findings. This is data driven and not a hypothesis testing exercise.

3.8 Validity, reliability and trustworthiness

To ensure reliability, descriptions of the current leadership structures will be compared with other sources (Youngman, 1994: 263) and through the piloting process (Bush, 2007: 92). The validity of the survey lies in whether it (Bush, 2007: 97), 'accurately describes the phenomenon that it is intended to describe.' This can be checked by cross-referencing with other sources and carried out at the same time as ensuring reliability. There is potentially a problem with the data collected about prior experiences because it is dependent upon the headteachers' memories for this information. It would be possible, although unfeasibly time consuming, to check the details by contacting all of their prior schools. Given the restraints of time, this will not be followed through, but the issue needs to be borne in mind in terms of reliability.

Reflexivity (Townsend, 2010) is an important aspect to consider in the design, delivery and analysis of the questionnaire. A significant benefit of the researcher's positionally is that the language chosen is likely to be understood, as intended, by the participants because of a shared professional lexicon. I know how busy headteachers are and that the presentation of the survey; content, appearance and time required to complete it are crucial in ensuring good uptake rates. On the other hand, I need to be conscious of approaching the research with an open mind.

There is a sliding scale of reliability of the accounts provided by interviewees that relate to the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee Dingwall (1997). Robson (1993: 237) described these as, 'differences or similarities in class, ethnic origin, gender, age and status.' Furthermore, (Hobson and Townsend, 2010: 229) '…the level of expertise of the interviewer, who may, for example, unwittingly influence the interviewee's responses by giving non-verbal clues, such as frowning.' can affect the responses. This must be tempered by the need to remain open and responsive to the interviewee, because no response at all could lead to the interviewee feeling uncomfortable and less willing to share their experiences.

It is possible that an interviewee will not respond 100% truthfully when the response may, in their eyes, present them in a less than favourable light (Hobson and Townsend, 2010). This is particularly significant because of the delicate nature of discourse around people and power. The less formal, freer flowing semi-structured interview is said to allow greater opportunity for the interviewer and interviewee to develop a rapport (Oakley, 2004 and Hobson and Townsend, 2010) and, more importantly, to gain their trust. This degree of rapport and trust is more

likely to elicit honest responses, thus more credible data. Oakley (2004: 263) also states that:

> in most cases, the goal of finding out about people through interviewing is best achieved when the relationship between interviewer and interviewee is non-hierarchical and when the interviewer is prepared to invest his or her own personal identity in the relationship.

It is hoped there will be an easily built, professional rapport because there should already exist shared experiences and understanding about the issues that small primary schools face when dealing with leadership structures. There are issues of power to consider; the issues being discussed are of a sensitive nature and highly confidential. In order to establish an atmosphere of trust, interviewees were repeatedly assured that their anonymity and confidentiality would be guarded.

While the advantages of the human factor in interviews are recognised, there is a very real danger of unreliable data emerging where the (Hobson and Townsend 2010: 228) 'interviewer is a co-producer of knowledge.' This has been seen by many (Jones, 2004) as not necessarily a problem as long as the researcher embraces (Hobson and Townsend, 2010: 228), 'reflexivity, to be transparent about the 'baggage' that they may have brought to the research, and open about potential effects that this may have on their research findings.' As previously stated, a critical mechanism for judging the authenticity and trustworthiness of the participants' accounts is the use of probes to ensure that generalisations are exemplified, contextual detail enriches the account, cross referencing throughout the interview to check for contradiction. All of these processes add weight to the conviction that a participant is providing a credible account and the analysis therefore has integrity. It is also worth re-stating here that the study is dependent upon the self-reported perspective of the headteachers, which could be considered a limitation of the research. The interview schedule can be located in the appendices.

3.9 Ethical framework and position in the research

Hartas (2010a: 20) states that methodology and choice of approaches are, 'all influenced by the values and beliefs, as well as the identities of the researcher and the researched.' This ultimately challenges the notion that any research can be value free. The researcher, therefore, is required to do three things: be honest about his/her

beliefs and values from the beginning, attempt to be as neutral as possible and during the data analysis and conclusions, reflect on whether he/she allow bias or influence of his/her own values of beliefs (Hartas, 2010, Greenbank, 2003).

This is particularly relevant when trying to, 'ensure accuracy in the representations of fieldwork experiences and participants' accounts, transparency in the way they present evidence and openness about their positionality and bias' (Hartas, 2010a: 20).

Furthermore, Morrow (2007: 215) states that, 'as investigators make public their own stances, motivations, assumptions, and biases, the research gains a level of honesty that contributes to the trustworthiness (rigour) of the study.' In addition, 'the self-reflective process involved in making the researcher's stance public helps to address the issue of subjectivity in qualitative research' (Morrow, 2007: 215). It is, therefore, crucial to present one's positionality up front and central. Morrow (2005) also points to the importance of revealing positionally in order for the reader to better understand the researcher's stance and thus reflect upon the impact that may or may not have on the validity of the study. This is substantiated by Suzuki, Prendes-Lintel, Wertlieb, & Stallings (1999), who assert that without knowing the social location of the researcher in relation to the research, it is difficult to have enough information upon which to fully understand the context of the research and without which it is hard for the reader to know whether the research is transferable to other contexts. For the reader, it is also important to be explicit about the social position of the researcher in relation to the participants, as this:

> provides the reader with an understanding of the relative
> privilege and power held by the investigator and participants,
> as well as shedding light on the worldview of the researcher or
> the lens through which she or he views the participants and the
> phenomenon of interest. (Morrow, 2007: 215)

In this case, the researcher and the participants are headteachers, and could be viewed as having equal status on a power continuum, although other factors will come into play. The reality, however, is that as the researcher and being part of the professional group of headteachers, with knowledge of their schools and staff through the interviews, the power balance swings towards the researcher. Some of what the headteachers share in the interview process could be seen as controversial. therefore, it is imperative that there is a sound ethical framework to protect confidentiality and anonymity.

Cassell (2005) wrote an extremely interesting article about creating the interviewer, in which she identifies the key factors that build her identity. With this as a model, the following demographic factors contribute to my identity: female and only child, married with a step-family. I was born and raised in southern England and have lived and worked for the last seventeen years in southern England. I am a professionally qualified, relatively young primary headteacher (first appointed at 35) of a small (101 pupils) Church of England school. My previous teaching experiences include, a suburban community primary school with around 200 pupils, a rural primary school with a growing population and a private girls' junior school in a city centre. All of the above, '...cast a light on how I interpret the nature of the research questions and the world around me' (Cassell, 2005: 171). I understand the world around me through my own experiences, as well as attempting to understand how others understand the world through their experiences. Equally, I agree with Mason (2006: 13) when she asserts that, 'our ways of seeing, and of framing questions, are strongly influenced by the methods we have at our disposal, because the way that we see shapes what we can see, and what we think we can ask.'

In her 2007 article, Morrow is quite emphatic that whilst she makes every effort to be balanced in her approach to the approaches and methods, and I too will strive to do this, I agree with her statement, however, that, '… it is likely that my 'lens' will colour what you read' (2007: 210).

The researcher will naturally want to ensure that the participant is at ease and the key question is how does the interviewer achieve this without blurring the boundaries (Mukherji and Albon, 2010). Oakley (1981) was critical of many interviewers' ice breaking tactics, which were identified as manipulative tactics. The ethical interviewer needs to strike a balance between an un-influential warm up before the interview and the cold art of manipulation.

For the benefit of the interviewee, it is important for the location of the interview to be somewhere that is private and will make the interviewee most at ease. Ethically, it should also be at a location that inconveniences the interviewee least. Rather than make assumptions about which location will be best for the interviewee, the researcher offered participants 3 options; the participant's school, the researcher's school or common ground. All of the headteachers opted to be interviewed at their own schools.

If the importance of the research in terms of practical guidance for headteachers is not clear, then it is difficult to make informed consent and more importantly

headteachers may fail to connect with the project and fail to respond at this phase. For this reason, the researcher's first contact with headteachers explains how the research project came about with a real life problem and the potential benefits for the leadership community from participation in the project (Howitt and Cramer, 2005). Informed consent also covers confidentiality, anonymity, data storage and withdrawal of consent. A copy of this document can be found in the appendices.

In phase two, the nature of the semi-structured interview was explained to participants again, as well as reinforcing the same information provided in phase one. Particular attention was to be paid to addressing concerns about confidentiality and anonymity. Information was also to be provided on secure data storage which was in a fire-proof safe in the researcher's home. Field notes and transcripts were be coded for identification and the codes stored separately to the data. Consent was be recorded with a 'belt and braces' approach with written consent in both phases and oral consent also recorded on tape at phase two.

Another aspect of informed consent involved making explicit to participants that they may withdraw consent at any point in the research project, including their withdrawal of consent to use any data collected up to the point of withdrawal (Howitt and Cramer, 2005). Ethical approval was required from the University of Leicester before the research project could begin (University of Leicester, 2014) and in preparing to grapple with ethical considerations, I engaged with the ethical guidance from the British Educational Research Association (2011) and British Psychological Society (2009). This was to be made explicit on the consent form. It is only the headteachers that need to provide consent - there are no gatekeepers in this instance. I liaised with the local authorities, however, to gain approval for involving their schools as a courtesy, rather than a necessity.

Debriefing at the end of the research project to be outlined in the consent procedure, so that participants would be clear about how they would access the findings from the project. Finally, the consent form clarified the extend of accessibility to data for verification purposes. The data will be available for this purpose to those certified to do so from the University of Leicester.

Anonymity; under no circumstances should the participants be identifiable (Bell, 2005: 49) and so their names are replaced with pseudonyms. Confidentiality, however, requires that care must be taken not to, 'disclose personal identities'(Denscombe, 2003: 332) which means that additional precautions must be taken to ensure that any contextual information does not inadvertently lead to participants being identifiable.

3.10 Identifying problems in the research design

Confidentiality became increasingly critical, even more so than had been anticipated during the pilot stage. Some headteachers revealed things of a highly personal and potentially damaging nature. I had initially disclosed the county in which the study is set, but in light of their revelations, in combination with providing Ofsted contextual information, I felt that participants could be identified. I made the decision to protect their confidentiality and anonymity by removing the geographical location of the research.

I thought I had very carefully considered the issues relating to trust and power in the relationship between researcher and participant, but two interviews stood out as being very different from the rest. These headteachers gave very cursory answers, did not really respond to prompts or probes and I felt that they were guarded and wary of me and the process. Both asked during the interviews whether they were confidential, which I assured them they were, but I do not think that they fully trusted in me as a researcher and I believe that this was because they knew me in professional terms and did not want to share anything they deemed to be damaging.

Whilst the pilot was deemed a success at the time, upon reflection, I would make changes to the interview schedule. In particular, I would have been made the questions much more focused around the research questions, but these shifted over time through the inductive analysis. I would like to explore issues around headteachers' understanding of micro-political literacy and investigate participation and power through the eyes of other stakeholders in the schools, since I only have the headteachers' insights and perspectives.

3.11 Summary

This chapter has, through critical engagement with the methodical literature, identified and justified the methodology utilised in this study. Positivist and interpretivist approaches are taken, using a case study strategy with mixed methods. The sample is drawn from the pool of small primary schools, defined as small by having four or less classes. Data was collected through surveys and semi-structured interviews and analysed using descriptive statistical analysis of the quantitative data and thematic analysis of the qualitative data, taking an inductive approach. The research was 'messy' but using a spiral process, it kept returning to the aims, the processes and the findings. The University of Leicester's ethical code of conduct was adhered to, informing, reliability, validity and trustworthiness of the data.

4.0 Presentation of findings - What type of leadership structures are effective in small primary schools?

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is organised into eight sections. Following the introduction, the next section explores the contextual backgrounds. The third sets out the different types of leadership structures and the fourth looks at the roles of the members of the leadership structures. Patterns of change to inherited structures are explored in the fifth, whilst the headteachers' prior experiences are the subject of the six section. The effectiveness of each structure is presented and analysed in the next section. The data that addresses research question one is drawn from the survey (phase one) and updated information, where appropriate, from the interviews (phase two). Finally, the summary draws together the findings in relation to this research question.

4.2 Contextual Information

There were 42 schools identified as meeting the criteria for inclusion in the study and 21 headteachers responded in phase one. All of the headteachers were approached and 15 agreed to be interviewed as part of phase two. Of the remaining six schools, four failed to respond to attempts to contact them. Two of them had interim headteachers, who did not feel in a position to participate.

There was a wide range of descriptors used by headteachers when describing their schools' characteristics. Using only their descriptions, the table below was drawn up.

Table 11: Tally of school characteristics where the description was mentioned more than once

Characteristic	Tally
Rural setting	5
Drawing pupils from out of catchment	9
Part time staff	8
High number of pupils with special educational needs	7
Pockets of deprivation	3
Significant deprivation	2
Rising roll	4
Traveller population	2
Low number of FSM pupil	2
Low attainment on entry	3

In analysing the descriptions of the headteachers' schools, three features stand out as being general characteristics of the sample:

- 60% of the sample draw pupils from out of catchment,
- 53% have part-time staff,
- and 47% have high numbers of pupils with special educational needs.

This analysis should be treated cautiously because this was an open question. For example, five schools are described as being rural, but no definition of rural was established. Similarly, there was no agreed definition of what constituted a high number of pupils with special education needs. Whilst generalisations based on this data would be highly suspect, in combination with the locations within the geographical area, it is possible to say that there are some quite significant differences between the schools that participated.

Due to the descriptions from the headteachers being very subjective and, potentially unreliable, contextual information was then extracted from each school's most recent Ofsted inspection report. The information within these reports is drawn from the schools' census data and it should be applied by inspectors in an objective manner, making this a reliable source of information for comparing the schools and finding commonalities beyond their size and location within the geographical area.

The following data was extracted from the 'Information about the School' section of the reports.

- 14 of the schools are described as being smaller than average and, interestingly, one report does not refer to the school's size at all.

- The proportion of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) ranges from one school being well below average, one below average, six average and seven which are above average.

- Pupil population is specified as being from the village and surrounding area for three schools, but not mentioned in the other reports. Fourteen schools are described as having a mostly white British population, with the final report making no reference to ethnicity. One school is described as having a higher than average population of gypsy/Romany pupils.

- In terms of EAL, eight reports make no reference to this, four schools are recorded as having no pupils with EAL and the remaining three have below average figures.

- Three schools have average numbers of children moving into the school during their school careers (mobility), one is listed as having low numbers and the remainder do not have mobility mentioned.

- Free school meals (FSM) or Pupil Premium numbers vary; in one school this is not mentioned, five schools have very low numbers, four are deemed below average, two are average, and three are above average.

- Floor standards (current measure at the time of the report being published) are met by nine schools. Three schools were deemed to have too few pupils to make the judgement and three reports do not mention floor standard as the inspections took place prior to this being a requirement.

The table on page 49 provides more contextual information about the schools. This information was gathered from the school's most recent Ofsted reports.

The rurality or not of the schools is not mentioned by Ofsted at all, but then the census data that Ofsted use does not include a measure on this factor. The reports' data on SEN reflects the headteachers' descriptions, as does the low number of FSMs. The ethnicity data also matches the headteachers' descriptions. There are commonalities amongst the schools, such as being predominantly white British in terms of ethnicity, with very few EAL pupils across the sample.

Another important school characteristic is the type of school. There were five types of primary school represented in the sample group, with the largest number of schools that responded having Church of England status. The table illustrates the different types of primaries in the research sample, survey responses and interview participants.

Table 12: Types of school

Type of School	Sample group (42)	Survey participants (21)	Interview participants (15)
Academy	1	1	0
Foundation	1	0	0
Church of England - Voluntary Controlled	16	7	3
Church of England - Voluntary Aided	7	4	4
Community	17	9	4

To find out if there were any significant aspects to the data, it was important to look at the representation of school types across the whole sample group, not just those that responded. Academies and foundation schools are not represented in the interview phase, but there was only one of each in the sample. The number of voluntary

controlled schools drops considerably in both phases of the research. Voluntary aided schools and community schools remain fairly representative of the sample group. The exact number of pupils at a school will impact on the number of staff at a school and thus the leadership structure. The criterion for identifying the sample schools is no more than 4 classes, and if applying approximately 30 pupils a class as a measure, that could indicate up to 120 pupils. Similarly, there could be significantly fewer pupils in the sample. The first table below sets out pupil numbers. There appear to be a fair representation of the different pupil number groups in the interview stage. The second table shows the number of classes which also remains a fair representation of the research sample.

Table 13: Pupil numbers in survey and interview schools

Pupil Numbers	Survey (21)	Interview (15)
50-59	0	0
60-69	5	3
70-79	1	1
80-89	2	1
90-99	2	2
100-109	7	7
110-119	4	1

Table 14: The number of classes in survey and interview schools

Number of Classes	Survey (21)	Interview (15)
3	5	4
3 1/2	1	0
4	14	10
4 1/2	1	1

In comparing this sample's contextual factors to those in the Bush et Al. study (2012), some key differences are apparent. In terms of location, only one is in southern England. It also happens to be rural and Church of England, and fits the sample size. The other two case studies are not close matches in terms of geography or size of numbers. The contextual factors that are identified in the analysis correspond to some of the same aspects as those in Wallace and Huckman (1994), however, gender, site and institutional history are not collated. Their case studies are all significantly bigger and most fit an urban context. It is clear that the schools in this study are incredibly different from those in their case study. This demonstrates that the findings generated in this piece of research are potentially very different and size specific in terms of the structures that may emerge in the following section.

4.3 Identifying the types of leadership structures

The table on the next page illustrates the types of leadership structures that were found in the schools that participated in phase one.

Table 15: Types of leadership structure in the survey

Leadership Structure Groups	Frequency
1. Co-headship + Maths Leader	1
2. Headteacher + Deputy Headteacher	3
2a. Headteacher + Deputy Headteacher + Business/Office Manager	1
2b. Headteacher + Deputy Headteacher + combination of subject leaders, KS and EYFS leaders and TLR and UPS	2
3. Headteacher + Assistant Headteacher	1
3a. Headteacher + Assistant Headteacher + subject leader	3
4. Headteacher + Senior Teacher(s)	4
4a. Headteacher + Senior Teacher(s) + Class Teacher	1
4b. Headteacher + Senior Teacher(s) + SENCO	1
4c. Headteacher + Senior Teacher(s) + Office Manager	1
4d. Headteacher + Senior Teacher(s)+ EYFS leader	1
5. Headteacher + combination of subject leaders, KS and EYFS leaders and TLR and UPS	1
6. Headteacher + class teacher	1

Only fifteen headteachers agreed to be interviewed and this resulted in four structure types not being represented; Co-headship + Maths Leader, Headteacher + Deputy Headteacher + combination of subject leaders, KS and EYFS leaders and TLR and UPS, Headteacher + Senior Teacher(s) + Combination and Headteacher + class teacher.

The table below presents the structures represented by the interview sample.

Table 16: Leadership structures in the interviews

Type of structure	Tally
1. Headteacher and deputy headteacher	2
2. Headteacher and assistant headteacher	1
2a. Headteacher, assistant headteacher and literacy leader	2
2b. Headteacher, assistant headteacher and 2 x TLR (teaching and learning responsibility)	2
2c. Headteacher, assistant headteacher, Literacy leader and EYFS (early years and foundation stage) leader	1
3. Headteacher and senior teacher	4
4. Headteacher, Literacy leader, Numeracy leader and EYFS leader	1
5. Headteacher, Literacy leader and Numeracy leader	1
7. Headteacher, TLR and office administrator	1

Six main structures emerge:

- Headteacher and deputy Headteacher,

- Headteacher and assistant Headteacher,

- Headteacher, assistant headteacher/deputy Headteacher and a variety of subject or phase leaders

- Headteacher and senior Headteacher,

- Headteacher with a variety of subject or phase leaders,

- Headteacher and senior teacher with an office administrator.

This sixth model does not feature in the literature (Abbott and Bush, 2013; Wallace and Huckman, 1999). In addition to this role being added to the leadership structure, Diane described how her structure has flexibility to, 'co-opt other people into projects.' When asked how this worked in practice, she said, 'It depends what the need is really. So if we are doing something, we're looking at foundation stage we'd co-opt the foundation stage teacher….' This is a unique feature in the interviews, and one that could potentially be a very workable model for small schools to manage workload and the management of specific projects/developments. A follow-up piece of research could explore the role of the assistant headteacher; when it emerged as a new role and how the role differs from that of a deputy.

The Bush et al. study (2012) identified only one of their three primary structures with any definition, and the only one that was, consisted of a leadership and a separate management team. This bears absolutely no resemblance to any of the structures that feature in this sample. School L, however, does feature an office manager and that ties into the sixth, and potentially newly, identified leadership structure in this sample. There are some similarities in that two of the schools in their study feature assistant headteachers and one has a deputy. When comparing these structures to those found in Wallace and Huckman's (1999) research there are several key differences. In their study, each school had a deputy headteacher. In the interview sample, only two schools have deputy headteachers and yet, there are six assistant headteachers in the sample and this role does not appear in the 1999 research. The smallest school in their research had two deputies - certainly not something that was featured in any of the interview sample.

Seven of the structures do not have an assistant or deputy headteacher. This may link to the findings of the literature review, in which the main reason for small schools not having deputies or assistant headteachers is due to the cost of more senior staff

being beyond the budget because of the size of the school (Southworth, 2008: 417). None of the schools in either of the studies examined in the literature review are in this position. Again, this points to potentially new structures in regard to the literature emerging into the field of knowledge.

Seven of the structures consist of just two people. Four have three members and four have four members, so over 50% have three or more members. In other words, the headteachers of seven schools have just themselves and one other person in a senior leadership role and for eleven schools, the headteachers have only two other individuals in their structures. The table below presents the number of people in the structures. Please note that there have been changes to structures between the survey and interviews.

Table 17: Number of people in current school leadership structure

	2	3	4
Number of People in Current Structure - survey	7 (33%)	11 (52%)	3 (15%)
Number of People in Current Structure - interviews	7 (47%)	7 (47%)	1(7%)

This is quite significant since many of the headteachers talk about the difficulty of having so much to do and not enough people to share the workload (Clarke and Wildy, 2004 and Wildy, Sigurðardóttir, and Faulkner, 2014). Alexa makes the following point, 'so we have a headteacher and a senior teacher, there's very little hierarchy…… so everyone is expected to go the extra mile.' Due to financial constraints, it would appear headteachers are dependant upon goodwill.
In comparing these findings with those of Wallace and Huckman (1999), it is interesting to note that one would expect the bigger the school, the greater the number of members in the structure; however, this is not the case. The largest school with 687 pupils has a team of four, but does have two deputies. The smallest school, with 340 pupils, has a team of five. The largest team, however, belongs to the school with 450 pupils. All the schools in this study have four classes and the largest team has four members and that is only one of the fifteen schools. In comparison to the schools in the Bush et al. (2012) study, two of the schools have at least three members (again clarity of the descriptions of the leadership structures is a problem) and one school has at least four. The only school that has a size that meets the small school sample used in this study has at least three, which makes it comparable to those in these findings.

4.4 Roles within the leadership structure

Having explored the number of people in the structures, the table below focuses on the roles of the people in the structures. There are fifteen different roles named. One

role is listed as having 0 frequency because the role had been identified in the survey, but this had changed by the time the headteacher was interviewed.

The co-headship no longer exists, but at the time or the survey, the structure consisted of just the two co-headteachers. Three schools have assistant headteachers and they all have one additional member of the team (one literacy leader, one numeracy leader and one inclusion leader).

Table 18: Frequency of roles represented in the survey and interviews

Role	Survey (21)	Interviews (15)
Co-Headteachers	2	0
Deputy Headteacher	5	2
Assistant Headteacher	3	3
Senior teacher/Teacher in Charge/Upper Pay Spine (UPS)	11	8
Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)	3	1
Key Stage 1 Leader	1	0
Key Stage 2 Leader	1	0
Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Leader	2	1
Literacy Leader	5	3
Numeracy Leader	4	4
Arts Leader	0	1
Office/Business Manager	1	1
Teaching and Learning Responsibilities	1	1
Inclusion Leader	1	1
Class teacher	1	0

This data should be treated with a degree of caution because sometimes people hold multiple roles, and at the time of data collection, some headteachers elaborated on these multiple roles and others did not. It was not until data analysis that this error was recognised and the information gathered is so fragmentary that it is too difficult to report or to be meaningful. This is potentially an area for research in the future. Other than the deputy and assistant headteacher roles, the most common roles in the structures are the literacy and numeracy leaders, which could reflect the emphasis on literacy and numeracy as core subjects, whose outcomes are used as external measures of a school's effectiveness.

4.5 Patterns of change from inherited structure to existing structure

The tables below present the structures that were inherited, at the time of the survey and at the time of the interviews, alongside the structures that each headteacher had previously experienced. The shaded rows indicated structures that have remained the same.

Table 19: Changes to leadership structures

Pseudonym	Inherited Structure	Structure at time of survey	Structure at time of interview	Prior Experience 1	Prior Experience 2	Prior Experience 3
Diane	HT, MP	HT, TLR, OFFICE	HT, TLR, OFFICE	HT, DHT, TLR X3	HT, DHT, EYFS	HT, DHT, 4 X YL
Fiona	HT, AHT	HT, AHT, NUM	HT, AHT, NUM	HT, DHT, 2 X ST		
Sara	HT, KS1, KS2	HT, ST, SENCO	HT, ST PLANNED HT, AHT	HT, KS1,KS2	HT, DHT, EYFS	HT, DHT,
Barbara	HT, DHT	HT, ST	HT, ST	HT, DHT, EYFS	HT, DHT, 3 X S3	HT, DHT, 4 X S3
Fred	HT, ST	HT, DHT	HT, DHT	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2	HT, LIT, NUM	
Ellie	HT, NUM, LIT	CO HT, NUM	HT, LIT	HT, DHT, LIT, NUM	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2, EYFS,	
Laura	HT, AHT	HT, ST, EYFS	HT, DHT, EYFS	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2	HT, DHT, LIT, NUM	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2
Alexa	HT, ST	HT, ST	HT, ST	HT, 2 X AHT		
Caroline	HT, LIT, NUM	HT, LIT, NUM	HT, LIT, NUM	HT, DHT, 4 X SL	HT, DHT, + 2 UN	
Ann	HT, DHT	HT, 3 X ST	HT, 2X TLR	HT, DHT		
Marianne	HT	HT, AHT, INC	HT, AHT, INC, EYFS	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2, EYFS,	HT, AHT
Meghan	HT, AHT, LIT	HT, AHT, LIT	HT, AHT, LIT	HT, DHT, KS1	HT, LIT	
Liz	HT	HT, ST	HT, ST PLANNED HT, AHT	HT, DHT, AHT, ST X2	HT, ST	
Lily	HT/TLR	HT, ST, EYFS	HT, ST, SENCO PLANNED HT, AHT	HT, 4 X HEAD OF YEARS	HT, DHT, SENCO	
Susan	HT, DHT	HT, DHT	HT, DHT	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2, EYFS, SENCO	2X CO KS1, KS2, EYFS, SENCO	

A table of abbreviations can be found on the next page.

Table 20: key to the abbreviations used in the table 20

HT	Headteacher
DHT	Deputy headteacher
AHT	Assistant headteacher
ST	Senior teacher
OFFICE	Office manager
LIT	Literacy leader
NUM	Numeracy leader
KS1	Key stage one leader
KS2	Key Stage two leader
SENCO	Special needs co-ordinator
INC	Inclusion manager
TLR	Teaching and learning responsibility
MP	Management point
EYFS	Early years and foundation stage leader
SL	Subject leader
UN	Unspecified
S3	Scale point three
YL	Year Leader

Six headteachers have created more senior posts than those they inherited. Two deputy headteacher posts were created, one enhanced from an assistant headteacher post and the other from a senior teacher post. Four have created assistant headteacher posts, two of which had no leadership structure at all upon appointment. The third assistant headteacher post replaced two key stage leaders and the fourth had previously had a TLR post. Three of the assistant headteacher posts were not in place at the time of the interview, but appointments had been made for the term following the interview process.

Two headteachers supplemented their existing structures with additional leaders - either subject leaders or phase leaders.

Four headteachers have the structures they inherited; although Susan knows changes will come, she does not know what they will be. Two of these structures already had either a deputy or assistant headteacher, with the other one having a senior teacher and the last one having a subject leader.

Two headteachers reduced the seniority of their leadership posts, both opting to not have deputy or assistant headteacher positions. One went with a senior teacher and the other with 2 x TLRs. The remaining headteacher reduced her structure from two subject leaders to one.

Growth would appear to be the over arching pattern of change, either in number of people in their leadership structures, or in terms of the seniority of the posts of the individuals in the leadership structure. At least two other headteachers indicated that they would like the opportunity to grow their structures, but were unable to do so at the present time. This means two thirds of the interview sample have grown or would like to grow their leadership structures.

The literature certainly identifies the role of inheritance (Ball, 1987; Fullan, 1997; Abbott and Bush, 2013 and Wallace and Huckman, 1996) and it is clear from the number of changes within the interview group that a large proportion of the headteachers changed structures after their appointment. The findings of this study support those of Northfield (2014), Abbott and Bush (2013) and Wallace and Huckman (1999); what you inherit is critical to what happens next with a leadership structure. The headteachers have to utilise their micro-political skills to analyse who and what they have inherited (Caruso, 2013) and then make their move, as will be discussed in the findings regarding research question two.

In every single interview, headteachers referred to what had come before them in one form or another. They had to deal with the legacies of the past (Ball, 1987) and have the micro-political literacy skills to be able to analyse and formulate a way forward. They inherited the school's financial situation, whether that was unaffordable structures, like Laura, or deficit budgets, like Liz. Likewise, they inherit a part-time staffing situation, along with all the staff, including the powerful people and their cliques. Leadership capacity of the existing staff is also inherited. The historical roles that the headteacher had before them is also inherited and can take a long time to change, like Fred waiting for finances to allow him to take a non-teaching role or Caroline being a midday supervisor. A school's previous Ofsted judgement and its impact are clearly inherited by headteachers until such time as they lead the school through an inspection themselves. Finally, a school's culture is most definitely an inheritance issue, one which some struggle with and have to change. Recruitment and academies are the only two factors that sit outside this in that they do not appear, from this study at least, to be inherited aspects.

Whilst the literature does reflect some aspects of the patterns of change associated with inheritance, it does not provide anything to compare and contrast with, on the matter of patterns of what do headteachers actually do to the structures. This makes the findings around growth a unique contribution to the field of knowledge.

4.6 Contextual information relating to the headteachers' experience

Headteachers' prior experiences could be a key factor to be considered when trying to understand how the leadership structures of small primary schools come into being and evolve.

The table below combines information about each headteacher's prior experiences.

Table 21: Headteachers' prior leadership structure experiences

Pseudonym	Years in current post at time of interview	First Headship	Inherited Structure	Structure at time of survey	Structure at time of interview	Prior Experience 1+ NOR[1]	Prior Experience 2 + NOR	Prior Experience 3 +NOR
Diane	6	Yes Had been acting HT in exp. 2 1 year	HT, MP	HT, TLR, OFFICE	HT, TLR, OFFICE	HT, DHT, TLR X3 210	HT, DHT, EYFS 120 Acting headship	HT, DHT, 4 X YL 360
Fiona	6	Yes, was acting head at this school first	HT, AHT	HT, AHT, NUM	HT, AHT, NUM	HT, DHT, 2 X ST 400		
Sara	3	Yes	HT, KS1, KS2	HT, ST, SENCO	HT, ST PLANNED HT, AHT	HT, KS1,KS2 120	HT, DHT, EYFS 250	HT, DHT, 350
Barbara	24	Yes	HT, DHT	HT, ST	HT, ST	HT, DHT, EYFS 180	HT, DHT, 3 X S3 350	HT, DHT, 4 X S3 400
Fred	10	No	HT, ST	HT, DHT	HT, DHT	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2 260	HT, LIT, NUM First headship 70	HT, KS2 240
Ellie	11	Yse	HT, NUM, LIT	CO HT, NUM	HT, LIT	HT, DHT, LIT, NUM 210	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2, EYFS, 350	
Laura	2	Yes	HT, AHT	HT, ST, EYFS	HT, DHT, EYFS	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2 150	HT, DHT, LIT, NUM 85	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2 300
Alexa	4	Yes, was acting head for 6 months first	HT, ST	HT, ST	HT, ST	HT, 2 X AHT 195		
Caroline (Acting HT)	6 months, but had done previously covered maternity	No, been head for 25 years. Retired - now helps county it required.	HT, LIT, NUM	HT, LIT, NUM	HT, LIT, NUM	HT, DHT, 4 X SL 600[2]	HT, DHT, + 2 UN 200 [2]	
Ann	17	Yes	HT, DHT	HT, 3 X ST	HT, 2X TLR	HT, DHT 200		
Marianne	12	Yes	HT	HT, AHT, INC	HT, AHT, INC, EYFS	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2 350	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2, EYFS, 650	

Pseudonym	Years in current post at time of interview	First Headship	Inherited Structure	Structure at time of survey	Structure at time of interview	Prior Experience 1+ NOR[1]	Prior Experience 2 + NOR	Prior Experience 3 +NOR
Meghan	5	Yes, was acting head before - no time given	HT, AHT, LIT	HT, AHT, LIT	HT, AHT, LIT	HT, DHT, KS1 150	HT, LIT 58 Acting headship	
Liz	1	Yes	HT	HT, ST	HT, ST, PLANNED HT, AHT	HT, DHT, AHT, ST X2 450	HT, ST 200	
Lily	4	Yes	HT/TLR	HT, ST, EYFS	HT, ST SENCO PLANNED HT, AHT	HT, 4 X HEAD OF YEARS 360	HT, DHT, SENCO 200	
Susan	4	Yes - had exp. of co-headship	HT, DHT	HT, DHT	HT, DHT	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2, EYFS, SENCO 400	2X CO KS1, KS2, EYFS, SENCO Was co-head 400	

[1] NOR number on roll

[2] These were the prior experiences of the headteacher who was in post at the survey stage (prior to her going on maternity leave). Key to the abbreviations used in the table - see page 74

The survey asked headteachers to indicate how long they had been headteachers at their current school and their responses are presented below. The reason for this question was to gauge where the headteacher was in their headship journey, as changes take time and inheritance might be more apparent in schools where a headteacher is very new to a school. Since the survey, there are only two changes of leadership in the interview group. There are two acting headteachers in place.

Table 22: Time in current post

Time in years and months	Survey (21)	Interview (15)
0-12 months	4	0
1 year - 2 years 11 months	4	1
3 years - 4 years 11 months	5	5
5 years - 6 years 11 months	2	2
7 years - 8 years 11 months	0	0
9 years +	6	5
Currently unknown		2

The data indicates the stability of the headships. The majority are still in post and their experience is growing. This indicates that seven of the headteachers are within the first four years of headship in their current school, with four headteachers in 5-10 year brackets and two headteachers who have been in post for a significant number

of years. This is related to the next aspect of analysis. Whilst the literature review indicated that there was a gap concerning the direct link between the length of time in headship and leadership structure, there might be more light shone on this by exploring the 'shelf life' of the headteachers (Earley and Weindling, 2007) by finding exactly when during their headships they made changes.

The survey and interview phase asked headteachers to indicate whether their current headship was their first. The table below illustrates their responses.

Table 23: First headship

	Survey (21)	Interview (15)
First headship	19	13
Not First Headship	2	2

The statistics quite clearly indicate that the vast majority of headteachers that participated were in their first headship at the survey stage and now the majority remain in their first headship. The survey data, in combination with the previous table examining time in current headship, indicates that the headteachers who responded to the survey were predominantly in their first headship and were new to or early on in their first headship experience. This is of note because the interview stage will allow headteachers to reflect on those early days of establishing their leadership teams and the changes they have made in the last year. This relates to the literature review around the issues of first headship, (Mayer and Macmillan, 2011 and Caruso, 2010). These findings also support the inclusion of inheritance and new headship material in the literature. It is worth noting that the longest serving headteachers have only been headteachers in their current schools.

In comparing this data to the findings from both of the studies examined in the literature review, the headteachers in the Bush et al. (2012) study all have 11+ years in post, but their prior experience is unknown. This does, however, mean that it is not directly comparable with this study's findings to which the vast majority are early in their first headships. By contrast, Wallace and Huckman's (1999) headteachers were known to all be in their second headships ranging from 1 year to 13 years in post. This would make the findings comparable for Winton and Waverley (two schools in the Wallace and Huckman study) in terms of headteacher experience.

The survey asked headteachers to indicate their experiences of leadership structures from their previous schools, in particular the number of pupils on role. The following

table indicates number of previous experiences that the headteachers had before coming to their present school.

Table 24: Number of schools heasteachers have previously worked in

Number of Previous Schools	Survey (21)	Interview (15)
1	8	4
2	7	2
3	5	7
4	1	0
Unknown	0	1

This data set includes references to all past school experiences, not just headship. Six of the headteachers have only worked in one or two schools. Seven, just under 50%, have worked in three schools, with only one headteacher having worked in a greater number of schools. This data indicates that these headteachers have, on the whole, had very limited exposure to different types of school leadership structures. This is further supported by the fact that only two schools experienced by all of the headteachers were in the 1-120 range i.e. the size of the sample. This is not merely information about the sample group, but it could be argued that it is crucial in understanding the difficulty facing many of these headteachers; they do not have the experience of working in small schools, or in fact many types of schools, to fall back on when becoming the headteacher of a small school.

The survey asked headteachers to indicate the number of pupils on roll at each of the schools they had previously worked in. There were a total of 42 schools cited by headteachers, but six were not included in the table below because they were infant, junior or middle schools. In the interview stage there were a total of 27 schools listed, but five were removed for the same reasons. This was done to ensure that like for like comparisons between primary leadership structures and numbers on roll were made.

Table 25: Size of schools previously experienced

Number of Pupils on Role in Prior Experiences	Survey (21)	Interview (15)
0-120	8	4
121-200	9	10
201-300	8	8
301-400	8	5
401+	3	3

The data clearly demonstrates that of the 22 schools listed as prior experiences in the interview phase, only four schools were of a size that meet the criterion for inclusion in this study. This leads to the conclusion that the majority of the headteachers, in both the survey and interview stage, have experiences in schools that are significantly larger than the small schools in this study. Cross-referencing this data against the participants, only three of the fifteen headteachers have experience of a school with no more than 120 pupils. This, in turn, then also implies that the majority of headteachers will have leadership structure experiences that are unlikely to be applicable in their current school because the number of staff available will be significantly smaller.

The following tables compare the number of people in the current structures with the number of people in the structures from the previous experiences.

Table 26: Comparing current structure with previous experiences

School	Number of people in current structure	Number of people in structure from first prior experience	Number of people in structure from second prior experience	Smaller	Equal	Bigger
1	3	4	5	✓		
2	3	2	3		✓	
3	2	5	N/A	✓		
4	4	2	N/A			✓
5	2	2	N/A		✓	
6	3	6	4	✓		
7	2	3	N/A	✓		
8	2	3	N/A	✓		
9	3	4	N/A	✓		
10	3	6	5	✓		
11	3	5	7	✓		
12	2	3	2		✓	
13	4	N/A	N/A		N/A	
14	2	5	2	✓		
15	4	6	4		✓	

Table 27: Size comparison of the leadership structure in current and previously experienced leadership structures

No Comparable Data	Smaller	Equal	Bigger
1 (5%)	13 (62%)	6 (29%)	1 (5%)

The most common number of people in the current structures is three (52%). Comparing the number in the current structures to the numbers experienced in previous structures, 62% have smaller structures in their current schools, with only 5% being larger.

Once again, there is a very dramatic difference between the number of people in the current leadership structures and those in the structures from previous experiences. Where the most common number of people was three in the current structure, previous structures show quite large percentages with four, five and six people. Early in the findings a pattern of growth was identified and this finding is further reinforced by this section of analysis - many headteachers are trying to increase the number of people in their structures.

Having established the types of experiences, number of schools, sizes of schools and variety of leadership structures, and their impact from the raw data, the headteachers were asked to reflect on how, if at all, they felt their prior experiences of leadership structures had influenced their current leadership structures as headteachers.

Six headteachers recognised there was a direct relationship between the structure they created or are in the process of creating and those they have experienced. They all have different perspectives on how those experiences had an impact. Ellie had seen a co-headship model in a colleague's school and to retain a senior member of staff, she, ' did a shift of my own leadership. I went out four days and released a day for her to be acting head on a Friday.' This proved to be a very successful model for both parties. The school retained a valued member of staff, who was able to gain valuable leadership experience and the headteacher was able to have, ' a day off, which made me perform better on the four days I was in.' Unfortunately, the situation changed between survey and interview, as the new co-head moved on to a leadership role in another school and the headteacher does not feel that model would currently work in her school, due to the lack of leadership capacity in the remaining staff.

In Diane's school, the inclusion of the office manager in the senior leadership team was directly based on the headteacher's experience in her previous school. She describes the role of the office manager as follows, '…she line manages the midday supervisors, she's got a health and safety responsibility, she line manages the caretaker. Her role has grown a lot in supporting me and outside the curriculum areas.'

For Sara, she was adamant that, '…I wanted something more than just key stage coordinators.' In her listed prior experiences, two of the schools she worked in had

key stage leaders and she must clearly have felt that the model of leadership did not work. Sara had much greater prior experience than the other headteachers because she had worked as an advisor for the local authority prior to headship, thus had worked in significantly more schools (she was unable to quantify). She remarks that she saw, '…many enviable ones where you're seeing sort of headship and then multilayers of deputy head and assistant heads. When I say enviable because if you've got that sort of structure, then clearly there is going to be far more shared leadership.' She changed her structure once, shifting away from key stage leaders to a senior teacher and SENCO and at the time of interview was planning a second significant shift to replace the senior teacher role with an assistant headteacher position. It would appear that she is trying to replicate the multilayer models she admired.

A model with two assistant headteachers was one one that had an impact for Marianne. She inherited a leadership structure of one - her! She said, 'Obviously we didn't need two assistant heads here, we only need one because obviously we don't have the capacity to support two assistant heads, but I think that's definitely the way to go.'

It was the deputy headteacher role that Liz reflected upon, having been a deputy herself in a small primary school, she knew the importance of the role and argued her case to her governing body when faced with resistance. She is also quite clear that she is doing more that just developing her school's leadership structure, ' I think it's important for us to grow leaders within small schools and I am passionate about that.' A deputy headteacher was also top on Lily's wish list when it came to changing her leadership structure. This reflection of the importance of the experience gained as a deputy headteacher on influencing their desire to have their own deputy supports the findings of Earley and Weindling (2007).

Three headteachers indicated that they had been influenced by previous experiences, although they had not directly impacted on their leadership structure. Laura said, 'I definitely recognise in myself that there are things I have seen in my previous jobs and roles that I brought to here.' For Barbara it was, '…the larger schools and the role of the headteacher' that was significant to her in terms of impact and for Fiona, it was the ethos of previous schools that she had taken with her.
Five headteachers felt that their prior experiences had not impacted on their current structures. Four of them did not feel that their previous leadership structure experiences had any bearing on their current structures because their previous experiences were in larger schools. Fred's comment ably sums up their thoughts on this, '… the model doesn't work, you haven't people to manage it, largely, what it boils

down to is people.' For Ann, she did not mention structures having any influence, but she did speak about her experiences as a deputy headteacher. 'As the deputy, you've got to be there for everyone. You're there for the teachers, you're there for the head, and that is exactly how my experience was.' One could speculate that this perhaps influenced her to move away from having a deputy to having two senior teachers.

For interim headteacher, Caroline, this question was omitted because she was not in a position to comment on the school after such a short time in post with her remit of holding the fort.

It could be argued that people rather than structures are more influential, because the larger school structures simply cannot be replicated in small schools because there are not the funds or personnel that would it require. Susan reflected, 'I feel that having been in big schools really all the time, I wasn't fully prepared for the leadership structure that I've had to adopt because there is no choice.' However, there is clear evidence that six headteachers, more than a third of the sample, did use their prior experiences directly to impact on their current leadership structures and a further five felt there was a more indirect impact.

A final issue to explore is why four schools have not changed their structure. Alexa and Susan were happy with the status quo and do not mention any desire to change in the future. Meghan inherited a situation with an assistant headteacher and would like to change the structure, but feels she cannot do anything until the assistant headteacher retires. Caroline's situation is unique in that she has been acting head at the school during the headteacher's maternity leave for a second time. In this role she has no remit to change the structure and the substantive headteacher had not made changes, but Caroline was not in a position to be able to explain why.

4.7 Effective schools

It is important to note that the Ofsted inspection schedule has changed a number of times since 2007. This has affected the types of judgements made and most recently, in September 2012, the judgement of 'satisfactory' was changed to 'requires improvement'. The changes have also brought interim assessments that mean good and outstanding schools have less frequent inspections if an Ofsted interim desk assessment indicates no significant problems with the schools's data or complaints from parents.

Using the Ofsted criteria to judge effective leadership, ask discussed in the literature

review, the table below presents each headteacher and a collation of their category and structure.

Table 28: School inspection data

Pseudonym	Date of Inspection	Was the HT in post at time of inspection	Overall Ofsted rating	Leadership and Management Ofsted rating	Structure at time of inspection
Diane	2011	Yes	Good	Good	HT, TLR + office administrator
Fiona	2014	Yes	Good	Good	Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher and Numeracy Leader
Sara	2010	No	Good	Good	Headteacher, Senior teacher + SENCo
Barbara	2012	Yes	Good	Good	Headteacher and Senior Teacher
Fred	2014	Yes	Good	Good	Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher
Ellie	2014	Yes	Requires improvement	Requires improvement	Co-headship and maths leader
Laura	2013	No	Good	Good	Headteacher, Literacy leader, EYFS and Numeracy Leader
Alexa	2013	Yes	Good	Good	Headteacher and teacher in charge
Caroline	2012	No	Good	Good	Headteacher, Literacy leader, and Numeracy Leader
Ann	2014	Yes	Good	Good	Headteacher, Senior teachers x3 for inclusion, assessment and EYFS
Marianne	2013	Yes	Good	Good	Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher and Literacy Leader
Meghan	2010	Yes	Good	Good	Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher and Literacy Leader
Liz	2013	No	Requires improvement	Requires improvement	Headteacher and Senior Teacher
Lily	2013	Yes	Good	Good	Headteacher and Senior Teacher
Susan	2013	Yes	Inadequate	Requires improvement	Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher

There are only three schools with less than good judgements about the leadership and management and all three have different structures. There are schools with deputies and senior teachers with good judgements, so it would be difficult to state that the structure itself was inherently the problem. The co-headship model is a lone example across the whole sample, therefore, one cannot make any comparison.

The sample in this study differs greatly from that of Bush et al. (2012); all of their schools were judged to be outstanding by Ofsted and none of this group are. A direct comparison cannot be made with the Wallace and Huckman (1999) research as this information is not provided. A critical question that arises is whether there is any significance attached to this difference between the schools in the studies.

Table 29: Compilation of data regarding leadership structures

Pseudonym	SEN	Ethnicity	EAL	FSM	Mobility	Floor standard[1]	Inherited Structure	Structure at time of survey	Structure at time of interview	Prior Experience 1 + NOR[3]	Prior Experience 2 + NOR[3]	Prior Experience 3 + NOR[3]	Date of Inspection	HT in post at time of inspection?	Overall Ofsted rating	Leadership & Management Ofsted rating	Structure at time of inspection
Diane	Average	Mostly White British	No pupils	Not included in report	Above average	N/A	HT, MP	HT, TLR, OFFICE	HT, TLR, OFFICE	HT, DHT, TLR X3 210	HT, DHT, EYFS 120 Acting HT	HT, DHT, 4 X YL 360	2011	Yes	Good	Good	HT, TLR, OFFICE
Fiona	Above average	Mostly White British	No pupils	Average	Not included in report	Met	HT, AHT	HT, AHT, NUM	HT, AHT, NUM	HT, DHT, 2 X ST 400			2014	Yes	Good	Good	HT, AHT, NUM + LIT
Sara	Above average	Mostly White British	Well below average	Very low	Not included in report	N/A	HT, KS1, KS2	HT, ST, SENCO	HT, ST PLANNED HT, AHT	HT, KS1,KS2 120	HT, DHT, EYFS 250	HT, DHT, 350	2010	No	Good	Good	HT, ST, SENCO
Barbara	Average	Mostly White British	No pupils	Average	Very low	Met	HT, DHT	HT, ST	HT, ST	HT, DHT, EYFS 180	HT, DHT, 3 X S3 350	HT, DHT, 4 X S3 400	2012	Yes	Good	Good	HT, ST
Fred	Above average	Not included in report	Not included in report	Above average	Not included in report	Too few pupils	HT, ST	HT, DHT	HT, DHT	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2 260	HT, LIT, NUM 70 First headship	HT, KS2 240	2014	Yes	Good	Good	HT, DHT
Ellie	Above average	Mostly White British	Not included in report	Below average	Above average	Not included in report	HT, NUM, LIT	CO HT, NUM	HT, LIT	HT, DHT, LIT, NUM 210	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2, EYFS 350		2014	Yes	Requires improvemelt	Requires improvement	CO HT, NUM
Laura	Above average	Mostly White British	Not included in report	Very few	Not included in report	Met	HT, AHT	HT, ST, EYFS	HT, DHT, EYFS	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2 150	HT, DHT, LIT, NUM 85	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2 300	2013	No	Good	Good	HT, EYFS, LIT, NUM
Alexa	Above average	Mostly White British	Not included in report	Well below average	Above average	Too few pupils	HT, ST	HT, ST	HT, ST	HT, 2 X AHT 195			2013	Yes	Good	Good	HT, ST
Caroline	Above average	Vast majority White British	Very few	Well below average	Average	Met	HT, LIT, NUM	HT, LIT, NUM	HT, LIT, NUM	HT, DHT, 4 X SL 600[4]	HT, DHT, + 2 UN 200[4]		2012	No	Good	Good	HT, LIT, NUM
Ann	Above average	Large majority White British[2]	Not included in report	Above average	Not included in report	Met	HT, DHT	HT, 3 X ST	HT, 2X TLR	HT, DHT 200			2014	Yes	Good	Good	HT, 3 X ST
Marianne	Below average	Mostly White British	No pupils	Below average	Not included in report	Met	HT	HT, AHT, INC	HT, AHT, INC, EYFS	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2 350	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2, EYFS 650	HT, AHT 200	2013	Yes	Good	Good	HT, AHT, INC +LIT
Meghan	Average	Mostly White British	Below average	Below average	Not included in report	Met	HT, AHT, LIT	HT, AHT, LIT	HT, DHT	HT, DHT, KS1 150	HT, LIT 58 Acting HT		2010	Yes	Requires improvemelt	Requires improvemelt	HT, ST
Liz	Above average	Mostly White British	No pupils	Below average	Not included in report	Met	HT	HT, ST	HT, ST PLANNED HT, AHT	HT, DHT, AHT, ST X2 450	HT, ST 210		2013	No	Good	Good	HT, AHT, LIT
Lily	Above average	Mostly White British	Not included in report	Below average	Not included in report	Too few pupils	HT/TLR	HT, ST, EYFS	HT, ST, SENCO PLANNED HT, AHT	HT, 4 X HEAD OF YEARS 360	HT, DHT, SENCO 200		2013	Yes	Good	Good	HT, ST
Susan	Above average	Not included in report	Not included in report	Below average	Not included in report	Met	HT, DHT	HT, DHT	HT, DHT	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2, EYFS, SENCO 400	2X CO KS1, KS2, EYFS, SENCO Co-head 400		2013	Yes	Inadequate	Requires improvemelt	HT, DHT

[1] Depending upon the year of inspection, the floor targets change [2] with an above average number from Romany/gypsy backgrounds [3] Number on roll [4] These were the prior experiences of the headteacher who was in post at the survey stage, who then went on maternity leave   SEN - Special Educational Needs   EAL - English as an Additional Language   FSM - Free School Meals   Mobility - amount of pupil movement in and out of the school population

4.8 Summary

The research question sought to know what types of structures exist in small schools today and six main structures emerged. In comparing the findings to the literature, is it therefore true to say that Way's perspective (1998) in the literature review from Wilson and Mcpake (2000:119-132) in which they note that Way rejects management models that are based upon large organisations because the nature of headship in small schools is essentially a very different type of organisation with different needs and dynamics is the case in may of these schools. It would seem that there are some similarities in terms of types of role and number, but equally looking at the findings from this study and from Wallace and Huckman (1999), there are plenty of differences too, which can only be accounted for by size of school. The models that emerge from this study highlight the diversity of structures that can operate in a small school.

It is the uniqueness of the sixth structure, however, that is potentially the most interesting. The inclusion of others beyond teaching staff in a leadership structure is quite a revelation and the literature does not reflect these individuals or models as being either well known, let alone understood. This is potentially a new and exciting contribution to knowledge and could, with further research, provide a model for the future.

The table presented on the next page draws together the key information around the context of the school, the prior experiences of the headteachers, the changes made to structures by headteachers with the structures at the time of inspection and the outcomes of those inspections.

One further conclusion that could be drawn from the findings is that there is no one perfect leadership structure that will guarantee effective leadership, using this definition of effectiveness. Many different types of model exist and from the scope of this piece of research it could be argued that most appear to be effective from an Ofsted perspective.

5.0 Presentation of findings - how are micro-politics understood and applied by headteachers to enable effective schools?

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings around research question three. It is presented in three themes relating to the following power framework;

1. **Power over**
2. **Power through**
3. **Power with**

There is a brief description of each theme at the beginning of the section. Each school has been situated into one of the themes. Representational quotes from each headteacher are provided as evidence for their placement. Following the quotes, there is analysis of where each position is compared and contrasted with each other and finally with the literature.

The chapter concludes with a summary of the findings and presents how the the power analysis can be projected onto a continuum of trust.

5.2 Power over

Power over is characterised by domination and control, where individuals are seeking to enhance their own power at the expense of others (Blase and Anderson, 1995). In this situation, power is viewed as a limited resource, which leads to competition. Leadership is assumed to be authoritarian. There are five headteachers that are positioned within this theme, which will now be presented.

Case 1 - Lily

> There is a clear divide, for me, in school and I think others, perhaps some of the governors who were closest to the school (the chairman and vice chair) are aware of the fact that that the school is a school of two halves in some respects. I have two teachers whom I've appointed and two teachers who've been here for a long time, certainly before I was appointed. So, the expectations that I have are fully embedded in the two that I've employed or have been appointed since I've been here. For the other two, whilst they could

see the need for change when I came and have been a joy to work with in that respect, they are perhaps more difficult to manage when the going gets really really tough.

Interviewer: Could you give me an example, I mean, you talk about how your governors are aware of this split. What is it that makes them aware?

I think it's about a perception by parents as well, our results are good, I don't know that parents outside would see the split, I think it's just that those governors, my chair of governors who works very closely with school and I trust implicitly. So, we've had conversations, there are observations, particularly around my senior member of staff, who was reluctant to deputise for the previous head, even though she was a UPS, I think, at that point. She was given a TLR in the summer before I got here, but for no specific reasons. So there were lots of politics around the fact that she was threatening to leave at a point when the school was in a bit of disarray and she was given a TLR because basically she was saying she was going to leave, but didn't ever really want the extra responsibility that went with it. When I came into this reasonably blind and you didn't know the history behind that, I couldn't understand why she wasn't just taking on certain responsibilities. So, there is a resistance in her, which makes her the most difficult member of staff who should be the easiest and she's now retiring. So, she's been here a long time, parents respect her and she does a good job with the children she works with, but in terms of the bigger school picture. I've not really had anybody really working alongside me and increasingly, as we get bigger, it's a load when you're thinking about vision and development plans and, working on them in isolation. As much as I, we, work together, because I insist that we do, if you don't have somebody who is a natural, who's naturally somebody who takes a strategic overview, that's quite difficult.

Case 2 - Meghan
Quote 1

She tries very hard to make out that there is upset generally amongst the staff and that people are generally unhappy. She tries lots of things, almost on a daily basis.

Interviewer: Have you developed a strategy for dealing with that?

I don't show that I'm cross, even though I am. I just listen to her concerns, give her answers and hopefully they are the right ones.

Quote 2

She is a governor, so she's there when we're talking about what we're planning for the future and all the rest of it, so she's there then. We're meant to have fortnightly meetings, I say we are meant to, it's not my idea, it was something that was apparently written in her contract when she was appointed, I don't know x number of years ago, before I came, and we do meet every now and again. I went over to see her the other night after-school, but we don't seem to get together very often. If I do ask her to do things, she doesn't always want to do them.

Quote 3

I do think staff that you have employed, chosen yourself, they have a particular loyalty to you. I think of the three teachers I've employed, I think they're all quite loyal to me and you feel differently about staff that you've appointed yourself and they towards you.

Case 3 - Fred
Quote 1

We had a teacher and two teaching assistants in the classroom who were very close friends outside school. They preferred to stay down in their own classroom at break time and chat rather than come up to the staff room and they met socially and talked socially about the school and that caused a few problems. She moved back to America and the two TAs have since moved on and I'm pleased to say that the appointments I have made since are very much part of the school team.

Quote 2

My one weakness is somebody who has no initiative and if you don't guide her and tell what to do at every step of the way, it's difficult.

Quote 3

One of the TAs was particularly negative about almost any new initiative that we, as a school, decided on at a staff meeting. There were a huge amount of negative comments made to the point where I had to speak to that person on several occasions and obviously, that made it worse. That made it more entrenched, rather than remedy the problem, actually made it worse, so that was quite difficult. It remedied itself in a curious way, which sometimes they do. Her husband lost his job, she was desperate for more hours as she only had 20. She demanded that I make her full-time and I said I couldn't make her full-time because I hadn't, well, I had actually, not that I was going give it to her, because of those negative issues and so she said 'Right, I'll find a job elsewhere,' and she did. So, in a sense, 'I thought that's fine, okay, I'll pretend to be distraught (laughter).

Case 4 - Caroline

One of the most powerful people is actually the school bursar/administrator …. and she is very influential.

Interviewer: Could you give me an example?

A lot of parents go to her with their concerns and things because they know that she'll pass it on to the head. She is very much in control of things like, she works out all the after-school clubs and and it doesn't come to the head and you suddenly discover you've got these clubs where you've got about 24 children in a room from reception to year six who really aren't being controlled or looked after properly, but that's been her domain.

Interviewer: Has she ever tried to block any initiatives?

Yes.

Interviewer: Could you talk me through one of those?

She was very concerned and in my face about the redundancy, for example, and didn't agree with who it came out with, but fortunately you have to go through the procedures. As a result,

there's been a few waves in the staff room because the person she would like to go, didn't. Every time that poor person speaks, you know, she gets all stressy and then comes out of the staffroom to me to me about it.

Interviewer: So, a very powerful individual.

Yes, very, very powerful. I mean sometimes it's very good advice, but sometimes it can be so petty almost, but you feel you've got to keep her on your side.

Case 5 - Marianne
Quote 1

There was no senior leadership when I took my role and I was teaching as well, two days a week, and the decision was taken that actually we needed additional leadership support because often as a head you go out and have meetings and therefore that left technically nobody in charge of the school and so that's why we restructured it to include an assistant head.

Quote 2

I think having a good deputy or assistant head is actually key to staying sane as the head because if you don't have someone that you can rely on it is extremely difficult as the head. Not only are you there having to cope with your own work load, you are also then having to micro-manage someone else's workload.

Quote 3

I'd got my assistant head on long-term sick, an NQT, two supply teachers and that left poor old NAME who is a reception teacher, who never ever wanted leadership. So, unfortunately she had to step up and be like a sounding board and do all the bits that, not all of the leadership bits, but certain things in leadership. Over half term, that wasn't advantageous because that's not what she wanted, she was actually very good.

Interviewer: You were lucky she agreed to.

She didn't have much choice because actually there was no one else who was going to do it. She had to be in charge of the school when

I wasn't here, someone had to be in charge and actually she was the only member of staff left, so it was sort of like leadership by default really.

Comparing and contrasting each case within a 'power over' framework
Lily talks about a clear divide in the school between the 'old guard' and those she has employed. It is not just Lily who is arguably operating in the 'power over' style, but also the member of staff she is discussing. Lily forces them to work together, but clearly has little or no respect for this person and shows no inclination to support or facilitate leadership. Equally, the member of staff who is leaving exerted 'power over' to gain the leadership position in the first place, and in this position of 'power over' does not see why she should have to do what the headteacher requires her to do.

Meghan also has a member of staff who is operating in a 'power over' mode. This individual holds a hierarchical position of power as assistant headteacher and, according to Meghan, causes her daily concerns, implying there are problems amongst the staff. It is very telling that Meghan's recourse is to hide her feelings and hope she provides the right answers. Without saying it directly, Meghan is aware that the power dynamic here is not what it should be. Interestingly, however, both Lily and Meghan try to force the other individual to work with them, but it is clear from both cases that this is not productive - the other parties refuse to participate. Both headteachers also identify that appointing staff makes them loyal to you.

Like Meghan and Lily, Caroline has an individual who is operating in the 'power over' mode. In her case it is a bursar/administrator. The fact that she believes that she knows who should have been made redundant and makes is abundantly clear to the member of staff that she should have left instead is a remarkable display of power that Caroline does not appear to address; perhaps this is because she is the acting headteacher.

Fred exhibits control issues; in the first quote he is clearly unhappy about staff having closed conversations about school and talking out of school. He does not know what is being said and does not like it. He refers to a member of staff as a 'weakness' because they have no 'initiative'. This is not indicative of someone who seeks to empower, but to over power. In the final quote, he discusses how he dealt with someone who was expressing a discordant opinion. His attitude is to shut them down and use his 'power over' employment terms/hours to persuade the member of staff to leave.

Of the five cases, only two, Fred and Marianne, are headteachers operating in the 'power over' framework. Meghan, Lily and Caroline have individuals in 'position power' and they are exerting this power quite effectively. The situations only resolve if/when that individual leaves the school.

In Caroline's school it was the school secretary. This is interesting because she does not formally have a source of power, but she is drawing power from the fact that she is the gatekeeper and has longer established relationships with staff and parents. According to Busher (2006), she has little legitimate power, but high personal power. Handy (1987) would suggest that she has position power through the flow of information. This role has emerged due to the arrival of an interim headteacher and this has resulted in parents and staff going via a known third party as they get to grips with the new headteacher. Although, it maybe that they don't want to establish a relationship because they know Caroline is not staying in the long term.

Marianne indicates the appointment of an assistant head was to do with covering in her absence, nothing to do with actually sharing any power with anyone else. This is supported by quote three where there is no choice offered to the member of staff who has to step up and take a leadership role. This is quite an extreme example of 'power over'. Her opinion of having to micro-manage other people's workloads is also indicative of a 'power over' mindset; she feels she must control the actions of others.

Comparing and contrasting with the literature
Domination, a key character of 'power over' (Blase and Anderson, 1999), is evident in each case. Competition (Blase and Anderson, 1995) is clearly evident between Meghan and her assistant headteacher, as well as Lily and her senior teacher. In both cases, they are trying to manage the situation because they are unable to 'over power' or neutralise the individual. It could be argued that they do not have the requisite tools in their micro-political toolbox to address the situation, although they can identify the problem they face.

Groups are predominantly not the problem in these schools, it is individuals who are exerting 'power over'. Fred does have a small group to deal with, but he removes them fairly quickly, in fact, removal seems to be the preferred option for four of the headteachers, as opposed to working with people, mentoring or facilitating change. It could be argued that there is no shared vision in these schools, only the vision of the individual exerting 'power over'. Fred can be seen to possess and exercise power (Lukes, 1974) with abandon.

Strategies at play in these five schools are not coming from the 'soft' lists gathered by Fairman and Mackenzie (2014), but rather from the 'harsh' coercive range (Starr, 2011). Marianne simply enforces her will on others, rather than taking a persuasive stance. Fred takes action from a more direct and adversarial position, which leads to staff leaving the school - he denies staff access to having lunch where they wish to and with whom they wish to, as well as challenging directly those who he perceives to be thwarting his efforts. These strategies reflect the destructive behaviours found by Blase and Blase (2003). Overt and covert mechanisms are evident (Bachrach and Baratz, 1962) in Fred's actions to speak to members of staff about dissension, as well as covert methods, where he withholds additional hours, in order to oust a member of staff.

There is some evidence of scoping the landscape using a micro-political lens from each of the headteachers. Lily reflects on getting the measure of her staff, particular the teacher with the TLR and her understanding of how the situation arose in the first place. Both Lily and Meghan refer to the loyalty of those you employ yourself, which reflects Ball's remarks around battles lost and frustrations simmering. Meghan in particular finds herself in the 'shadow of headteachers past' (Weindling and Gimmick, 2006: 328) as she battles daily with her assistant headteacher. Caroline also has to scope her landscape and she analyses her relationship with the office bursar; aiming to make the school she is care-taking effective (Northfield, 2014 and Caruso, 2013).

There is evidence of Buchanan and Badham's 1999 scoping of the landscape by the 'savvy executive' as all of the headteachers have discovered who is friendly with who and especially in terms of secret liaisons that Fred shuts down in his school. They are trying to work out the real agendas of those holding power, like Caroline and her bursar and there are clear indicators of who they hold dear and those they avoid, like Meghan and her assistant deputy.

5.3 Power through

'Power through' is characterised by power not being perceived as a limited resource or that there is a need for competition. In this situation, leadership is facilitative in nature, where leaders adopt a style that encourages and motivates others to reach goal achievement through a shared sense of ownership. This model, it could be argued, stimulates a greater degree of 'buy in' for stakeholders, which in turn creates a more forward thinking and dedicated organisation. There are six headteachers of small primary schools schools that are positioned within this theme which are presented next.

Case 1 - Diane

You've got to find an ally and grow people. I think that was one of the things I found and you've got to understand people. When I started, the woman who had a management point didn't appear as though she was going to be the problem. I had a staff meeting and said this is a new planning format I want to introduce. She would say, 'yes, yes' and you would think, 'oh good'. Yet, another member of staff, who is now the woman with the TLR, would say, 'Well, what about this heading? What about this?' and you would feel, as a new head, quite threatened. What I eventually realised was she was questioning me because she needed to know because she knew she was going to do it. I said it and she knew she'd got to do it. The other one could say yes to anything because she had no intention of doing anything different ever. So, in her room, she was doing what she sweet well wanted to, so it was a lesson; the person you think is the troublemaker isn't necessarily and it was because she had to understand, to know because she actually was going to do it.

Case 2 - Barbara
Quote 1

I hope that they would say of my style that it's very, very even handed and it doesn't matter who does what within the school, whether you're the caretaker or a senior teacher you'd be treated in the same way. I don't think there are real cliques. I have worked in schools where there are cliques, a lot of things happen behind closed doors. In this school it's a bit difficult because of its layout, there's no such thing. I think my door is the only door that closes and the lavatory door...

Quote 2

Currently, the team dynamic is really very good and there's no difference between the two senior teachers, myself and my senior teacher.

Interviewer: Has it always been that way?

No

Interviewer: How do you think it has become as harmonious as you described?

It's personalities.

Quote 3

> I've had two deputies here. The first one was absolutely incredible and the second time the appointment wasn't quite right and it was because the individual was very status driven, ' I'm the deputy head of this school.' For example, after parents and governors meeting, ' I don't put chairs away, I'm the deputy head.'

Case 3 - Laura
Quote 1

> There are differences between all of the people, that I think everybody recognises they've all got so much to do that actually people need to have their individual jobs and therefore everybody is quite happy to sort of acquiesce to that person's sort of tutelage and support and feeding back.

Quote 2

> There is a little bit of, not cliquishness, a little bit of difficulty sometimes, in that one of the things that was very evident when I started here was that everyone lived in kind of little bubbles. The school had lots of little bubbles and we live in a little bubble and there wasn't a lot of movement and so actually people didn't really go out on courses, they weren't keeping up to date with all the changes and so on and so forth. One of the things I did was to bring in middle management because there wasn't really any middle management; get them out on courses, get them coming into the school and delivering support and training across the school. So, the cliquishness difficulties are more around personalities, now we have got out of our bubbles and we're not quite so concerned about ourselves and we are a bit more concerned about the bigger picture of the whole school. The difficulties that occur tend to be personality difficulties and they generally happen when people are tired.

Case 4 - Alexa

> We have a headteacher and a senior teacher, but in reality there's very little hierarchy, so everyone is expected to go the extra mile. I don't see, in a school like this, you can really have much of a leadership structure. It has to be everybody pulling their weight, with one person making the ultimate decisions, I suppose, and being

the one to pick up the dead rat, although actually that's a treat. I don't do that, if there's a dead rat, somebody else does that, but I have been the one to pick up dog poo and all the rest of it.

Interviewer: So, you're a leadership structure of one?

Or conversely, a leadership structure of five, or even twenty, everybody in the school.

Case 5 - Fiona

We do a questionnaire every year and one of the things said last year was if they want to have a chat and to have somebody to listen then they come to me. If they want things done like that (clicks fingers) they go to Angela because they know I will think about it for a little while. I think that helps, the issues in other classes because we were strong together and then by employing the two of the TLRs I've now got two people who can lead their subjects. I think that the whole structure is supportive of the school now and, where we want to go rather than before where it was just me and Angela going, 'Right, come on, we've got to do this, we've got to do that, we've got to do this.'

Case 6 - Sara
Quote 1
Sara is referring to an internal promotion that had not been successful.

I think I had over-estimated her ability to take on that role. When I track back and think about her career history, she came into the school as the Key Stage two leader from a classroom position and has had no middle leadership training at all. So, I felt actually I had made quite big demands on her, expecting her to be able to move into that position without really any training or expectations really of what it involved.

Quote 2
Interviewer: Do you feel part of that group?

I didn't to begin with and part of it, I don't want. As far as I'm concerned, I keep my work life separate from my social life and I

did feel quite out of it to begin with, it's a far more comfortable situation now.

Interviewer: What changed do you think?

I think time, familiarity, trust, developing those sort of trusting relationships.

Quote 3

The person who is coming in has more expertise than me as a headteacher. I'm pleased about that because he can obviously advise me. I can learn from him, but the thing to be careful of doing is making sure that I don't put too much on him because he's chosen to move into a deputy role and it's just making sure I don't make too many demands, but I'm really excited because of what he will be able to bring to the school.

Interviewer: I think many people would be intimidated by the thought of someone more experienced arriving in your situation, but I guess you're not.

No, I welcome it. I'm generally not intimidated by people because I'm looking for the best outcome for the school.

Comparing and contrasting each case in a 'power through' framework
Diane is operating on two fronts; seeking allies and growing people. She is encouraging others to take on responsibility, often early in their careers and she recognises her own learning curve. She reflects that when people question things it does not always mean they are challenging you.

Barbara has expectations of equality in her school - elimination of status and hierarchy so that all of the members of staff are equally valued. In this way, she ensures that everyone is invested and motivated in school improvement, thus 'power through'. She provides an example of a deputy who did not fit her 'power through' model because of his/her concern with status.

In Laura's school her 'power through' approach has moved a staff she describes as being in their 'own bubbles' to a position where they are empowered through middle leadership, training opportunities and time. From a position where everyone was

working solo, they now have ownership of the bigger whole school picture.

Expectations of the team effort are indicative in Alexa's 'power through' model. She suggests that everyone pulls his/her weight, with someone making the ultimate decision, but contradicts herself immediately by deflecting from her own positional power as the headteacher that she also picks up the 'grotty' jobs too.

Fiona and her deputy were desperately seeking middle leadership with whom they could 'power through', but their reasoning is more about workload, than a conscious decision regarding a particular stance on power. What she describes is a situation where staff take on middle leadership and assume a role within the 'power through' model, but they were looking for support rather than a shared scenario.

Sara has two situations in her school. She reflects upon a member of staff who she failed to support and anticipate her needs. She was attempting to facilitate others, but has yet to bring this to fruition. Her second quote reveals an issue with group identity and membership, but she reflects that initial rejection from the group has changed over time. She identifies trust as the reason for this change. Sara is on the road to a 'power with' model because she has learnt from the first failed effort and she has appointed a deputy headteacher who has more experience than she has and embraces the fact that he actually has more leadership experience than she has. If this works, she will shift the school to a 'power with' model.

A common theme found in these cases is the movement from individualist 'bubbles' to team effort. Sara and Diane are trying to 'grow leaders' from within, but with mixed success. Fiona and Laura are desperately seeking middle leadership, and as they are doing so, they are able to shift along the continuum. Once the the team begin to think and operate like a team, goals can move to become one cohesive vision for the school. The dynamic can shift, if the headteacher so wishes it to, from 'power over' to 'power with'.

Comparing and contrasting with the literature
The key theme that all the schools share is the headteachers' drive to open up participation in their schools, with a view to developing a shared vision and the 'buy in' to the organisation (Blase and Anderson, 1999). This is particularly well articulated by Ellie, moving her teachers from isolationist positions to whole school positions. Furthermore, there is evidence from these schools that the headteachers are increasing access to power for the staff as a means to motivate and empower (Busher, 2006). These headteachers are on the road to developing deep and trusting

relationships with their stakeholders, the path that leads to 'power with'. Really knowing and understanding the people you work with, along with equity is spelt out by Barbara and Diane. This reading of the culture (Stoll, 2003), immersing themselves in the culture (Senge et al., 1999) and shifting it to reflect the new headteachers' values can be seen to be critical to these headteachers.

There are no evident cliques in these schools, or powerful individuals that threaten to derail because the expectations are very different to those in the 'power over' schools. Here, the schools do not have competing goals because they are working on a shared vision. Formal groups do exist to carry out designated functions, but not in a destructive fashion (West, 1999).

The strategies that headteachers employ are positive and drawn from the sorts of activities that Ryan's 2010 research uncovered. The tools in their toolkit include honesty, persistence, asking critical questions, planning and experimentation. The headteachers are employing a fairly full range of micro-political literacy skills in their dealings with their staff. They scope the landscape (see the paragraph above), they engage strategies that fit within a positive and supportive framework and they reflect on their efforts. In achieving their goals, they have managed to work with others in a positive, power sharing model that can only improve their school's effectiveness.

5.4 Power with

'Power with' is the third way, an alternative that Blase and Anderson (1995:14) propose as a means to take 'power through' to the next level. They also suggest alternative terms, 'power together' or 'power emerging'. This model presents a serious challenge to the 'power over' hierarchical domination approach to leadership because it is characterised by stakeholders being empowered, with leaders having close relationships with stakeholders; the stakeholders have fulfilled expectations of democratic participation, not as a privilege bestowed upon them by leaders, but as a right; a normalised means of school leadership and organisation. There are four headteachers of small primary schools that are positioned within this theme which will now be presented.

Case 1 - Susan
Quote 1

> I've got that energy and I'm very driven and very focused. They'll say that as well, so always it's been about sticking to our plan and our vision. It's a very different place to the school that I came to,

where the staff didn't really, feel that they worked as a team, but they maybe didn't understand what teamwork was all about. So, now there is a lot of give and take, it's all about give-and-take and lots of sharing and it isn't top down at all. I wouldn't say it is bottom up either you, it is…

Interviewer:… is distributed?

It is very evenly distributed.

Quote 2

Currently, we've got a couple of strong members of staff but they don't form a clique.

Interviewer: Strong in what way, could you give me an example?

They make their opinions very clear, which is a good thing…

Interviewer: Covertly or overtly?

Overtly, which is a good thing, but they will listen to other people's opinions and they are prepared to change their mind, so they're not stuck in their ways, set in their ways.

Case 2 - Ellie
Quote 1

The majority of the time everybody gets on fine. The teachers always support each other. It's more so now than it was when I first came. Everybody was sort of working on their own islands when I first came and I needed to pull them together to support each other. I noticed when I first came here, there was very much a TAs and teachers issue. I've always come from schools, and it's my own personal view, that when you have a staff, as far as the children are concerned, you respect every adult regardless of their status. So, we did a lot of work to include the TAs in what we were doing and everything we do, staff meeting wise, is open to the TAs. They don't have to come if they don't want to, but obviously if there are things we want them to come to things, that affect the whole school then, you know, I will say to them, 'we'd like you here and I'll pay

you to come' and they always feel good about it afterwards. At the moment we do all get on well as a staff together and I think the, the TA/ teacher split doesn't exist any more.

Quote 2

Interviewer: Would you say the leadership is distributed?

If I'm honest, no, not for want of trying.

Interviewer: Can you unpick that a little bit more?

Part of the problem we having at the moment is that we've just been 'Ofsteded' and in the previous Ofsted, middle management was something that they picked up on, so in other words having a leadership structure. We then did an awful lot of work trying to identify someone who was happy to do it, trained her up, she then moved at the end of last year to Yorkshire. The lady who has taken it on very happily only works three days a week, so, that's the history there. When the maths co-ordinator took on the literacy coordinator role there wasn't anybody in school that was suitable to take on the maths, so I took it on. I had an NQT, who was a maths specialist, but I didn't want to give it to her in her first year, so as soon as she finishes, she is a mature student, so as soon as she finished she is very happy to take on the maths coordinator role and obviously the teacher has now been off sick for a long time, so it's defaulted back to me again. And it's just we have a situation whereby we train them…

Interviewer: … and then they go…

… they either go off sick or they go somewhere else.

Quote 3

The lady that went to Yorkshire, she had been with us for about six years and was looking towards a sort of leadership capacity and she was the one we were training up to be the literacy coordinator. Rather than lose her to somewhere else, I actually did a shift of my own leadership. What happened in the end was that I went down to four days and released a day for her to be acting head on

a Friday. I drove it purely because I didn't want her to miss out on the leadership side of things. She was a fairly long term member of staff. She was the one who had been maths leader and she had the flexibility to move. Moving up the scale was going to be her next move, but I didn't want to then lose a member of staff, so it didn't matter to me at all. I was fine with it and I was also conscious at the time that the reason that we didn't have TLRs or anything like that was because I had been here for so long. Of course, my salary was upping and upping every year so by doing that I released funding for her to be able to get some management experience and leadership experience... while I had a day off, which made me perform better on the four days I was in... She then left, of course, so I'm now back to 5 days, so anyway (laughter).

Case 3 - Ann
Quote 1

There's no hidden agenda and the five of us attend. We do crank things up a bit, for instance, the standards committee for the governing body. It used to be that the teacher governor would represent on that, but this academic year we have changed it so that each member of the senior team attends the standards committee meeting because there is a wealth of school information, data so that it is shared and they have a huge input to it and they can do so in person.

Quote 2

The people that were here at the time, who have since retired, those senior posts, they felt more empowered and I have certainly felt, that. I began to know that their potential wasn't being realised and now they were growing and absolutely loving it.

Quote 3

I suppose I set high expectations for myself and I expect a lot from other people, but I don't have to crack a whip because the people, my leadership team are so, if you like, we complement each other and we compliment each other on our work and we are so aware of each other's strengths and areas of development that, I don't know if, I think this might be going off the point a bit, but we really want to do the very best for each other.

Case 4 - Liz
Quote 1

> There was originally one TA who was a slightly disruptive influence in the fact that whatever we did, there would be that voice of dissension about what was going on. To be perfectly honest, this year, I think she has really come around. She knows she wants to do well, and we're supporting her with her career development, so she feels happier in where she is, so I think she's more happier in where we are. I do have a very powerful HLTA who leads the TA team for me and she is also a staff governor and is very knowledgeable on everything, but she is actually the voice of reason and works within the team, to bring about change in a really constructive manner alongside me.

> Interviewer: Do you think these people have ever tried to block initiatives that you have tried to push through or changes?

> The one person who has is our office manager and that is because she doesn't like change. It is only if she feels she not been brought in 100% on every initiative and it is explained to her fully, even if it's a teaching initiative, she needs to understand it and when she understands its she is fine, she supports everything. She is the one person who if something is, 'oh' I don't know,' but actually, no they're fine. Nobody blocks things, as such, as long as they are included in all the discussions and I think that that is something new this year.

> Interviewer: Is that something that you bought in as a new head?

> Yes, most definitely and that's very much evident; they are shocked by how much I share with them and how much I involve them and ask them because they've not had that…

Comparing and contrasting each case in a 'power with' framework

Susan operates a 'power with' model, but on a sliding scale, this is only just evident. She has a powerful personality and she has committed to making her team function as a team. She recognises the need for her school to be modelled on 'give and take' and describes an 'evenly distributed leadership' style. She welcomes the overt voices of her strong individuals and acknowledges their input. She is empowering others to take part

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in the leadership process with her. Susan's school is an anomaly in the research however, because whilst her model is 'power with' the acadamisation process is not.

Ellie identifies how she moved her staff from individual islands to a cohesive group. She achieved this by using the 'power through' approach to motivate and empower all of her staff to participate in whole school decision-making and activity. There is a caveat; this may be her desired approach, it is not yet embedded because she cannot retain leadership staff for long enough.

Ann provides really helpful examples of how she works in a 'power with' model. She completely empowers her team to share their knowledge, and to turn to the most appropriate member of staff to lead at the most appropriate time. She recognises that this model means her staff feel empowered and reach their potential - they not only thrive, they love it! The whole team are completely invested in wanting to do the very best for the school.

Liz's 'power with' approach has significantly changed her school and the people within it. She has embraced those who could be potentially seen to derail and wield their power. By sharing, empowering and investing in others, she has people who work alongside her; they do not need to compete for power - they have 'power with' rather than over or through. Not only does she have 'power with', it is totally linked to a high level of participatory practices.

Susan and Liz have powerful individuals who have the potential to get into a power struggle with them, but their decision to adopt the 'power with' model deflects the need for a power struggle and power is shared.

Ellie and Ann have similar situations, where there are no particular individuals or groups, but it is the whole staff team that they are engaging with. What links them all is the strong evidence of the collective drive for doing the best for the school

Comparing and contrasting with the literature
The literature suggests that 'power with' models embrace close relationships, and that is evident in each case, and the willingness of school leaders to encourage, motivate, support and facilitate goes beyond the 'power with' models and as a result the schools in this model are highly effective. The headteachers are not trying to get their teams to conform or match their goals (French and Raven, 1968). They arrive at consensus through sharing a vision (Johnson and Short, 1998). Decision-making is expected to be participatory; the findings strongly suggest that stakeholders in these schools expect

the right to question, challenge and be heard, but equally know they must do the same for each other. It could be said here there is evidence of all stakeholders having access to power (Busher, 2006).

Whilst there is evidence provided around strong individuals, there is no evidence of groups or cliques (West, 1999). It could be argued that where there is a 'power with' model, there is no place for either because there is no competition for power. There are no conflicting goals; there is one goal - effective school improvement. Groups do exist, but operate in a formal sense to carry out specific tasks (i.e inclusion work), as West described in small group theory, but there does not appear to evidence of informal groups that are acting contrary to the school's goals. Arguably, this is what Senge (1990) refers to as goal alignment. Over time, these schools have developed a commonality of direction, shared vision and common purpose, blended with the capacity to recognise and complement individuals' skills. Ann's quotes really demonstrate this in action. The analysis for this section also resonates with the findings of Abbott and Bush's 2013 study on high-performing teams.

Are these headteachers charismatic leaders? Certainly they are not '...Sir this and Dame that.....' Ball (2011: 50), but in order to achieve success, to lead effective schools, I believe there is evidence that they are 'charismatic people and 'persuasive personalities' and forceful agents for change' Ball et al. (2011: 628). The changes that they have wrought in their schools, through their chosen method of 'power with' does this in an heroic fashion because it is not about them as individuals, it is about the school; heroes do not do what they do for their own personal glory. You can hear this in their voices as they describe their schools, the staff that they have grown and the pride they have in their team.

The most key element to this synergy is that individual vision is not relinquished, but that the shared vision becomes, 'an extension of their personal vision' (Senge, 1990: 234). The strategies used by the headteachers are squarely reflected in the findings of Fairman and MacKenzie (2014:68). There is copious evidence of sharing, modelling, coaching, collaborating and learning together, and advocating, as well as the:

> professional dispositions and behaviours (e.g. honesty and openness, reflection, respect, communication, encouragement, prodding and support), and supportive conditions (e.g. trust, safety, time/scheduling and support from administrators) to establish and deepen their professional working relationships within various spheres of leadership activity.

It is the use of these strategies that enables the 'power with' model to work because it is based in collaborative co-development and hinges upon the quality of relationships. There is absolutely no evidence that this group of headteachers operate in the 'darker realms' that are evident in the 'power over' cases. Coercive, punitive means are not the strategies employed in this model.

All of the headteachers operating this model display high levels of micro-political literacy. They are hyper-aware of the school culture; scoping the landscape upon arrival, identifying what they needed to do to ensure their schools are effective and getting to that effective level in such a way as to enhance the experiences of everyone in the school. The headteachers are articulate about their visions and values and how they bring about effectiveness through growing trust and being willing to share power.

5.5 How do headteachers use micro-politics?

The first sections of the chapter identified the power model each headteacher is operating within, which partially answers the research question around recognising their micro-political landscape, but to fully answer the question an analysis of where the headteachers sit within the micro-political literacy definition of Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002) is required.

The same quotes from the power model categorisation have been used to place the headteachers into the categories of knowledge, operational or experiential, whereby placement is cumulative. For example, Barbara demonstrates proficiency only in the knowledge strand. Lily displays acumen in both knowledge and operational. Fred (by placement in experiential) is by default also demonstrating the first two strands.

Table 30: Micro-political literacy placement

Knowledge - ability to interpret the situation	Operational - ability to use variety of strategies	Experiential - awareness of micro-political literacy in action
Barbara	Lily	Fred
Alexa	Caroline	Marianne
Meghan	Sara	Diane
		Laura
		Fiona
		Susan
		Ellie
		Ann
		Liz

Each headteachers is aware of their context; they are able to interpret their situations and show an awareness of their power model, but there are different degrees of micro-political literacy in action. Nine of the headteachers are operating at high levels of micro-political literacy with competencies in all three strands. The question that this does not address is whether the headteacher is using his/her competence in such a way as to bring about both high degrees of participation and the empowerment of their stakeholders through a 'power with' model.

There are situations where one or two of the headteachers find themselves lacking in the operational strand, but the most interesting revelation is the necessity of micro-political literacy in navigating the complex world that headteachers inhabit. There are times when headteachers reveal their thoughts about their own micro-political literacy, the experiential, and they tend to be negative. Like Fred and Laura feeling as if they have been 'naughty' or 'sneaky' in their application of strategies. In another representational quote from Barbara, she is fairly blunt about her lack of micro-political skills in making an appointment, 'I made a bad choice, I should have listened to others.' Diane questions her own motivation and contemplates whether she has been ruthless, 'I don't know whether it is through a combination of luck here and strategy and skill, but the staff who were here, who would hold me back, have all gone now.'

5.6 Summary

Two thirds of the headteachers in the study are working in a 'power through' or 'power with' models, with indications from some headteachers of movement towards the 'power with' model.

Table 31: Summary of location with power models

Power over	Power through	Power with
Lily	Diane	Susan
Meghan	Barbara	Ellie
Caroline	Laura	Ann
Fred	Alexa	Liz
Marianne	Fiona	
	Sara	

There is a direct correlation between those schools that are 'power over' and the use of strategies that are 'harsh' rather than 'soft.

From an over-view of the findings for research question two, it appears that it is individuals rather than groups that drive power dynamics. Where they are these

individuals, whether they are the headteacher or an another member of staff, there does appear to be a tendency towards these being 'power over' situations, but not always.

The literature review identified various power frameworks and the argument for using the Blase and Anderson (1995) model was cogently argued, however, a review of the evidence suggests that three models of 'power over', 'power through' and 'power with', perhaps sit upon a continuum. Each case displays predominant features that place them in one of the three categories, but there are features of movement toward one end or the other of the continuum. Furthermore, the use of a particular power model can be seen to be a reflection of the degree of trust operating within a school. For example, Fred demonstrates a strong 'power over' model at the far end of the spectrum and in doing so reflects that he has very little trust in his team - they cannot even have conversations in their classrooms during lunchtime. At the other end of this spectrum, in the strongest position possible in the 'power with' model, Ann displays a stunning example of how her team functions as one cohesive body, reflecting that she has total trust in them to run specific functions within the school, without the need for her involvement.

6.0 Presentation of findings - how do processes and practices of participation enable effective schools?

6.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with presenting the findings around research question two. It is presented in four themes relating to levels of participation evident in each school. The first theme has two sub-themes; external and internally driven.

1. No participation - there is no, or very little, explanation or chance to respond to or question the change or its processes.

    1a. The degree of participation is established by external forces.

    1b. The degree of participation is established by internal forces.

2. Low levels of participation - information sharing only, with no opportunity for concerns to impact on decision-making.

3. Moderate levels of participation - this change is planned. Through consultation there is an opportunity for dialogue and for concerns to impact on the outcome.

4. High levels of participation - open forum for discussing and proposing possible options from all parties. Decision-making is fully participatory and negotiated. There is the opportunity to veto decisions.

There is a brief description of each theme at the beginning of the section. Each school has been situated into one of the themes. Representational quotes from each headteacher are provided as evidence for their placement. Following the quotes, there is analysis where each position is compared and contrasted with the others and finally with the literature. Where stakeholders are referred to, this includes all staff (teaching and support), governors, parents and pupils.

6.2 No Participation

6.2.1 The degree of participation is established by external forces.

This theme is characterised by there being no participation for the stakeholders in the school. The process is compulsory, following an Ofsted judgement. Thus an external force is driving the change and the stakeholders are informed of the change, but have no stake in the process. There is only one headteacher of a small primary school that is positioned within this theme, which is presented below.

Case 1 - Susan

> We've had so much change, we really have. We're going through another huge change as we are going academy, forced academy and that hasn't been very positive for us.
>
> Interviewer: Why forced?
>
> Well, because we had our last Ofsted in November and we are in serious weakness, not special measures, serious weakness, purely because of data, attainment data (progress data is good, attainment is not) and I think actually under the new framework we would have been all right. Because of that categorisation, we had to seek a structural solution. Because we are a church school, there was only one structural solution which is the diocese. They're taking on a lot of schools at the minute and the process hasn't been well managed and it is sort of out of my control. I think the staff morale has dropped and I don't feel I can do much because it is out of my control and I can't reassure them because I don't actually know.

Susan describes the situation where her school was judged to be inadequate and as a result of this, the school had to seek a structural solution in order to improve outcomes for the children; the school is directed to become an academy. At the time of the interview (2014), the only multi-academy trust that a church school could join was the diocese to whom the school belongs. This is a direct reflection of the process required for a school in such circumstances (Simkins, 2015).

With only one case, there is no means of comparison with other schools within the theme, however, the literature on the need for rapid change in response to a crisis is

reflected. The position that Senge et al. (1999) take on the cultural damage that can be caused by rapid change and the resentment caused, is clearly in line with Susan's experience. The situation also agrees with the findings of Barker (2005), where the change observed in their research was in response to Ofsted findings, just as it is here. It could be that Susan and her staff view the external force as oppressive because they also reject the agenda of acadamisation. In comparing this case with the literature, it is clear that the government line (DFE, 2015b) on forcing acadamisation where schools are deemed to be failing by Ofsted, is taking place. Whilst it may be in line with government policy, the impact on Susan and her staff in terms of this being a change with zero participation, is a negative and unwelcome experience. Even with the government u-turn on the 2015 White Paper (DfE, 2015a), in which the Secretary of State has withdrawn the direction that all primary schools will become academies, those who still do not meet Ofsted's 'good' criteria, will be faced with the compulsion to become an academy.

6.2.2 The degree of participation is established by internal forces.

This theme is also characterised by there being no participation for the stakeholders in the school; but it differs from the first theme in that here there is an internal force driving change and the stakeholders are informed of the change, but have no stake in the process. There are three headteachers of small primary schools that are positioned within this theme which will now be presented. For cases one and three, there are more than one quote.

Case 1- Fred
Quote 1

> I inherited staff who weren't team players, if you like, so that my first job was to subtly move them on; either change their roles so that they were less than comfortable in that role and and then they decided to leave. They all moved on anyway.

Quote 2

> Sometimes I'm told by my deputy that I don't distribute enough because sometimes it is easier to do it yourself, you know. I know what I'm doing so, I'll just go and do it.

Case 2 - Liz

> Traditionally, HLTAs were kept within one class and, if you were lucky, you got the HLTA and you got all the vast experience and

they did come out and do some interventions; but this year it has been far more structured. So after Christmas, it became evident to me that the weighting was far too heavy in two year groups and that they were making acceptable progress and other children weren't because they didn't have the access to that assistance. So after Christmas, I suppose this is one change where actually I wasn't able to go out and do a big discussion beforehand. They came into pupil progress meetings and when they came in and said, 'This is how I'm using my HLTA' and I said, 'No, this is not your HLTA. I would like you to put a bid for their time in please. You tell me what you want and then I'll allocate the time suitably for you and...'

Case 3 - Marianne
Quote 1

Prior to this section of the transcript, Marianne described a situation where the acting headteacher, who had covered her maternity leave, had caused numerous power struggles amongst the staff.

She's not here now although actually she is coming back in September. It was NAME.

Interviewer: Tell me more.

At the moment we're going to restructure our key stage two and the leadership. We are going to take the current assistant head, and current year 5/6 teacher. He is going to be taken out of the class, we've appointed a new 5/6 teacher, which is NAME. He will teach mornings and in the afternoon he's going to do leadership things.

Interviewer: So, your assistant head is going to come out and only do mornings…

… teaching…

Interviewer:… So, NAME…….

Yes, she'll be back as a class teacher.

Interviewer: That's going to be very interesting.

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Well, she's not been here for three years and it's her choice.

Interviewer: How do you think the staff will respond to that?

Well, as I only appointed her yesterday, I haven't told them yet. So we've got a staff meeting this afternoon, when I will drop the bombshell that she is returning, but she's not returning with the same capacity that she was when she left and she's learnt a lot since she's been away.

Quote 2

The assistant head has been on long-term sick, he was off for 4 1/2 months, this was the autumn term, that I was left by myself and we couldn't recruit even for supplies to take the class. It was just totally horrendous, honestly. I, myself was very unwell as well, which then meant that within the school, another member of staff is on maternity leave, so I'd got my assistant head on long-term sick, an NQT, two supply teachers taking the two classes, the reception/year one and 5/6 so that left poor old NAME who is a reception teacher, who never ever wanted leadership. So, unfortunately poor NAME had to step up and be like a sounding board and do all the bits that, not all of the leadership bits, but certain things in leadership that, over half term. That wasn't advantageous because that's not what she wanted, she was actually very good, she was very good.

Interviewer: You were lucky she agreed to.

Well, we didn't really have much choice. She didn't have much choice because actually there was no one else who was going to do it. She had to be in charge of the school when I wasn't here. Someone had to be in charge and actually she was the only member of staff left, so it was sort of like leadership by default really.

Comparing and contrasting with each case for participation in change processes

Fred is quite clear that those whom he perceived not to be team players in his sense of the term, were manoeuvred out of the setting. He is very clear that he achieved this through making their positions 'uncomfortable'. He does not appear to have felt

any need to engage with these staff members; the solution is not participation, but removal. The second quote potentially suggests that Fred finds participatory practices challenging, as he would prefer to do things himself rather than delegate. He is self aware of his actions and motivations. Comparing Fred to Liz, she also describes decision-making that has no participatory dimension. The first time her team know about her decision to change the allocation of HLTAs is when they meet with her individually to discuss their TA requirements.

Liz is also self aware that she did not engage in participatory practices, but in fairness to Liz, she identifies that this might have been unusual in her behaviour, indicating she might hold discussions that involve others in different situations, but did not provide any examples in her interview. It is also questionable as to why she felt that she could not engage in participatory practices on this occasion.

Finally, Marianne is also self aware of the impact that is likely because she has employed someone who had previously caused great difficulties within the school. Her actions could indeed be perceived to be self destructive for her school. Furthermore, the second quote reveals that she does not appear to value participatory practices in decision-making. She decides what is happening in her school and in both quotes the impact on staff of her decisions seems unimportant. She assumes that staff will accept the inevitable, like the teacher who was given no choice, but to step into a leadership role.

Clearly, they are similarities in each case; headteacher self-awareness of their strategies and lack of concern regarding the impact on staff of their decisions not to engage in participatory practices.

Comparing and contrasting with the literature
It could be argued that these three headteachers disagree with Somech's (2010:175) position in which he states, 'scholars and practitioners often conclude that the problems facing schools are too great for any one person to solve alone.' On the contrary, they appear to suggest that they are quite happy to be taking on sole responsibility for solving all their schools' problems single handed, without any form of participation from their stakeholders. The headteachers in these cases appear to ignore the impact on their staff resulting from their decisions to not adopt participatory practices. This attitude is in striking contrast to the literature, which identifies the very positive outcomes from engagement with PDM (Taylor & Tashakkori, 1997 and Somech, 2002).

An important factor to reflect on at this point in the analysis is that the research only gathered the headteachers' perspectives. Would their stakeholders view their position on PDM in the same way? This is impossible to answer within the scope of this piece of research. There is very clear evidence of how headteachers use and apply micro-politics, as well as the strategies that they employ; the pursuit of their interests, the embodiment of power and the degree of trust are all very prominent features in these interviews.

6.3 Low degree of participation

This theme is characterised by there being low levels of participation for the stakeholders in the school, where fundamentally changes are described and the reasons are explained, but this is the extent of the participation. The stakeholders receive information, but are not provided with opportunities in which they can respond, challenge or impact on the decision-making process.

There are three headteachers of small primary schools that are positioned within this theme which will now be presented. Case one provided rich data around this theme hence, three quotes are presented to fully explore this theme within the school.

Case 1 - Sara
Quote 1

> Governors had told them there would be changes and it would be
> a very different leadership role than the one they had been used to.
> So I think there was some sort of trepidation from everybody.
>
> Interviewer: What sort of changes did they say were likely then?
>
> Expectations, standards; they were told that it wouldn't be the sort
> of comfortable position that they had been in, complacent and...

Quote 2

> I didn't receive any overt hostility, but in the first year, it was the
> summer sports day (it was the Olympic year), so I had suggested
> we did a completely different sports day than the normal one we
> would have; and made a suggestion that we sort of have some
> round robin, semi-competitive theme because I had heard from a
> number of parents that their children hated sports day, hated the
> competitive element. So, I felt we could do both things. We would

have these round robin games, but also then have some competitive things. It was, 'we don't do it like that, we've never done it like that' type of attitude. There was some sort of partial thing for it, but we went ahead with it and that was one of the things that the TA told me at some later time that they hoped that it would fall flat.

Interviewer: What did they hope to achieve by you failing?

That they were right and I was wrong.

Quote 3

There are a couple of members of staff who, there's an element of, I think, people that don't like to be directed; a couple of staff who don't like to be tasked because they have been used to making their own decisions, going their own sweet way, find it difficult when actually, 'no, it's going to be this way.'

I decided that assemblies would be first thing in the morning, 10 minutes and then the day gets started. Now, that meant that, because when it had been before playtime, those people who were on duty then had a break during the assembly time. It then meant that people would not have breaks if they were on duty. I did some research about what other schools do and found out that actually at many schools if it's your duty day, then you don't have a break. So I felt that I was in a fairly strong position, you know for that kind of backlash.

Interviewer: Did you expect a backlash then?

Yes, because staff were, it was something they had been used to, something they felt was being taken away from them.

Case 2 - Lily
Quote 1

I don't really feel I have a management structure at the moment and whilst I'm very courteous and I make sure that I have conversations. I have conversations with other people about senior leadership or bounce ideas or whatever. It does feel more, up until now, it has been a case of trying to push this person into the place that they need to

be, but since the change is happening, basically I'm doing a courtesy that, 'you need to know x, you need to know y'.

Quote 2

I was appointed as acting head. The school at that point had 33 children and in September was going up to 42, so there was already that beginning of the rise in numbers and the school was split into two classes and the previous head had worked a third class for four mornings a week, even with 33 children and lower. I was told very clearly that that this wasn't a teaching headship, but I'd need to do the odd bit of supply, if you like, to step in and boost to work, but this was not a teaching headship. So, that's what I came into and the school for the first time in some time, was going to 2 classes and so that was a big challenge for both of those teachers, although albeit they were, one had been here about a year and NAME had been here a long time and I remember very clearly speaking to NAME in the staff room. Her whole demeanour was not quite as warm, let's put it that way, and she made the point that she was teaching from foundation through to year two and I said, 'that's quite a challenge, what do you need? what support do you need?' and she got very cross and was very defensive and said, 'I don't really need any, I've done it all before' but that set the tone. I always say, 'so what do you need? or how can this be better? how can we change this?' and that's been the way to manage her basically because it feels as though that's the way through. We address it.

Case 3 - Caroline

How I went about it was that I explained to the staff at the very rare occasion where we have an inset day, this was in the Easter, that from September we would no longer be doing this [making yearbooks]and the first thing was, 'You'll have to inform the parents.' They were very concerned about that. And then building that culture during the term. We did a lot of work in staff meetings, on presentation, getting a new presentation policy together, so that we were all set to go in September, when all the lovely books were ordered. The children knew and the parents were informed in the July and reminded in the September that this wouldn't be happening and then at the first parents' evening, which was the October, we had the books there so parents could see that now

children were doing work in the books. I wasn't here at the end
of the year, but I don't think there was any flack from parents
because I think it became history; but I know the committee of
the governors that deal with this sort of thing. The majority of
them were absolutely for it because they could see what a waste of
time it was; but the parents who were on that committee were very
saddened because they loved these books, but, you know, then we
had Ofsted, I mean you couldn't not have work to show for them.

**Comparing and contrasting with each case for participation
in changes processes**

Sara's interview provided a fascinating insight into her experiences in terms of
participatory practices. She does find herself facing a school that was not necessarily
in a good place to receive her new leadership, which quote one illustrates. The
governing body's decision to inform staff that things were going to change probably
in a way that would be perceived as a threat to the way that the school had been
operating previously denied her the opportunity to set her tone. At the same time,
Sara presents a view that she had already decided that the staff were 'comfortable and
complacent'. It could be argued that the lack of participation is a two way process
here; Sara is determined to make the changes she sees as necessary; combine this with
her perception that she believes staff will oppose her, and it could lead her to question
why she should bother to attempt high levels participation. Similarly, the staff have
already decided that they will not like/approve of any changes that she makes and
are waiting for them to fail, so what is the point of them attempting a higher degree
of participation.

Quote one sets the scene for the degree of low participation in this school. Quote
two provides an example of the low degree of participation, with quote three adding
to the picture of Sara's management of the decision-making process. She views her
role as directing staff, as opposed to working with. This links very much to research
question three around the use and application of micro-politics and heavily links to
aspects of trust. The three quotes from Sara paint a picture of a school that is not
operating effectively because of the degree of conflict, mistrust and low levels of
participation in decision-making.

Lily portrays a situation where she 'bounces' ideas with staff and is 'courteous'; but
the underlying message is that she will tell people what is happening. That is the
extent to which she is willing to invoke participatory practices, but she is only doing
this to be polite; there is is no value placed on this. She is describing inheriting a

senior teacher who is not, in her opinion, up to the role; hence she is 'pushing this person' into the place she believes she should be. The change she refers to is that the member of staff in question is leaving the school. She goes on to describe how she managed this person. Having found her offers of help only offended, one has to wonder why she continued with the strategy. The strategy is another example of low level of participatory practices because the headteacher is telling the staff member what is happening and the offers of support confirm that you will do this, your input is not required.

There is a close similarity with case one because both the heads and the staff have already decided their 'positions' with regard to each other; 'things will have to change' versus 'I will not like your change no matter what it is' and this leads to the situation where the low level of participation becomes entrenched from both parties. The purpose of participation and the value it can bring are completely lost.

Caroline's situation is interesting because she describes quite a lengthy process of informing stakeholders about change and engages with a wider range of stakeholders than can be seen in cases one and two. For her, she needed to inform staff, parents, pupils and governors. She does clearly explain her rationale for the change, takes her time over the information sharing period and launches into the the new school year. Whilst this is a low level of participation because it was non-negotiable and no stakeholders were involved in the decision-making process, she was ultimately successful because of the clarity of her rationale and the time taken to allow stakeholders to think about and come to accept the change. Caroline's description is markedly different from cases one and two because, with her, there is a sense that she is mindful of the feelings of her stakeholders and wants them to understand and go with this in a genuine way. She does not present a situation where positions are entrenched or in anticipation of failure. She is not informing her stakeholders to be polite, but in a carefully thought out manner so that they are enlightened as to why the change is necessary for the benefit of the school; to be effective the school must meet Ofsted thresholds and this is the basis of her argument.

Comparing and contrasting with the literature

Cases one and two are prime examples of headteachers not recognising the benefits of PDM and, particularly, the enhancement of teacher motivation (Taylor & Tashakkori, 1997). In both cases, there is inferred evidence of teacher dissatisfaction and, in case one, the staff are actively rooting for failure, surely the polar opposite of the kind of positive 'sign up' that is described by Taylor and Tashakkori in 1997. They provide evidence of how such low levels of participation become entrenched

and ultimately lead to negative impacts on school effectiveness. By contrast, case three, whilst still operating a low level of PDM, does manage to effectively engage the stakeholders via the quality of explanation and time used to introduce the change and this method demonstrates exactly what Taylor and Tashakkori (1997) were finding.

Clearly, none of these cases actually allow, groups or collectives to secure their interests (Somech, 2010), but they do allow the headteacher to do exactly that. There are no opportunities for any of the stakeholders in these cases to contribute through 'self determined choices' (Somech, 2010).

6.4 Moderate degree of participation

The third theme is characterised by there being moderate levels of participation for the stakeholders in the school. In this theme, consultation with stakeholders takes place. The rationale for changes is explained, options may be proposed or sought and the stakeholders have an opportunity to respond and their responses have the potential to alter the decision. There are four headteachers of small primary schools that are positioned within this theme, which will now be presented.

Case 1 - Diane

> When I started here really, it was very much a one man band. The headteacher took everything in, made all the decisions that were to do with strategy and didn't really share it with anybody. So, I think none of the staff, apart from the year 5/6 taecher, would have had any idea about progress or about Raise-online, or CVAs or any of those things because they were a head's job and the year 6 teacher, if she nagged, got to hear of it and likewise SATS were the year 6 teacher's job. So, there wasn't a feeling that we're all in this together. There were lots and lots of discussions, as I understand it, talking to colleagues who were here at the time, there were lots and lots of discussions with staff about very day-to-day things. There would be an hour long staff meeting about where to sit for the carol concert and whether we were going to have sweatshirts on or off, but strategically, no. So, there was no distributed leadership. There was somebody with a management point for literacy. They didn't really lead literacy, but just got it because they had been here a long time. So, it needed to change and it needed to change quickly. So, that's why it changed, I had to have it change. It is not my style to sit and make the decisions, you've got to if you are going to have

an impact. It's no good me sitting here thinking that would be lovely. When I got here it was when the frameworks still existed, so I said, 'Well, you're doing the new frameworks?' Staff said, ' Oh, we tried them, but the staff didn't like them.' I thought they're here to drive standards forward, not for the staff to like or dislike. They're here to to drive that forward, those sort of things are my job, to get the curriculum to be more dynamic, to get staff to have an understanding that what you did in key stage 1 impacts on key stage 2 and that you know that it's everyone job to get the kids to level 5 that was everybody's job.

Case 2 - Barbara

The current leadership structure is head and senior teacher and very, very recently, within the last year, we've been trialling a team approach to curriculum responsibility.

Case 3 - Ellie

From my point of view, I need to make sure that everything is right before I start telling people, because, if it's staff changes, people respond to changes in different ways. There is no point in telling people about a proposed change if it hasn't been thought through, if there is no valid reasons for doing it either. We've talked about changing in the past, there's going to be some change next year. Obviously I'm not going to be here, but one of the things I have promised NAME, who is coming, is that I will sort the staffing out for her so she comes into a staff that's set. So, there will be some changes. They are going to be some classroom changes, they'll be some age group changes because again things are happening. So, for example, the staff are beginning to ask questions about next year and I've got a plan in my head, plan B, plan C and I shall probably end up going with plan D so, there is no point in me telling people what A, B and C are until I know exactly what's going to happen because then you end up dealing with change twice over. That's just not worth it. It's making sure that you, as the manager, know exactly what's going to happen and that you know why you are doing it, what you're doing, so when you do deliver the news. People are going to ask questions and you have to be able to have solid answers as to why you are doing it, justifiable answers as well, not just because you felt like it.

Case 4 - Laura

To say that we have senior leadership team meetings is a little bit daft because the senior leadership team is practically the entire staff. We tend to have our staff meetings and then I will meet with specific individuals, or one or two for us to look at certain things, but because there aren't that many staff, you tend to do a lot more together. You make a lot more decisions together. However, that in itself has difficulties in getting us all together in one place. I've got two part-time staff, no three part-time staff, because you know sometimes it's kind of tricky with us all here in order to make those decisions; but I do think one of the things is that the team ethos is much better. There is a much better team ethos in a smaller school. I'm a very pro-good communication person. I think that it's important that, obviously there are need to know principles, and there are some things people don't need to know and they don't need to be involved in certain decisions. It is important on a day-to-day basis that we know what's going on, we all know who's coming into school, we all know what, how we expect things to happen and therefore it's important that those messages are delivered.

I also tried very hard to ensure that when decisions need to be made, people have had the opportunity to have their say, which I think, sometimes is easier in a small school than possibly in a big school. It also breeds a kind of family ethos, I suppose. I gave a lot my own personal time to them, to help them and so on and so forth, so, I think that they felt it was quite a reciprocal kind of relationship.

I think one of my strengths is my openness to communicating with staff. My wanting to ensure that it is a team effort and that everybody feels involved. My weakness, which, in some respects, becomes a bit of a disadvantage is that, the sort of person that I am, I find it very hard when not everybody's like that (laughter) and so, sometimes I have to do work really hard in my head to kind of back myself up sometimes and to think, 'right, okay, see it from their point of view, to see it from their side'.

Comparing and contrasting with each case for participation in changes processes

Diane's quote provides an interesting position because she recognises that she inherits a situation that had seemingly high levels of participation in some areas of decision-making that she identifies as being non strategic, and the headteacher was a 'one man band' in terms of the strategic decision making to the extent of the exclusion of stakeholders. She states that this is not her style, but goes on to give an example of change which was non-negotiable (using the frameworks) which did not involve consultation. She is quite clear in her mind that the purpose of the change is to drive up standards (i.e. improve effectiveness) and not about whether staff like the change. There is a blurriness about her location within this theme because it does not appear on the the surface that her way is any more participatory than her predecessor, however, she is trying to move a staff from an extreme position. Her participatory ambition is for her staff to realise that they are not operating as islands within the school. Each and every teacher has a responsibility in terms of pupil outcomes, not just the year 2 and 6 teachers. She needs the staff to recognise that they are collectively engaged in their pupils' education and once this key connection is understood and made, then her staff will be in a position to engage in participatory practices which move beyond the day-to-day organisation to the long term strategic view.

Barbara's staff have reached this point of collective responsibility and this had led to them being in a position to consult and then trial a team approach to curriculum responsibility. Diane's staff are nowhere near this position yet.

Ellie sets out her personal approach to participatory practices, which begin with the importance of her being extremely clear about what she is proposing and why, so that she is in a position to clearly state her case, offer options and answer questions. Ellie is setting out options for consultation rather than it being an open-ended situation. Like Diane, Ellie is clear that any changes should not be about personal agendas, but be absolutely tied to the notion of school improvement and effectiveness.

Laura also takes a very personal approach to participatory practices and she too recognises the absolutely key role of communication in developing these practices. She identifies that she believes in small schools it is easier to function at this moderate level because there are so few people. She has paid attention to developing relationships, being open and acknowledging the necessity of providing opportunities for stakeholders to voice their concerns. What contrasts markedly with the other cases in this theme is Laura's self awareness and determination to view decision-making from other perspectives - the ability to empathise and potentially respond to

objections to change because she has made the effort to understand how the objector is feeling about the proposed change.

Comparing and contrasting with the literature

In examining each case and comparing them to the findings of Taylor & Tashakkori (1997) and Somech (2002), there is a clear shift from themes one and two. In theme three, it is particularly clear from Ellie and Laura that they are cognisant of staff well-being and motivation being positively impacted upon by increasing levels of participation in decision-making processes. Whilst Diane and Barbara are not as explicit in their quotes about this, their pursuit of participatory practices is most probably driven by the knowledge that increasing the level of participation will increase teacher motivation.

Somech (2010) identified the growth in levels of participation as linked to the number of challenges facing schools, too many for one person alone. The four cases in this theme seem to reflect this finding. Diane is moving towards being able to do this, Barbara has found a means of tackling the many demands of curriculum leadership through a team model. Ellie seeks to provide options for consultation to help her navigate the decision-making process and Laura identifies those decisions that really benefit from having everyone's involvement to ensure that the right choice for the school is made. This does not mean that the headteachers are abdicating their decision making responsibilities, merely that they know when it is opportune to seek answers/solutions from a wider audience.

Heler, Pusic, Strauss and Wilpert 's sliding scale (1998:42) of participation can be seen to now start to shift towards the more comprehensive end of the scale, with stakeholders beginning to have access to some self-determined choices, albeit from a range of presented options in some cases; although Diane still has some way to go with this, compared to the other schools in this theme.

Moving through the themes it is also possible to see headteachers driven by decision-making processes that are increasingly school improvement focused, as opposed to structural or based on personal agenda, i.e. Fred's removal of certain staff that he perceived were not team players.

6.5 High level of participation

The final theme is characterised by high levels of participation for the stakeholders in the school. There is full consultation, stakeholders are fully engaged with the creation of solutions/options and they have the ability to not only respond to proposals, but

they can impact on the outcome of the consultation. There are four headteachers of small primary schools that are positioned within this theme, which will now be presented.

Case 1 - Fiona

> I think everybody has to be on board,. Two years ago, we introduced assertive mentoring. We have had our Ofsted, it had gone better than 2012. Just prior to that, we had been on this course, my deputy and I, on assertive mentoring and we thought that it could work for us. So, we came back and instead of just saying, 'Right, this what we are going to do' we had parent meetings, we had meetings with everybody, including the midday supervisors. We talked to the children and and we said, 'This is what we like, what do you think?' and everybody was on board and because of that it worked.
>
> Whereas other things we've tried to do, like role-play corners for example, I went to one school where they had a role-play corner in every room up to year six and we tried to put that in because they were all with it, they weren't all with it, they didn't see the belief in it and it didn't work. So, we got it going in a few classes; some people use it really regularly and could see, but there were some people who just couldn't see the value of it. So, I think you have to see that value, you have to all be, ' Yes, this is what we want'. Over the last year, we have all wanted success, we have all wanted to push and get it right and it's ended up well. We've all had that same dream because we were determined not to get it wrong again (laugh).

Case 2 - Alexa

> The culture amongst the staff, who work very closely as a team, and we place great value on that. We look after each other's well-being, as well as our professional lives. I like to think it's a very friendly team to work in. In the staffroom, there is a table, a hexagonal table, where everyone sits and has lunch together. Lots of tea is drunk and lots of cake is eaten.
>
> I think it is just that sort of thing [cliques], which I'm sure happens in bigger schools. So, if you are talking about past pupils, if you haven't been there very long, you're not able to share in the hysteria about the time somebody ate a spider, or whatever it was

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(laughter), but we are very welcoming. Trainees, we have every year, with very very few exceptions, always comment on how much they are made to feel welcome here. We are always looking out for theatre trips and it's a good culture because if you don't want go on the theatre trip there's no 'them and us'. If you want things to go up in the staff room and if you want to, you can go and if you don't want to go, it's fine.

Case 3 - Ann

I arrived in January 1998. For the first two terms I was teaching for two days in the 5/6 class and juggling that with my headship. Then five weeks into the autumn term of that first year of headship, overnight my deputy was taken off to a school that was in difficulty and the structure changed in that the LA basically paid for the privilege of having my deputy to keep me out of the classroom. During the time the deputy was at the other school, we restructured here. Two of my colleagues became senior teachers with an allowance and very, very quickly they realised and we realised as a staff team that we liked that way of working. Because of how we work at NAME we were cutting out the middleman. We were meeting as a staff team; this is how small schools work and that deputy head didn't ever return here. She went to the other school and over, it was over a long period, probably about 16, 18 months, but she eventually got the substantive post and we've never ever considered going back to head and deputy.

Distributed leadership in terms of I don't want to know every little bit of decision-making. I'm usually kept in the loop because then I can support. I'll give you a couple of examples. If we get a contact from somebody who would like to meet with the headteacher about inclusion matters, I will hand that over to my inclusion coordinator. She knows absolutely that I'm happy to be part of an initial meeting and I'll make sure the person who's coming in knows there is no hidden agenda. It's not that I'm saying, ' oh, yeah, talk to her, and then I'll tell you what's really happening'. I hand it over, but my inclusion coordinator knows I'm right there, she can call me in. Interestingly, my inclusion coordinator, who was in place when you did the other the questionnaire, who has now retired, she retired a year ago, she said that, when we would have our CPD meetings,

she absolutely loved the fact that I had that trust in her and gave
her that rein to go off and do and that is, that is how we work. I also
have a leadership team that are very loyal, very committed.They
are very open, we laugh like boxers together, we cry together, if we
need to, and we put our cards on the table.

Case 4 - Meghan

We listen to everybody and if it's a good suggestion then it will be
carried forward, if it is not such a helpful suggestion then maybe
it won't.

Get everybody on board. At a meeting where you've got all your
stakeholders there, whether it be teachers or teaching assistants or
whatever, make them part of process, as we do for our strategic
vision with the governors and assistant head and whatever. Try
and get them on board and make them feel part of the process
and receptive.

**Comparing and contrasting with each case for participation
in changes processes**

Fiona gives two great examples that illustrate why she is situated in this theme. When
talking about Assertive Mentoring and introducing it into school, the process begins
not with herself, but with her and her deputy. They decide they want to think about
introducing it and do not have a range of options from which people chose. They
took an open approach that they like it and what do others think of it as opposed
to we are doing this, they say that we are interested in this and what do you think.
From this point, they fully engage in a high level of participatory practices to evaluate
whether everybody else thinks it would be a good idea for their school and arrive at
the decision that it would, collectively and they made a success of it because they
reached nirvana; everyone was on board with the change. In her second example, the
introduction of another new idea fails because she does not use the same high level of
participation. She demonstrates a high degree of self awareness of this process and
her role within it.

Alexa does not a provide clear example like Fiona; however she talks about her school
culture and its openness to collective activity, the fluidity of social groups within the
school and the stability that this clearly brings as she has not made any changes to her
leadership structure since arriving. This has enabled an effective school to flourish.
Ann embraces high levels of participation in her school, from decisions around the
leadership structure in her first example, to who is involved with specific duties around

school. When she as headteacher is not best placed to deal with an issue, other staff can deal with it. This requires high degrees of trust, which she identifies, along with a dedication to the development of relationships, equity and the celebration of the team. Furthermore, she acknowledges the long term success of this high level of participation in the continuation of good Ofsted outcomes, stable staff and a motivated, self aware team, who are deeply committed to the school and each other.

Meghan is emphatic about the need for all her stakeholders to have a role in the decision- making process. For her, participatory practices are not lip service, she truly acknowledges that for success, everyone needs to feel that he or she have been involved. The bottom line is that if someone makes a good suggestion then it will be carried forward. That is about as participatory as it gets.

There are similarities in the first three cases, where the quality of the relationships between the stakeholders is seen as critical. There are vivid descriptions, particularly about how their teams view each other, what forms the relationships take and how they bond. Ann takes the most personal interest in her staff's development and relationships, and refers specifically to trust. Meghan and Fiona mention the assessment of whether ideas are good or not for school improvement as part of the high level of participation, where the idea could come from any stakeholder. This illustrates one of the reasons why they are situated in theme four not three.

Comparing and contrasting with the literature
Each of the cases put forward in theme four are embodiments of the high levels of participation that are described by Heler, Pusic, Strauss and Wilpert (1998:42) whereby individuals in these schools are able to secure their interests (in all cases absolutely linked to school improvement, not personal agendas) and are invested in the change process through the suggestion of ideas to the discussion of the validity and applicability of the ideas and arrive at self determined choices as a team through the process. A clear picture of what happened when this was not applied, thanks to Fiona, illustrates the impact of failing to get a high level of participation in the decision-making process.

The impact on teacher motivation of employing high levels of participation (Taylor & Tashakkori, 1997) can also been seen in action in three of these cases. Where it is a core and embedded practice, staff are seen to be highly motivated and genuinely 'signed up' to the school, its success, and their well-being is also highly prized by the headteachers.

In terms of the four central properties (Dachler and Wilpert, 1978 and McCaffrey, Faerman, and Hart, 1995), these schools reflect the third and fourth properties with headteachers very clear about not only ensuring that all stakeholders understands proposed change, but also recognise their role in bringing this about; and having had the chance to question and challenge, they are ready to embrace the change because the process has allowed them to reach the 'sign up' stage.

6.6 Summary

The table below summarises the placement of the headteachers by degree of participation, but the research question was how do these processes and practices promote effective schools, not just to identify the level of participation.

Table 32: Placement by degree of participation

No degree of participation	Low degree of participation	Moderate degree of participation	High degree of participation
Susan	Sara	Diane	Fiona
Marianne	Lily	Barbara	Alexa
Fred	Caroline	Ellie	Ann
		Laura	Meghan

To fully answer the research question, this must be cross-referenced with whether these schools are effective. It has already been established in answering research question one, all schools bar three are deemed to be good by Ofsted. Susan's school is in the 'no participation' category, Fiona is in the 'high participation' category and Ellie is moderate. So, it would appear that in this instance, degree of participation cannot be a reliable measure of effectiveness if applying an Ofsted criteria of good. This indicates a need for further research because the degree of participation in a school must arguably have an impact on effectiveness in one form or another. Another way of looking at these findings might be to say that perhaps the schools with high degrees of participation could be expected to be outstanding, so another angle of further research could be to explore why those school are not yet outstanding. There might, however, be a correlation between the degree of participation and the use and application of micro-politics.

7.0 What new theories of leadership structures emerge?

7.1 Models of leadership structures in small primary schools

In comparing and contrasting the literature and the findings, it was identified that there was nothing available that provided detailed models of leadership structures that were solely designed for small primary school settings. From this research, six main structures emerge;

- Headteacher and deputy Headteacher,

- Headteacher and assistant Headteacher,

- Headteacher, assistant headteacher and a variety of subject or phase leaders

- Headteacher and senior Headteacher,

- Headteacher with a variety of subject or phase leaders and

- Headteacher, senior teacher and office administrator.

The findings offer models of potential small school primary leadership structures for headteachers to explore, a starting point for those with a lack of prior experience in small schools, those new to headship; models that would have been of critical importance to me as I began my journey. The key new finding, an addition to the field of knowledge, is the sixth structure and the inclusion of administrative personnel. Although there was evidence of an office administrator in one structure identified in Bush et al.'s study (2012) - this school was so much larger than the schools that fit into a small school definition and consisted of other members - it does not really stand up as a model that would be workable in a small school.

7.2 Processes and practices of participation

A four step model emerged from the data analysis, building upon the four central properties of PDM (Dachler and Wilpert (1978) and McCaffrey, Faerman, and Hart (1995), but developed in response to a lack of distinction between the four properties. The four properties become four models of participation.

In model one, discussion takes place, but it is only one way. Stakeholders are informed that there is going to be change, but no explanation is provided or opportunity to

respond or ask questions. In model two, discussion takes place and now it is a two-way conversation, which allows stakeholders to come to understanding through discussion. In model three, discussion takes place around change options. Dialogue takes place between all parties and stakeholders have the opportunity to discuss, understand and respond to those options. In model four, the dialogue is fully participatory. There is an open forum for the discussion of change, understanding to develop, chances to respond are embedded in this. Decision-making is fully participatory and negotiated, leading to sign-up commitment from all stakeholders. Each model has an additional dimension that builds upon the previous model and this can be seen in the diagram below.
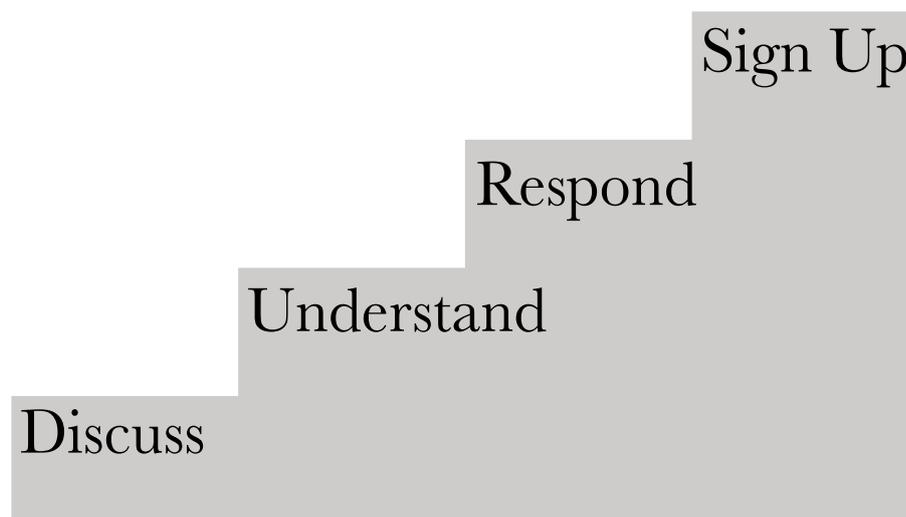
Figure: 2: Model of participation

The data indicates that these are not just four absolute positions, but that they are more like a sliding scale, moving from the extreme of no participation through to high participation at the opposite end. The degree of participatory processes and practices in use on its own was not enough to indicate effectiveness in the school.

7.3 Power and trust

Power dynamics were analysed using the power 'over, through and with' framework from Blase and Anderson (1995) and a review of the evidence suggests that rather than the three absolute of 'power over', 'power through' and 'power with', perhaps they too sit on a sliding scale, with 'power over' at one end and 'power with' at the other, sitting upon a continuum. Furthermore, the use of a particular power model can be seen to be a reflection of the degree of trust operating within a school. The degree of power/trust in use on its own was not enough to indicate effectiveness in the school.

7.4 Working in combination; participation and trust

In each school, the headteacher was operating somewhere along the degrees of participation continuum and somewhere along the trust continuum. By taking the two and merging them, a power and trust/participation matrix emerges and potentially it is possible to locate a headteacher's position in relation to both power and participation as a means to explore effectiveness.

Degrees of Participation

High Degree

Degrees of Trust

Low Degree   High Degree

Low Degree
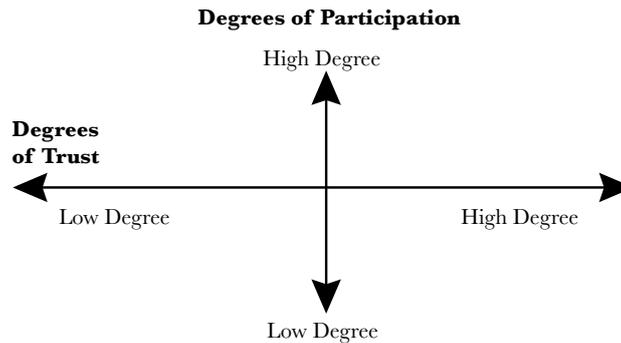
Figure 3: Power and trust/participation matrix

This new theory of locating a headteacher's participatory decision-making, has the potential to help headteachers understand this process and impact on outcomes in developing their leadership structures. The next stage is to test this theory by positioning the schools on the matrix. The diagram to the right identifies each school and where the evidence suggests they are located. Each quadrant is presented with a brief summary of the schools within that quadrant compared to the others schools within the quadrant.

High Degree

Ann

Ellie

Meghan

Fiona

Laura

Alexa

Diane

Barbara

Low Degree   High Degree

Sara   Caroline

Liz

Lily

Fred

Degrees of Participation

Susan   Marianne

Degrees of Trust   Low Degree
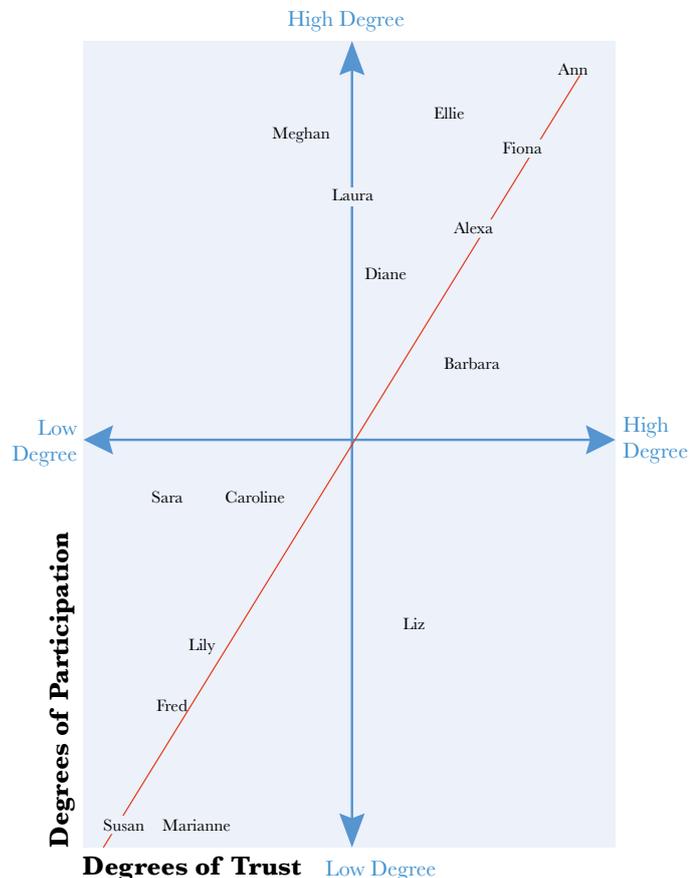
Figure 4: Location of school on a power and trust/participation matrix

7.4.1 Low levels of participation and low levels of trust

There are six schools located within this quadrant. Susan's school is located in the bottom left of this quadrant, indicating very low levels of trust and very low levels of participation. There is no other possible placement of this school based on the evidence. The school is going through a process that is being done to them, they are not active in the participatory process in any way, shape or form, which was established in research question two. Trust is also clearly at its lowest point because the acadamisation process itself implies that the current school team are not trusted to bring about the necessary changes to the school to improve its outcomes. That said, prior to this process, Susan provides evidence that she does operate a 'power with' model, but this is currently not the case. It is important to emphasis that this is the imposition of external agency.

Fred and Marianne's schools are also located in a very similar position because there is no evidence of participatory practices or process, and both operate in a low trust, 'power over' model, but both are in this position of their own choosing rather than through external forces.

Caroline's position is interesting because she has a low degree of trust in part due to her 'acting headteacher' status and powerful individuals who are preventing movement to a 'power through' model. She also has low participation, again probably due to her status and decision-making being carried out by her because of the nature of the short term situation.

Lily has some low levels of participation, but displays quite a strong 'power over' model. Like Caroline, however, it is not so much her behaviour that causes this model, but that of a powerful individual. Both show movement towards a 'power through' model. Sara has a self fulfiling prophecy situation which has led her to low levels of trust and low levels of participation.

7.4.2 High levels of participation and low levels of trust

There is one school located within this quadrant. Meghan is an anomaly because it would seem to be exceptionally difficult to have high participation alongside low levels of trust, as the two things appear to be co-dependent. The reason for this anomaly is due to the trust issue being not with the headteacher, but with the assistant headteacher. Meghan is operating with a high degree of participation, but she is stuck in a power model not of her making and with no movement away from this model possible until the assistant headteacher retires.

7.4.3 High levels of participation and high levels of trust

There are seven schools located within this quadrant. Ann is situated in the top right of this quadrant, with a long established team of staff, with whom she operates a totally 'power with' model, in combination with very high levels of participation for all.

Fiona, Alexa and Laura are all placed in close proximity. All three show signs of movement towards greater degrees of 'power with'. Laura, in particular, is growing trust, but there is a personal tension between her drive to support people having a 'joint say' and her belief that sometimes she will just do something better than anyone else. As a counterweight, she says that she is also very aware of the amount of work that others can feasibly take on. Thus to relief them, she takes on more herself. There is evidence that she is trying to grow people and support them so that they will trust in themselves in order that they can get on with things without her constant support, while recognising that she trusts them.

Diane is as close to operating moderately on both continuums as any other headteacher - a middle of the road, whilst Barbara is moving from moderate to higher levels of trust, and has moderate levels of participation. Ellie has a high degree of trust, but she is working on increasing her participatory practices and processes. This is dogged, however, by constantly changing staff which limits her ability to do this as she would like.

7.4.4 Low levels of participation and high levels of trust

Liz is located in this quadrant and is somewhat of an anomaly because, on the one hand, evidence supports a low degree of participation when exploring how she made changes she then contradicts this by displaying a 'power with' model in terms of empowerment. It is very difficult to know exactly where to place her on the matrix because of this contradiction. There is a question around whether these two things can operate in tandem and whether or not Liz believes that she is empowering and working in this model and whether her staff would concur with that judgement.

7.4.5 An emerging continuum

In testing the theory, by locating the schools on the matrix, it would appear that the theory holds up to scrutiny. It is not an absolute, as anomalies appear and deserve further study to explore their seemingly contradictory placements.

A bisecting line connects the two extremes. In Ann's school, she used a high degree of participation, employing strategies and mechanisms that were truly two way in

nature, placing her in the upper right quadrant. By contrast, Susan's school going into acadamisation showed a low degree of participation and there was an extreme case of 'power over' and zero trust, placing them in the lower left quadrant. In answering the question as to school effectiveness, it would appear that the combination of high trust ('power with') with a high degree of participation suggests an effective school. A school that is not just effective in terms of Ofsted outcomes, but also in terms of a happy, supportive team of staff who have one single, united goal to make their school the very best it can be. Conversely, a school which is operating with no to low participation, in a strongly 'power over' model, suggests an ineffective school in terms of Ofsted rating and in terms of staff who are disenfranchised, unmotivated and have no engagement with the vision.

Using the literature and the findings, a new theory has been generated; a new theory of participation and trust in the school improvement and change process to increase school effectiveness and their importance is more significant than the impact of the leadership structure.

8.0 Conclusions

This study addressed the professional challenge facing headteachers in small primary schools, without the knowledge/experience of the context of small school leadership structures, and how they are operationalised through change strategies to improve school effectiveness. The study aimed to investigate effective small primary school leadership structures in the UK and how headteachers use a micro-political lens to scope the landscape of the inherited school, using this knowledge to inform their use of change strategies to improve school effectiveness.

The research questions ask; what type of leadership structures are effective in small primary schools, how are micro-politics understood and applied by headteachers to enable effective schools, how processes and practices of participation enable effective schools and what new theories of leadership structures emerge. Key themes from the literature include; the impact of leadership structures on school effectiveness is minimal and school effectiveness is more influenced by participatory practices and processes in combination with degree of trust exercised within school improvement strategies.

These themes form the researchframework:

- Effective leadership structures in small primary schools

- How micro-politics are understood and used by headteachers to develop effective schools

- Processes and practices of participation in developing effective schools

- New theories of effective small school leadership that emerge.

The key methodology which enabled the researcher to address the research questions involved positivist and interpretivist approaches, using a case study strategy with mixed methods. The sample is drawn from the pool of small primary schools, defined as small by having four or less classes. The research design has two phases; phase one seeks to establish existing leadership structures in the sample group and phase two is designed to gain greater insight into the leadership structures and effectiveness of the schools. Data was collected through surveys and semi-structured interviews, and analysed using descriptive statistical analysis of the quantitative data and thematic analysis of the qualitative data, taking an inductive approach. The sample is drawn forty two schools in southern England having no more than four classes. Twenty one headteachers responded to the survey and fifteen were subsequently involved in phase two.

Table 33: Compilation of data regarding leadership structures

Pseudonym	SEN	Ethnicity	EAL	FSM	Mobility	Floor standard [1]	Inherited Structure	Structure at time of survey	Structure at time of interview	Prior Experience 1 + NOR [3]	Prior Experience 2 + NOR [3]	Prior Experience 3 + NOR [3]	Date of Inspection	HT in post at time of inspection?	Overall Ofsted rating	Leadership & Management Ofsted rating	Structure at time of inspection
Diane	Average	Mostly White British	No pupils	Not included in report	Above average	N/A	HT, MP	HT, TLR, OFFICE	HT, TLR, OFFICE	HT, DHT, TLR X3 210	HT, DHT, EYFS 120 Acting HT	HT, DHT, 4 X YL 360	2011	Yes	Good	Good	HT, TLR, OFFICE
Fiona	Above average	Mostly White British	No pupils	Average	Not included in report	Met	HT, AHT	HT, AHT, NUM	HT, AHT, NUM	HT, DHT, 2 X ST 400			2014	Yes	Good	Good	HT, AHT, NUM + LIT
Sara	Above average	Mostly White British	Well below average	Very low	Not included in report	N/A	HT, KS1, KS2	HT, ST, SENCO	HT, ST PLANNED HT, AHT	HT, KS1,KS2 120	HT, DHT, EYFS 250	HT, DHT, 350	2010	No	Good	Good	HT, ST, SENCO
Barbara	Average	Mostly White British	No pupils	Average	Very low	Met	HT, DHT	HT, ST	HT, ST	HT, DHT, EYFS 180	HT, DHT, 3 X S3 350	HT, DHT, 4 X S3 400	2012	Yes	Good	Good	HT, ST
Fred	Above average	Not included in report	Not included in report	Above average	Not included in report	Too few pupils	HT, ST	HT, DHT	HT, DHT	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2 260	HT, LIT, NUM 70 First headship	HT, KS2 240	2014	Yes	Good	Good	HT, DHT
Ellie	Above average	Mostly White British	Not included in report	Below average	Above average	Not included in report	HT, NUM, LIT	CO HT, NUM	HT, LIT	HT, DHT, LIT, NUM 210	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2, EYFS 350		2014	Yes	Requires improvemelt	Requires improvement	CO HT, NUM
Laura	Above average	Mostly White British	Not included in report	Very few	Not included in report	Met	HT, AHT	HT, ST, EYFS	HT, DHT, EYFS	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2 150	HT, DHT, LIT, NUM 85	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2 300	2013	No	Good	Good	HT, EYFS, LIT, NUM
Alexa	Above average	Mostly White British	Not included in report	Well below average	Above average	Too few pupils	HT, ST	HT, ST	HT, ST	HT, 2 X AHT 195			2013	Yes	Good	Good	HT, ST
Caroline	Above average	Vast majority White British	Very few	Well below average	Average	Met	HT, LIT, NUM	HT, LIT, NUM	HT, LIT, NUM	HT, DHT, 4 X SL 600 [4]	HT, DHT, + 2 UN 200 [4]		2012	No	Good	Good	HT, LIT, NUM
Ann	Above average	Large majority White British [2]	Not included in report	Above average	Not included in report	Met	HT, DHT	HT, 3 X ST	HT, 2X TLR	HT, DHT 200			2014	Yes	Good	Good	HT, 3 X ST
Marianne	Below average	Mostly White British	No pupils	Below average	Not included in report	Met	HT	HT, AHT, INC	HT, AHT, INC, EYFS	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2 350	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2, EYFS 650	HT, AHT 200	2013	Yes	Good	Good	HT, AHT, INC +LIT
Meghan	Average	Mostly White British	Below average	Below average	Not included in report	Met	HT, AHT, LIT	HT, AHT, LIT	HT, DHT	HT, DHT, KS1 150	HT, LIT 58 Acting HT		2010	Yes	Requires improvemelt	Requires improvemelt	HT, ST
Liz	Above average	Mostly White British	No pupils	Below average	Not included in report	Met	HT	HT, ST	HT, ST PLANNED HT, AHT	HT, DHT, AHT, ST X2 450	HT, ST 210		2013	No	Good	Good	HT, AHT, LIT
Lily	Above average	Mostly White British	Not included in report	Below average	Not included in report	Too few pupils	HT/TLR	HT, ST, EYFS	HT, ST, SENCO PLANNED HT, AHT	HT, 4 X HEAD OF YEARS 360	HT, DHT, SENCO 200		2013	Yes	Good	Good	HT, ST
Susan	Above average	Not included in report	Not included in report	Below average	Not included in report	Met	HT, DHT	HT, DHT	HT, DHT	HT, DHT, KS1, KS2, EYFS, SENCO 400	2X CO KS1, KS2, EYFS, SENCO Co-head 400		2013	Yes	Inadequate	Requires improvemelt	HT, DHT

[1] Depending upon the year of inspection, the floor targets change   [2] with an above average number from Romany/gypsy backgrounds   [3] Number on roll   [4] These were the prior experiences of the headteacher who was in post at the survey stage, who then went on maternity leave   SEN - Special Educational Needs   EAL - English as an Additional Language   FSM - Free School Meals   Mobility - amount of pupil movement in and out of the school population

The key theme from the data analysis is that school leadership structures have no impact on school effectiveness. What is of critical significance, however, is scoping the landscape of the inherited school using a micro-political lens, locating the power framework and identifying the processes and practices of participation in change strategies to improve school effectiveness.

8.1 Findings regarding leadership structures

This section addresses research question one with regard to the types of leadership structure in small primary schools. In analysing the data from the survey, there is evidence of six main leadership structures in the sample.

- Headteacher and deputy Headteacher,

- Headteacher and assistant Headteacher,

- Headteacher, assistant headteacher/deputy Headteacher and a variety of subject or phase leaders

- Headteacher and senior Headteacher,

- Headteacher with a variety of subject or phase leaders,

- Headteacher and senior teacher with an office administrator.

As well as contributing this new information regarding the types of structures found in small primary schools to the field of knowledge, a key new finding, is the sixth structure, with its inclusion of an office administrator. This model does not feature in the literature. In addition to this role being added to the leadership structure, Diane described how her structure has flexibility to, 'co-opt other people into projects.' When asked how this worked in practice, she said, 'It depends what the need is really. So if we are doing something, we're looking (for example) at foundation stage we'd co-opt the foundation stage teacher....' This is a unique feature in the interviews, and one that could potentially be a very workable model for small schools to manage workload and the management of specific projects/developments. This unofficial co-opting of other school staff presents another alternative model.

So far, this is just a presentation of types of leadership structure, and the research question sought to discover effective structures. The table on the next page, as presented in chapter four, pulls together the findings around prior experiences, inherited structures and Ofsted judgements.

As demonstrated by the data in the table, it appears that there is no one perfect structure that will guarantee effective leadership, using this definition of effectiveness. Many different types of model exist and from the scope of this piece of research, it could be argued that most appear to be effective from an Ofsted perspective. What can be ascertained from the findings is that whilst there may not be a structure that is identified specifically as being the key to an effective school, the people within that structure certainly can have an impact. Perhaps more significant is the exploration of effectiveness that emerges through the trust/power and participation matrix.

The findings indicates that these headteachers have, on the whole had, very limited exposure to different types of school leadership structures. This is further supported by the fact that only two schools experienced by all of the headteachers were in the 1-120 range i.e. the size of the sample. This leads to the conclusion that the majority of the headteachers, in both the survey and interview phases, have experiences in schools that are significantly larger than the small schools in this study. Susan reflected, 'I feel that having been in big schools really all the time, I wasn't fully prepared for the leadership structure that I've had to adopt because there is no choice.' Cross-referencing this data against the participants, only three of the fifteen headteachers have experience of a school with no more than 120 pupils. This, in turn, then also implies that the majority of headteachers will have leadership structure experiences that are unlikely to be applicable in their current school because the number of staff available will be significantly smaller. This makes a direct link with the findings about patterns of change being predominantly concerned with growth.

8.2 Findings regarding scoping the inherited small primary school using a micro-political lens and locating the power framework

This section addresses research question two. In every single interview, headteachers referred to what had come before them in one form or another. They had to deal with the legacies of the past (Ball, 1987) and have the micro-political literacy to be able to analyse and formulate a way forward. The link between inheritance and micro-political literacy is made very explicit in the findings. Inheritance is as influential as the literature suggests ((Ball, 1987; Fullan, 1997; Abbott and Bush 2013 and Wallace and Huckman, 1996), but the literature does not necessarily reflect some aspects of the patterns of change associated with inheritance that were apparent in the findings.

All of the headteachers demonstrated a degree of micro-political literacy, with the vast majority operating with a high degree of dexterity. They not only understand

micro-politics, but most of them are able to access and utilise a wide range of strategies to meet their ends. Identifying the central role of micro-political literacy in the creation and development of leadership structures in small primary schools is a unique contribution to the field of knowledge. Whilst micro-politics has been widely understood within the education world, the notion of micro-political literacy is still relatively new and has not been specifically related to leadership structures. What does sit, possibly uncomfortably, is the application of those strategies in the 'power model', but that is a question for another piece of research.

Although the power framework based on Blase and Anderson's 1999 work for the analysis was extremely informative, the unique contribution to the field of knowledge emerges from the discovery that the three definitions are not finite, but in fact operate along a continuum, nor are schools in a static position on this continuum.

8.3 Findings regarding processes and practices for school improvement change strategies to deliver school effectiveness

This section addresses research question three with regard to identifying the levels of participation in small primary schools. From the PDM model that began as the analytical tool, the definitions of each stage of participation developed as a result of the analysis and findings. A clear model of four levels of participation emerged, but where a school is located in terms of participatory practices and process is not static and the four models morph from steps into a continuum.
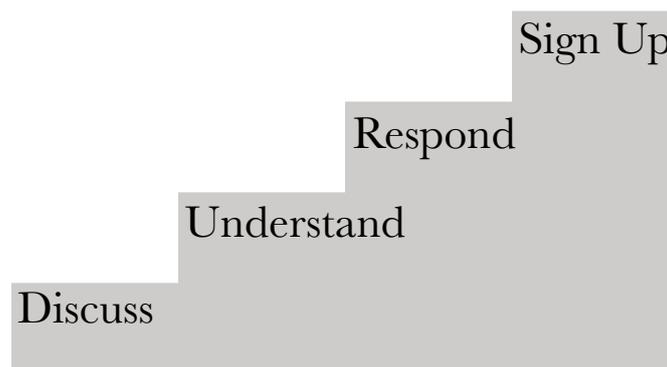

Figure: 5: Model of participation

The data indicates that these are not just four absolute positions, but that they are more like a sliding scale, moving from the extreme of no participation through to high participation at the opposite end. The degree of participatory processes and practices in use on its own was not enough to indicate effectiveness in the school.

8.4 A new theory

This section addresses research question four with regard to new theories about effective leadership structures in small primary schools. Finally, it is the coalescing of the participatory practices and processes continuum with the power and trust continuum which really sheds light on effective small primary schools. It is the impact of how these two factors work together which identifies a whole new way to analyse the effectiveness of schools, and in particular, their leadership.

Degrees of Participation

High Degree

Degrees of Trust

Low Degree   High Degree

Low Degree
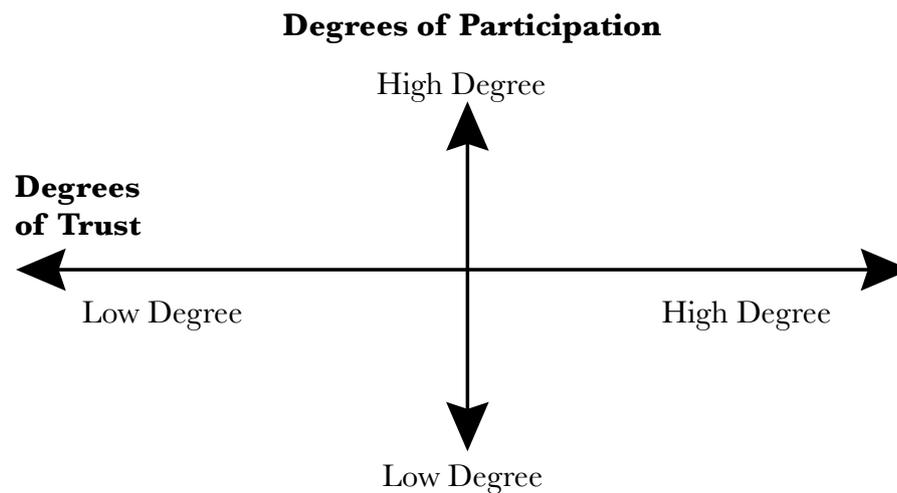
Figure 6: Power and trust/participation matrix

With this new theory, it is finally possible to answer the key question about effective leadership structures in small primary schools. Having established that the structure itself is of little import, it is the combination of participation and trust that holds the key.

It would appear that the combination of high trust ('power with') with a high degree of participation suggests an effective school. A school that is not just effective in terms of Ofsted outcomes, but also in terms of a happy, supportive team of staff, who have one single, united goal to make their school the very best it can be. Conversely, a school which is operating with no-low participation, in a strongly 'power over' model, suggests an ineffective school in terms of Ofsted rating and in terms of staff who are disenfranchised, unmotivated and have no engagement with the vision. This does not necessarily lead to a poor Ofsted outcome, but will have the described impact on stakeholders.

Using the literature and the findings, a new theory has been generated; a new theory of participation and trust in the school improvement and change process to increase school effectiveness and their importance supersedes the impact of the leadership structure.

8.5 Areas for further research

Throughout the research process, it became apparent that there are areas that would benefit from further research. Listed below are the key aspects that emerge.

- Re-running the whole project, but through the eyes of other stakeholders to see if perceptions marry with those of the headteachers.

- Returning to the schools that are implementing new structures and see if/ how the power dynamics have changed.

- Exploring the leadership structures in schools that are federated or part of academy chains.

- Exploring Sara's situation with her ex-headteacher becoming her assistant headteacher and the ensuing power dynamics.

- A focus on the impact of headteachers' previous experiences in terms of leadership style.

- A review of the relationship between the teachers and teaching assistants in Fiona's school, in particular getting the perspectives from both groups.

- Looking at specific training for headteachers of small schools.

- An examination of how headteachers perceive micro-political literacy.

- Exploring the role of the assistant headteacher; when it emerged as a new role and how the role differs from that of a deputy.

- Exploring the 'shelf life' of the headteachers (Earley and Weindling, 2007) by finding exactly when during their headships the headteachers made structural changes.

8.6 The end of the journey?

So, as I come to the end of my six years of doctoral research on effective primary schools and their leadership structures, it is timely to reflect upon my own journey. I began studying just months into my first headship, facing the problem that triggered the research. When I began, I remember reading Lincoln and Guba (2000) and wondering what they meant about the researcher's journey. Now I do; I have come to know and understand myself better as a result of carrying out this study. My reading about micro-politics, participation and power has had a profound impact on my own style of leadership, the development of the school culture and the power

dynamics. The difference that it has made to me is in the huge development of my micro-political literacy skills and the analytical insight that now comes naturally as I scope constantly, reading the landscape, assessing relationships; and these skills have meant that I can successfully navigate change processes and ensure my team are motivated, dedicated and 100% engaged in one vision, as we strive to improve school effectiveness. These were things that were not covered in the National Professional Qualification for Headteachers.

I wanted this research to be of use to headteachers who found themselves in the position that I did; new to headship, without previous experience or knowledge of leadership models that were workable and with no idea what was possible. I believe that I have made a modest contribution to the field with my new theory of participation and trust for change strategies to improve school effectiveness.

Looking ahead, I would like to disseminate my research in several ways. One way is through publication in international journals, so that I can reach headteachers in other countries facing the same professional challenge. I intend to reach out to the diocese and share my findings as the Church of England has numerous small primary schools facing professional challenges at this moment in time. Furthermore, there are the networks of headteachers that I belong to, in various capacities, that I would hope to disseminate to in the coming months.

After seven years in my small school, I have now moved onto to a school that is twice its size. I have cut my teeth in a small school; I have juggled a tight budget, worn far too many hats, battled to recruit staff, faced Ofsted twice, never had to wrestle with a dead rat, but did have to rescue a bat, herd deer out of the playground and I loved most of it. I can say, however, that I am delighted at the prospect of a larger leadership structure, with a deputy and an inclusion manager, not to mention two full time office administrators. I will finally be able to delegate some of my hats!

Postscript: Within the first four weeks of starting in my new school, the deputy headteacher resigned providing an opportunity for a brand new creative leadership structure to emerge. This thesis has proved itself to be a useful toolkit in my journey and this time my team are creating a structure in a completely different way, exploring using my theory of participation and trust in change strategies to improve school effectiveness. Without understanding the significance of trust and participation, I would not have had the knowledge or confidence to be creative with our leadership structure, realising that the structure itself was not what would make the difference in terms of school effectiveness. Watch this space...

9.0 Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1

Combined Information and Consent Form for the Survey

TITLE OF STUDY: Small Primary School Leadership Structures: Challenges and evolution

Whilst there is a considerable body of research on leadership and management in education, there is currently very little literature about small primary schools, and even less work has been done on the leadership structures of small primary schools. To this end I would like to investigate the types of leadership structures found in schools with up to four classes.

In order to do this I would like to collect examples of leadership structures using a survey. From the examples, I would like to identify different types of structures. Your identity would be kept anonymous, and anyone asked to participate would be able to withdraw at any point in the research. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the leadership structure, a second phase of the research involves interviewing headteachers from each type of structure. If you would be willing to be interviewed, please provide your contact details on the proforma.

The data collected will be stored in a secure place to ensure that the responses remain anonymous. The data, in any form, will not be available to be used in any other research project, nor will it passed onto anyone else. At the end of the project de-briefing will be available to all participants. It is hoped that this study will help to develop understanding of the types of leadership structures found in small primary schools.

If you have any questions about the research, please contact Mrs Catterson (see letterhead for contact details). If you are willing to be involved in the collection of data described above, please complete the slip below and return to Mrs Catterson.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Francesca Catterson

I am happy to take part in the collection of data concerning leadership structures.

Name: . . . .   Signature: . . . .

Date: . . . .

9.2 Appendix 2

School Leadership Structure Survey
Thank you for your time

Part 1

If you are willing to be contacted to discuss the possibility of participating in the second phase of this research project, please provide your contact details below. If you <u>do not</u> wish to be contacted, please complete the number of pupils and type of school only.

Name of School	
Name of Headteacher	
Address	
Contact Details	
Number of pupils	
Type of Primary School	

Part 2

How long have you been headteacher at this school?	
Is this your first headship? If your answer is yes, please complete parts 3 and 4. If your answer is no, please complete parts 3 and 5.	

Part 3

Describe your leadership structure at your current school   (For example, Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Literacy Coordinator)
You may wish to provide a diagram.

Part 4

Please list your experiences of leadership structures prior to headship.		
Type of School	Number of Pupil	Describe the leadership structure

Part 5

Please list up to two of your previous headships

Headship 1

Name of School	
County	
Number of pupils	
Type of Primary School	

Describe the leadership structure
(For example, Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Literacy Coordinator)
You may wish to provide a diagram.

Headship 2

Name of School	
County	
Number of pupils	
Type of Primary School	

Describe the leadership structure
(For example, Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Literacy Coordinator)
You may wish to provide a diagram.

9.3 Appendix 3
Interview Schedule

Question 1
Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study and I am very grateful that you are willing to give up your time to talk to me about your school and your experiences. Please tell me a little bit about your school.
Question 2
Question 2a How long have you been headteacher at this school?
Question 2b Is this your first headship?
Question 2c If the answer is no - please give me a brief outline of your previous headships, with specific references to number on roll and leadership structure.
Question 2d If the answer is yes, please describe the leadership structures that you ahem experience prior to working at this school.
Question 3
Question 3a Please describe your school's current leadership structure.
Question 3b If this is not the same structure that was in place when you were appointed, please describe the structure you inherited.
Question 4
Question 4a How would you describe your school culture?
Question 4b Do you perceive your school staff to have group dynamics, please identify and describe those groups?
Question 4c How would you describe the power dynamics between members of staff in your school, in particular, the relationship between the members of the leadership structure and the staff?
Question 4d Having discussed the power dynamics of your school, do you think that they have any impact on your leadership structure - how it functions and leads changes?
Question 5
Question 5a If the leadership structure has changed since your appointment, can you share with me what those changes were and why those changes took place.
Question 5b If your experiences of previous leadership structure have had an impact on the leadership structure you have in your current school, please describe this

Question 6
Question 6a
What do you think are positive conditions for change?
Question 6b
Through what practices did you establish the conditions for changing your leadership structure?
Question 6c
At any time did you decide to make changes when the conditions for change were not what you would describe as advantageous and why did you decide that you were going ahead despite this? Please talk me through the change process.
Question 6d
Having made the decision to change when conditions were not optimal, describe the outcome.
Question 7
Question 7
Reflecting on your journey in creating/establishing your leadership team, are there any things you would have done differently?
Question 8
Question 8a
What do you perceive to be the key issues facing headteachers in developing leadership structures in small primary schools?
Question 8b
Do you perceive any of these to be barriers in developing the ideal 'dream team' for your leadership structure?
Question 9
Question 9
Is there anything else that you would like to tell me about your leadership structure, its creation, advantages, disadvantages or any other aspect that I have not touched upon in the key questions?

10.0 List of Acronyms

AHT   Assistant Headteacher

CfBT   Centre for British Teachers

CVA   Contextual Value Added

CPD   Continuing Professional Development

DfE   Department for Education

DfES   Department for Education and Science

DHT   Deputy Headteacher

EAL   English as an Additional Language

EFA   Education Funding Agency

EYFS   Early Years Foundation Stage

FSM   Free School Meals

HLTA   Higher Lever Teaching Assistant

HMI   Her Majesty's Inspector

HT   Headteacher

INC   Inclusion

KS1   Key Stage1

KS2   Key Stage 2

LA   Local Authority

NCSL   National College for School Leadership

NCTL   National College for Teaching and Leadership

OFSTED   Office for Standards in Education

PDM   Participative Decision Making

SEN   Special Educational Needs

SFVS   Schools Financial Value Statement

SLT   Senior Leadership Team

SMT   School Management Team

ST   Senior Teacher

TA   Teaching Assistant

TLR   Teaching and Learning Responsibility

UPS   Upper Pay Spine

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