



National College for
Teaching & Leadership

High Potential Senior Leaders programme evaluation

Research brief

NCTL



Social Science in Government

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Executive Summary

Background and evaluation methodology

The High Potential Senior Leaders (HPSL) Programme (which has been delivered by the Future Leaders Trust under the brand name the 'Future Leaders programme') is currently a three year leadership development programme intended to raise levels of pupil achievement in challenging schools by developing high-potential middle and senior leaders to become headteachers in these schools. Between 2006 and 2015, 667 individuals participated in the programme; initially in small cohorts of 20 participants, expanding to larger cohorts of 100 participants by 2014¹.

The development programme takes place in two phases. In phase one, the first year of the programme, participants take part in Foundations, an intensive 2 week residential induction course and then are placed into a new senior leadership role in a 'challenging' school. They are supported by a leadership development advisor (LDA)², given responsibilities across the range of different leadership skills expected of a senior leader, including a whole school improvement project, and undertake training courses. In the second phase of the programme, years 2 and 3, participants are expected (and supported) to secure a senior leadership role in a challenging school and continue to a lesser degree to receive support from a leadership development advisor, continue leading at least two whole school improvement projects and undertake training courses.

The evaluation, set up by the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL), aimed to assess the effectiveness and impact of the current programme on both the senior leaders and the schools they are working in. The evaluation methodology included an analysis of school performance, an analysis of participant progression to leadership posts in challenging schools, a desktop review of participants' school improvement projects, surveys of current and past participants, interviews and group discussions with current and past participants and residency heads. Survey and interview fieldwork took place between March and November 2015, during which at least 274 participants and 29 residency heads provided information on their experience of the programme. The evaluation was carried out in three sections completed by different research groups; impact analysis (Muijs D. and Mugendawala H., 2016), qualitative and desktop analysis

¹ Fieldwork for this evaluation was conducted in 2015 and the reporting completed in Summer 2016. It therefore relates to a previous design of the HPSL programme. In Autumn 2016, DfE ran a procurement exercise for a re-designed HPSL programme. Ambition School Leadership (created from the merger of Future Leaders and Teaching Leaders) was successful in bidding for this, and have a contract to deliver until 2022.

² a serving or newly retired head

(BMG Research, 2016) and participant survey (NCTL, 2016). This summary draws on all three reports.

Impact on participant progression and pupil attainment

Over time, there has been a significant movement of participants into senior leadership, and, to a lesser extent, headteacher roles. Compared to their matched comparison sample, HPSL participants have statistically significantly greater and more rapid movement into senior leadership roles. While promotion to senior leadership in the first year is part of the programme design, the analysis shows that this is sustained after the residency year. The evidence is suggestive of a programme effect.

HPSL participants across cohorts 2011 to 2013 who had moved into senior leadership continued to work in schools that were far more disadvantaged than the national population. This remained the case across the years following programme participation, and they continued to be more likely to be working in challenging schools than the comparator group.

Compared to National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) participants, HPSL participants are less likely to be in senior leadership at the start of the programme. Cohorts of NPQH graduates tend to progress gradually into headship, 10-20% additional promotions each year, while cohorts of HPSL participants, starting from a lower hierarchical position, tend to move into senior leadership rapidly, 60-80% promotions in the first year.

Analysis of the relationship between participation in the HPSL programme and attainment gave limited evidence of an HPSL programme impact on attainment. While there was higher attainment in HPSL schools than comparator schools, any difference was only statistically significant overall at key stage 4 for the 2014 cohort of schools and in two of three years for the 2013 cohort of schools, and at key stage 2 in one of two years for the 2014 cohort of schools. The associated effect sizes were weak to modest. This finding was not altogether surprising, as analyses looking at a direct effect of leadership development on attainment rarely show strong effects. (Muijs D. and Mugendawala H. 2016).

Analysis of 100 school improvement projects provides some evidence that participants' leadership in schools is contributing to the achievement of better outcomes for pupils. Their efforts were particularly likely to be successful when they were related to implementing and embedding specific policies and systems and when linked to the improvement of teaching.

Participant experience

A large majority of participants rated their satisfaction and the contribution of the programme to their leadership development highly, 88% and 91% respectively. They generally felt that their training had prepared them well for the challenges of headship in a challenging school. Survey respondents wrote about the impact the programme had on their development as a leader, the high quality of the training and the high quality information and guidance on current evidence and best-practice.

Some survey respondents suggested that the programme could be improved by greater differentiation of the programme to better reflect the context of their school, or their personal circumstances and individual career plans. On the other hand, some respondents had specifically praised the programme for its responsiveness or tailored personal provision, the drive and impetus given to their career progression, or the ability to experience and engage with different types of school as part of the programme.

Other areas highlighted for improvement by some participants were varying quality in the experiences of participants in their training, residency year, or coaching. In some cases this was perceived to be related to region. Again, other respondents had praised these aspects of their training. As all such comments were given spontaneously in response to general questions, no conclusions can be drawn about the extent of these specific views from these specific comments, but they are noted to provide a complete picture of the views expressed by participants. The overall picture remains one of high levels of satisfaction with the programme and its quality as previously stated.

The survey of participants (NCTL, 2016) showed Leadership Development Advisor (LDA) support and Foundations training were most widely perceived to be important for participants' development, progression towards headship and their impact in schools. Important aspects of these were the high calibre of speakers and peers at the Foundation training, and the interplay between the support from the LDAs with the opportunity to lead school improvement through the residency year.

Introduction

This report summarises the findings of the six strands of the evaluation of the High Potential Senior Leaders Programme (HPSL). Detailed findings from each of these strands can be found in three supporting reports by the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL), BMG Research and Daniel Muijs and Hamis Mugendawala.

The High Potential Senior Leaders Programme, which has been delivered under the brand name the Future Leaders programme, is a three year leadership development programme designed specifically to raise levels of pupil achievement in challenging schools by developing high-potential middle and senior leaders to become headteachers in these schools. The programme was delivered through a commissioned charity, The Future Leaders Trust³. Graduates of the HPSL programme were expected to take up a headship position in a challenging school within four years of commencing the programme.

Evaluation approach

The evaluation, set up by NCTL, aims to assess the effectiveness and impact of the current programme on both the senior leaders and the schools they are working in. Areas of specific focus are:

- Impact of the programme
- Reach and engagement in the programme
- Opinion of the programme and learning outcomes

The evaluation also aimed to identify any examples of best practice in leadership development, enabling these to be shared across the school system. It has been conducted through a mix of in-house and contracted work. Detailed methodologies can be found in the three supporting reports.

- High Potential Senior Leaders Programme Evaluation: Impact Analysis (RR550)
- High Potential Senior Leaders Programme Evaluation: Qualitative and Desktop (RR549)
- High Potential Senior Leaders Programme Participant Survey 2015 (RR551)

³ Fieldwork for this evaluation was conducted in 2015 and the reporting completed in Summer 2016. It therefore relates to a previous design of the HPSL programme. In Autumn 2016, DfE ran a procurement exercise for a re-designed HPSL programme. Ambition School Leadership (created from the merger of Future Leaders and Teaching Leaders) was successful in bidding for this, and have a contract to deliver until 2022.

Table 1: Methodology for the six strands of the evaluation

Evaluation strand	Method
<p>1. An analysis of school performance in engaged schools, and a group of comparator schools. (Muijs D. and Mugendawala H., 2016),</p>	<p>Matched comparator analysis of outcomes for pupils in schools that host participants' residency years and employ past participants.</p>
<p>2. An analysis of participant progression to leadership posts in challenging schools. (Muijs D. and Mugendawala H., 2016),</p>	<p>Matched comparator analysis of the employment outcomes and destinations of participant leaders.</p>
<p>3. A desk top review of impact evidence, submitted by participants as part of their qualification. (BMG Research, 2016)</p>	<p>100 impact initiative forms, selected through a stratified random sampling process, were analysed through a quantitative and qualitative framework.</p>
<p>4. An analysis of engagement data, i.e. the number and characteristics of participants and schools involved with the HPSL programme. (Muijs D. and Mugendawala H., 2016),</p>	<p>A descriptive analysis of participants and schools that host participants' residency years and employ past participants.</p>
<p>5. Surveys with current and past participants. (NCTL, 2016)</p>	<p>Online survey in June/July 2015. Sampling allowed 266 responses from cohorts 2009-2014 to be analysed quantitatively, a 58% response rate. All 294 responses (including responses from cohorts 2007 and 2008) were analysed qualitatively.</p>
<p>6. Interviews and group discussions with current and past participants and residency school heads. (BMG Research, 2016)</p>	<p>108 in-depth interviews and online group discussions with 15 individuals including current and past participants, and with heads in residency schools. Interviews took place between March and November 2015.</p>

Programme Outline

The first HPSL programme was launched in 2006 with the creation of the Future Leaders Charitable Trust supported by Absolute Return for Kids (ARK) with the Specialist Schools and Academy Trust (SSAT), the National College for School Leadership (NCSL)⁴ and the Department for Children, Schools and Families⁵. The initial pilot was targeted at Urban Secondary school leadership; it was small scale, starting with 20 participants in the first year. The evaluation of the pilot noted the considerable success of the first cohort, who had fitted into the new (post-residency) roles effectively and were generally considered by their headteachers as having an impact in their school. It also provided areas for improvement of the development programme, and noted the potential challenges of scaling up the programme (Earley, P. et al, 2008).

Having established the potential of the programme for providing school leaders with an accelerated route to headship in challenging urban schools, NCSL went on to commission seven further cohorts of the programme through open commercial competition processes. The name High Potential Senior Leaders programme was introduced, although, having won the contracts to deliver the programme, the Future Leaders Trust continued to deliver this under the name Future Leaders. Changes in the focus of the development programme were gradual, with expansion urban areas outside London from 2008 and, from 2012, the recruitment of primary phase school leaders for the 2013 cohort.

Overview of programme phases

The three year programme can be seen as consisting of two phases, the first year consisting of Foundations training and the Residency year, and years two to three consisting of further training and support in a senior leadership role in a challenging school. After the programme is completed, the Future Leaders Trust has offered participants continued access to online resources⁶ and encouraged continued involvement in additional leadership development, outlined below.

Phase 1 – Foundations (Year 1): This phase focuses on building foundations for a successful residency year such as quality of teaching, behaviour, school culture, curriculum development, data analysis and intervention and performance management of staff through an induction day, two weekends and a two-week residential.

⁴ The National College for School Leadership has since merged with the Teaching Agency and become the National College for Teaching and Leadership.

⁵ The Department for Children, Schools and Families has since become the Department for Education

⁶ Initially this was offered free of charge, but more recently former participants have paid a membership fee for continued access.

Phase 1 – Residency (Year 1): Residency schools agree to hire an HPSL participant as a senior leader in their school and commit to ensuring they receive six key residency experiences which include school improvement, behaviour management, data analysis, teaching and learning, monitoring and management of staff performance and building an effective learning community. The residency year also includes regional events for network building and opportunities to share best practice, a study tour (now in the UK but previously in the US for cohorts in 2012 and prior), coaching by the participant’s assigned Leadership Development Adviser (LDA) and regular one-to-one feedback meetings with the Residency Head.

Phase 2 – Post-residency (Years 2 and 3): Following the residency year, participants need to secure a senior leadership role either at the same school or elsewhere. If an appropriate role is not secured then the participant may choose to leave the programme or to become an ‘Associate Future Leader’ until such time as they are able to find an appropriate school or role and re-join the programme. The focus in this phase is to have a whole school impact across several areas. Elements include modules that cover technical aspects of headship, such as finance, HR management and governance, which participants choose to best suit their needs, regional events as per year 1, coaching as per year 1 but with reduced LDA hours and cohort weekends specific to each cohort’s needs based on feedback received from the impact initiatives (see definition provided below).

Post programme support – pre-headship: For participants identified as ready for headship, to support their headship applications this phase previously consisted of two distinct programmes – the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH),⁷ which is not funded through the HPSL programme, and Headship Now! which consists of practical career support, group sessions and personalised support, a residential weekend focused on refining key skills and additional support for women in overcoming barriers to headship. However, it should be noted that, in 2014, these two programmes merged.

Post programme support – headship: The Headship Institute, which is a dedicated forum for participants who have become headteachers, includes support in managing finances, media training, peer-led school visits, Ofsted training and an annual symposium.

Participant profile

Between 2006 and 2015, 667 individuals participated in the programme. Early cohorts were small, including 20 participants each. Between 2012 and 2014, 266 individuals

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-professional-qualification-for-headship-npqh>

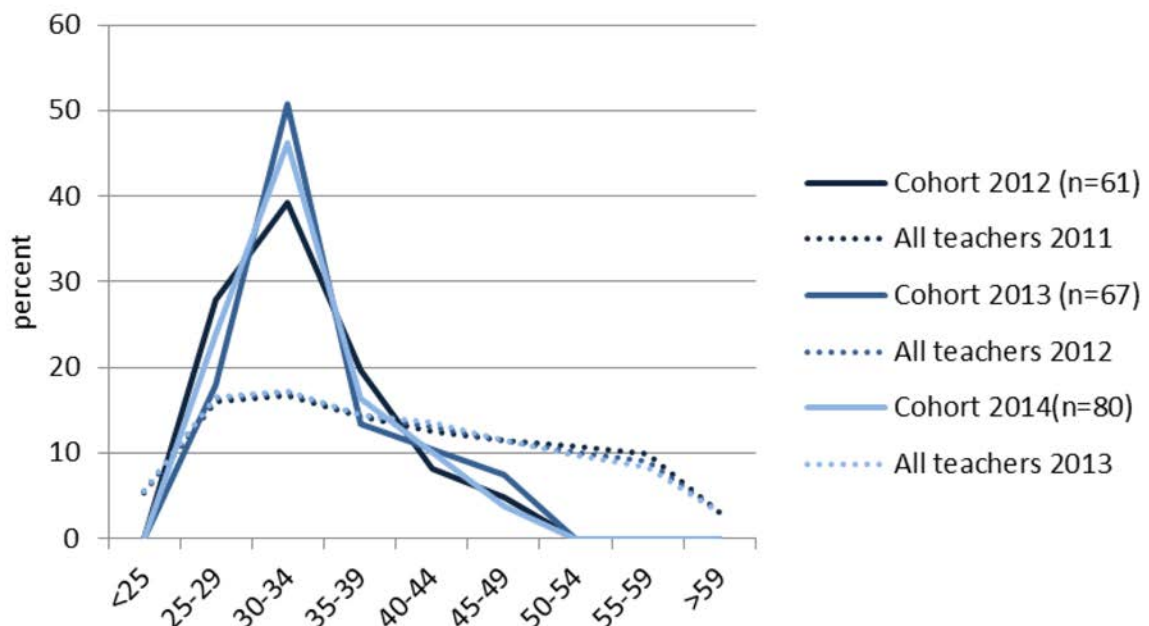
joined the programme in cohorts of 80-100. Characteristics of participants in cohorts 2012 to 2014 were reviewed for the year in which they applied to the programme through analysis of the School Workforce Census (SWC).⁸ As shown in table 2 and figure 1, participants were more likely to be young and male than the population of teachers as a whole. Participants were also more likely to be from a BME (black and minority ethnic) background. It is likely that this is related to relatively higher proportion of engagement in the Secondary phase, where a greater proportion of teachers are men, and to greater engagement in urban areas, where the programme was originally targeted. As expected, participants were more likely to be in middle and senior leadership roles than the teaching population as a whole. The 2014 cohort in particular included a relatively high proportion of participants (41.3%) who were already in senior leadership roles when applying to the programme (Figure 2).

Table 2: Cohorts 2012 – 2014 gender and ethnicity on application compared to all teachers

	Cohort 2012 (n=61)	All teachers 2011	Cohort 2013 (n=67)	All teachers 2012	Cohort 2014(n=80)	All teachers 2013
Female %	59	74.9	55.2	75	56.3	75.2
BME%	18	13.7	23.9	13.8	20	14.6

Source: Analysis of School Workforce Census data 2010

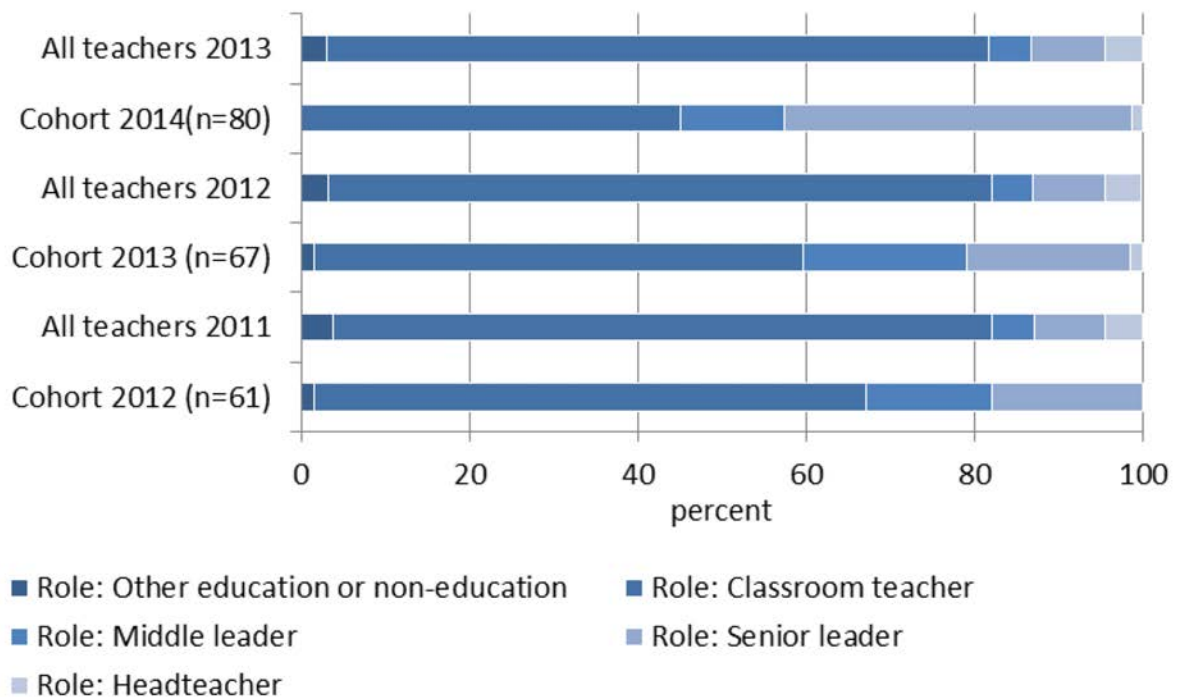
Figure 1: Cohorts 2012 – 2014 age on application compared to all teachers



Source: Analysis of School Workforce Census data 2010

⁸ Only the 78% of participants who were successfully matched to the SWC data were included in this analysis,

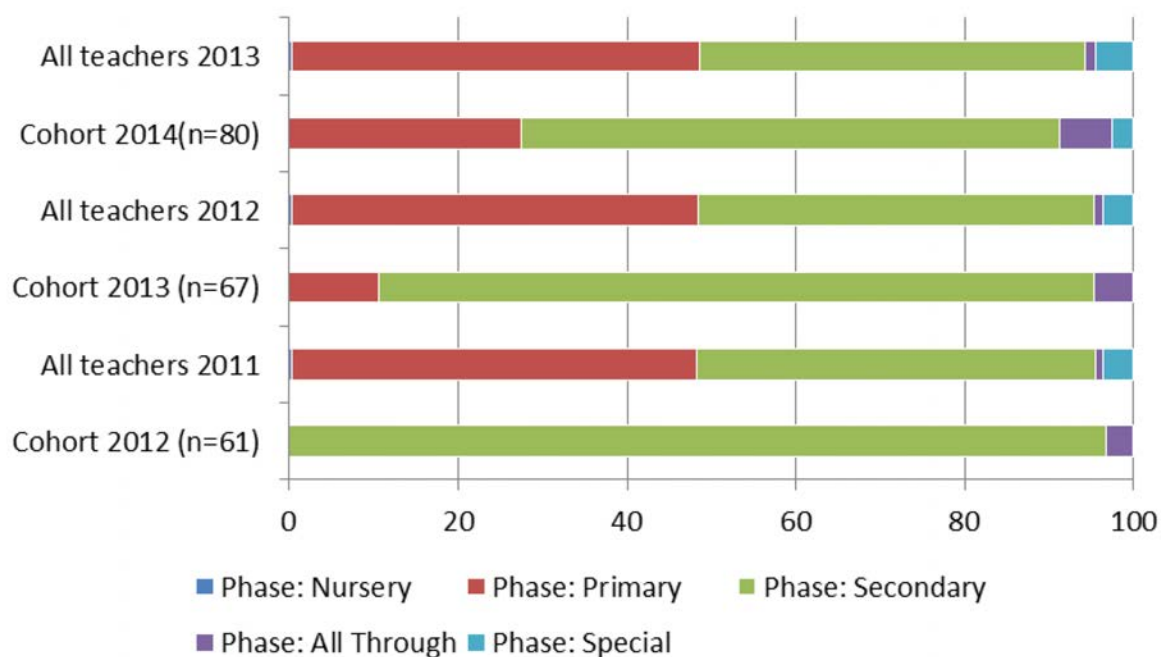
Figure 2: Cohorts 2012 – 2014 role on application compared to all teachers



Source: Analysis of School Workforce Census data 2010

Participants on the programme were also more likely to be teaching in secondary schools than the teacher population as a whole. From cohort 2013, as the programme’s scope was extended, participants from the primary phase began registering on the programme, with quotas for the gradual introduction of primary leaders determining the distribution between the phases, as can be seen in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Cohorts 2012 – 2014 phase on application compared to all teachers



Source: Analysis of School Workforce Census data 2010

Three quarters of survey respondents reported that they were working in a challenging school before starting the programme, as shown in table 3. Increasing proportions of participants carried out their residency year in the school which they worked for on applying to the programme. This represents a change in approach from the initial programme model, which typically involved recruiting individuals and finding a position for them in a different school which was eligible or interested in hosting a participant in the programme. The new programme model includes recruiting individuals already working in challenging schools and delivering the programme to them in their existing school.

Table 3: Participants' schools before the HPSL programme

	Cohorts 2009-2011	Cohorts 2012-2013	Cohort 2014
Working in a challenging school	77%	68%	82%
Working in their residency school	23%	46%	48%
Total	78	106	82

Source: NCTL, Future Leader participant survey July 2015

Engaged school profile

The engaged school profile includes two kinds of school:

- schools actively hosting participants in their residency year
- schools employing a current or past participant of the HPSL programme.⁹

Schools were included in this profile if they had employed a current or former participant for one or more years. On average schools had been engaged for between 3 and 4 years.

On average, schools engaged in the HPSL programme:

- had higher numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals (typically around double),
- a higher IDACI score (income deprivation affecting children index, showing greater levels of deprivation in pupil's home area),
- more than three times more pupils who speak a language other than English at home (EAL),
- a somewhat smaller percentage of boys,
- and higher levels of attainment at key stage 4.

The picture that emerged of HPSL engaged schools is therefore one of higher performing schools located in more disadvantaged and higher non-English speaking areas. These average characterisations did mask significant variation between HPSL participants' schools, however. Many of these characteristics, for example attainment, varied greatly even between schools engaged in the programme.

This profile of engaged schools is not necessarily a result of the HPSL programmes processes of recruiting schools for residency year placements. Many schools have become part of this group as a result of a combination of the following reasons:

⁹ Although not actively recruited to the programme by the Future Leaders Trust, the rationale for inclusion of the second kind of school in an analysis of impact is based on the following three points:

- Year 2 and 3 participants often seek employment in schools other than their residency school, but continue delivering impact initiatives in these schools.
- Future Leaders participants are strongly encouraged to gain employment in schools which meet the Trust's criteria for a challenging school.
- Future Leaders are encouraged to sign up for Associate Future Leader status and join the Headship Institute on gaining headship, to continue their connection to the programme and network beyond the three years of their programme.

- meeting the eligibility criteria¹⁰
- availability of a senior leadership role
- HPSL participants' choice of schools
- schools' recruitment criteria and processes

¹⁰ The criteria used by the Future Leaders Trust to determine whether schools are suitable for participation in the programme have developed and changed over the years, as accountability measures and educational policy on disadvantage developed. At present schools are eligible if they meet one of the following: (continued)

- Over 50% students have been eligible for free school meals in the last 6 years (EVER6FSM)
- 25%-50% students have been eligible for free school meals in the last 6 years and the percentage of disadvantaged students achieving 5+ A*-C GCSEs (including English and maths) or at Level 4 or above in English and maths at the end of key stage 2 is below the national average for all pupils
- 20%-25% students have been eligible for free school meals in the last 6 years and the percentage of disadvantaged students achieving 5+ A*-C GCSEs (including English and maths) or at Level 4 or above in English and maths at the end of key stage 2 is below the national average for disadvantaged pupils.

Participant experience

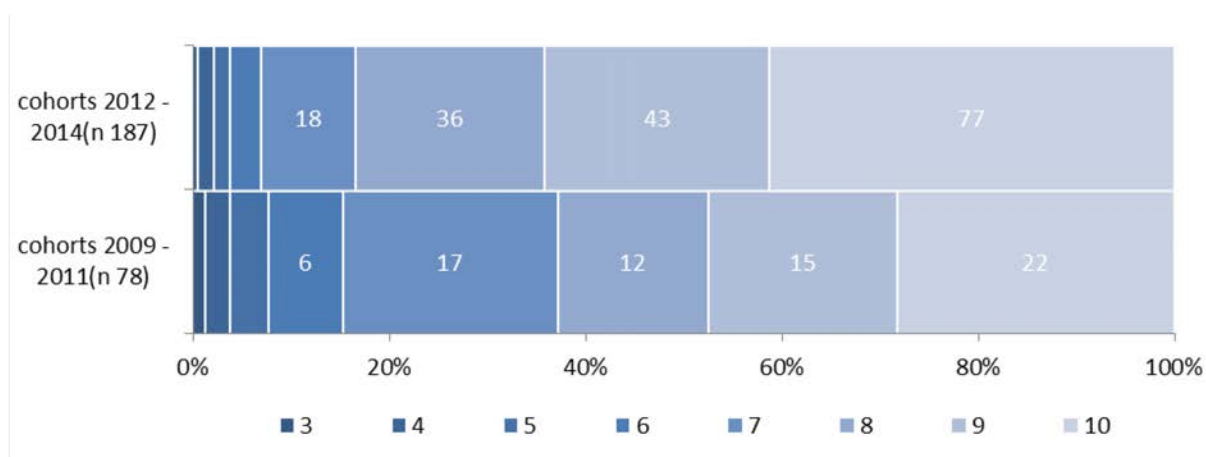
The evaluation explored participants' views and experiences of the programme through the participant survey (NCTL, 2016) and through in-depth interviews with current and past participants and with residency year heads (BMG Research, 2016). In this section of the report, participant views on the programme including their overall views on its contribution to their development and their preparation for headship, and their views on specific aspects of the programme are summarised.

Programme satisfaction

A large majority of HPSL participants, 93% of current participants and 85% of those recently completing the programme, rated the contribution of the programme to their leadership development highly¹¹. Participants' ratings of their satisfaction with the programme were similarly high.

Figure 4: Overall contribution to leadership development

What contribution has the HPSL programme made to your leadership development? (Scale of 1 – 10, with 1 being no contribution at all and 10 being the most significant contribution made over your career to date)



Source: NCTL, HPSL participant survey July 2015

Participants on the current programme were more likely to give higher ratings for the HPSL programme's contribution than participants from cohorts 2009 to 2011. Qualitative analysis shows that participants from 2009-2011 were slightly less likely to highlight coaching, guidance and support and the level of stretch and challenge offered by the programme. They were also less slightly likely to write generally positive comments about the programme. However, internal participant surveys in previous years have shown similarly high levels of satisfaction amongst participants in these earlier cohort groups

¹¹ Scored between 7 and 10, on a scale of 1 to 10

during the more intensive years of their training (Future Leaders Trust management data, 2011).

Online focus groups with participants and qualitative responses from survey respondents also reflect this positive view of the programme. Online focus group participants had generally described their experience on the programme as inspiring, empowering, rewarding and mentally-stimulating. Survey respondents wrote about the impact the programme had on their development as a leader, the high quality of the training and the high quality information and guidance on current evidence and best-practice. Respondents also valued the support offered from regional and central programme teams, and the inspiration and drive added to their career plans.

For me the experience has been phenomenal. The quality of technical training combined with networking, combined with access to people really making a difference within education has transformed my thinking. I believe I am a much better leader as consequence of my experiences and while I think I would have got to headship without [Future Leaders], I do believe I would not be as ready or having really explored what I believe about schools.

Survey respondent

It inspires you to go for promotion and helps you to realise that the skills you already have are important and that is possible to work on development areas

Focus group participant

In contrast, some focus group participants described their experience on the programme as frustrating and challenging. This reflected the level of personal and time commitments required of the programme and senior leadership role and also, for some respondents, frustrations over differences with existing senior leadership in their schools.

Some survey respondents suggested that the programme could be improved by greater differentiation of the programme to better reflect the context of their school, or their personal circumstances and individual career plans. Other respondents had praised the provision for its action in these same areas for instance, its responsiveness or tailored personal provision, the drive and impetus given to their career progression, or the ability to experience and engage with different types of school as part of the programme.

Other areas highlighted for improvement by some participants were varying quality in the experiences of participants in their training, residency year, or coaching. In some cases, participants perceived their region had affected the quality of the programme; this was slightly less common amongst respondents from recent cohorts. Again, other respondents had praised these aspects of their training. As all such comments were given spontaneously in response to general questions, no conclusions can be drawn

about the extent of these specific views from these specific comments, but they are noted to provide a complete picture of the views expressed by participants.

I often felt held back by my school and wanted to implement things/share what I had learned.

Focus group participant

I feel there could be more primary focused visits and events.

Survey respondent

Where could the Future Leaders Trust improve? Differentiated support according to the type of school you working rather than the region.

Survey respondent

It is hard to get out of my school for the days training sessions. Maybe have some on Saturdays or in the evenings.

Survey respondent

Programme participants generally agreed that their training from Future Leaders Trust in the last year had an impact on their development and on their school, and had met their development needs.

Overall preparation for headship

HPSL participants generally felt that their training had prepared them well for the challenges of headship in a challenging school, supporting them in developing a range of leadership skills. Leading school vision and culture, leading teams, strategic school improvement planning and school wide improvement to teaching and learning were amongst the areas which participants felt best prepared for. Skill areas receiving a lower proportion of positive ratings included governance, partnerships and parents and carers.

Participants felt positive about the Future Leaders Trust, in the main, agreeing that the Trust responded to feedback, has well defined expectations of their participants, delivers on their commitments to these participants, and in general has realistic expectations of their participants. They also felt that Future Leaders Trust upholds their mission and beliefs, which are focused on raising children's achievement regardless of background.

Programme design

The survey of participants (NCTL, 2016) showed Leadership Development Advisor support and Foundations training to be the stand-out programme elements, most widely perceived to be important for participants' development progression towards headship and their impact in schools.

Some aspects of the 2014 Foundations training were more widely found to be useful than other parts, for example sessions on coaching and difficult conversations, on school culture, leadership styles, and on values-based leadership. Both the survey and in-depth interviewing found that participants valued the Foundations as the start of their building of networks of support with like-minded school leaders, and also as a source of inspiration and knowledge through the range of speakers and content of the programme (Figures 5 and 6).

Foundations was incredible in its breadth of knowledge, gained from listening to consummate professionals.

Survey respondent

Foundations - starts from the premise that you are looking to be a head while also considering your first days as a senior leader. Opportunity to work with current and previous heads in a different way than previously or usually experienced.

Survey respondent

Figure 5: Foundations networking

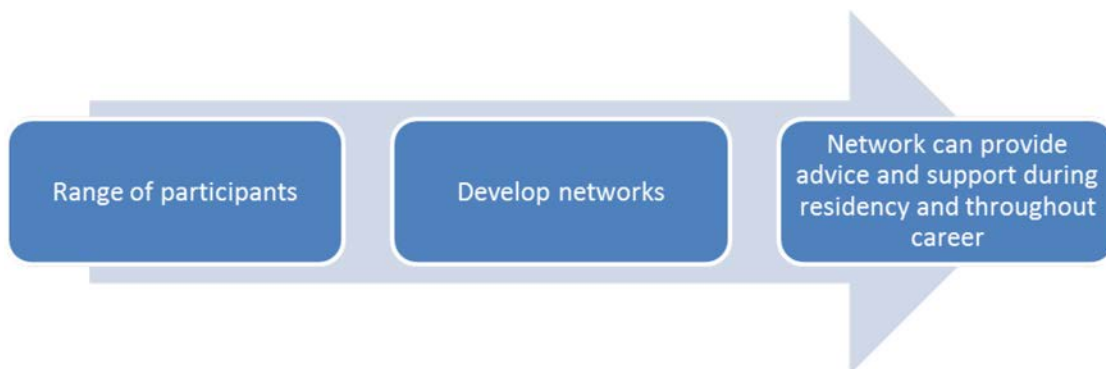


Figure 6: Foundations Speakers and content



Almost all respondents were satisfied or very satisfied, with the support received from their LDA(s) over the past year, agreeing that they had provided constructive and challenging feedback, supported them in making progress and making an impact in school. Many respondents commented specifically on the support and challenge given by

their LDA and their valued expertise. Some concerns about consistency of quality between LDA coaches were also noted.

The experience of working as a senior leader within a challenging school in the residency year was also an important part of the programme. Current participants were generally satisfied with the outcome of their residency year and with their access to developmental experiences across a range of leadership areas. In-depth interviews with current and past participants found that the residency year gave crucial opportunities to participants, to practically apply the theory and skills learned in Foundations in a challenging school context at a senior level. The interviews further found that support from LDAs and mentors was important at this stage, complementing practical development by providing opportunities for reflection and advice (Figure 7).

LDA offers support and advice on how to deal with sensitive issues in school. [The LDA is] the critical friend you trust to keep a confidence.

Survey respondent

Support from within school has been helpful in terms of enabling me to see, on a daily basis, the skills of those in positions above me. The Impact Initiative has enabled me to ensure that I can plan a project for wide impact, carry this out and then evaluate and improve it.

Survey respondent

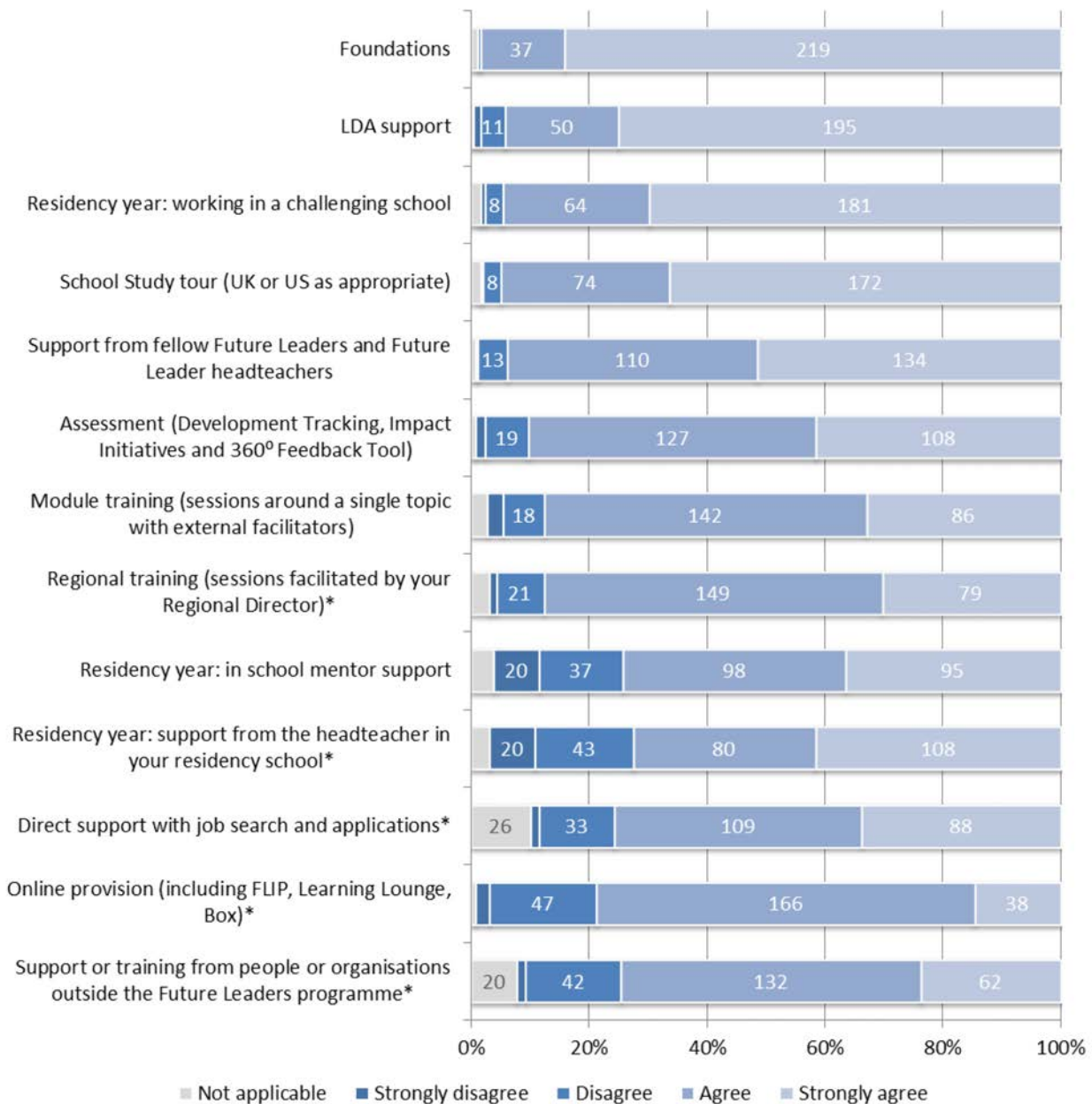
Figure 7: Residency year



All aspects of programme design were considered by some participants to be important contributors to their development. A full spectrum of ratings for programme elements can be seen in figure 8, ranging from Foundations and LDA support to job search support and online resources.

Figure 8: Programme elements, contribution to development

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the following have contributed to your development as a school leader since you joined the HPSL programme?



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More mixed feedback was received about some other programme elements, for example support from residency headteachers, which was very important for some participants, but not rated highly by other participants.

¹² For some leadership skills, respondents from one cohort group or another were more likely to give a positive rating; these are marked with a * (2014 more positive)

Many participants also received some support or training from outside the programme, and just under a quarter of respondents strongly agreed that this was important to their development.

The majority of participants felt that benefits gained from the HPSL programme are greater than the costs of offering their time and services for payback¹³. Many respondents, however, felt that there was limited access to payback opportunities outside London.

¹³ Participants in the HPSL Programme commit to paying back 30 days of their own time to the network e.g. supporting new participants. This is in exchange for the high quality subsidised training and development they receive as part of the programme⁷

Progression towards headship

The High Potential Senior Leadership programme aimed to accelerate the development of those with the potential and commitment to move rapidly to headship in a challenging school. The evaluation set out to understand the extent to which any acceleration to headship had been achieved, through a comparative analysis of career progression (Muijs D and Mugendawala H, 2016). This section also highlights participants' views on the speed of their progression. The section goes on to review some of the specific steps that participants are taking to achieve progression, over and above their development of leadership skills which has been reviewed in the previous sections.

Career progression comparator analysis

A comparator group of similar teachers to the HPSL participants was created using propensity score matching methods. Participants were divided into cohorts and matched to other teachers based on their characteristics in the year before joining the programme.

Variables used to create the matched comparator group were current role, full or part time contract, pay scale, gender, ethnicity, age, phase of education and details of individuals who narrowly missed joining the programme. School Workforce Census data was available for 2010 to 2014, so matching was carried out for participants from cohorts 2011 to 2014. The matching process was successful in creating a balanced comparator group.

Some caveats common to most analysis of this kind need to be taken into consideration, in particular that there may be other factors which distinguish HPSL participants from non-participants but which are not measured or measurable, for instance personality. Full details of the analysis are found in the accompanying report by Daniel Muijs and Hamis Mugendawala (2016).

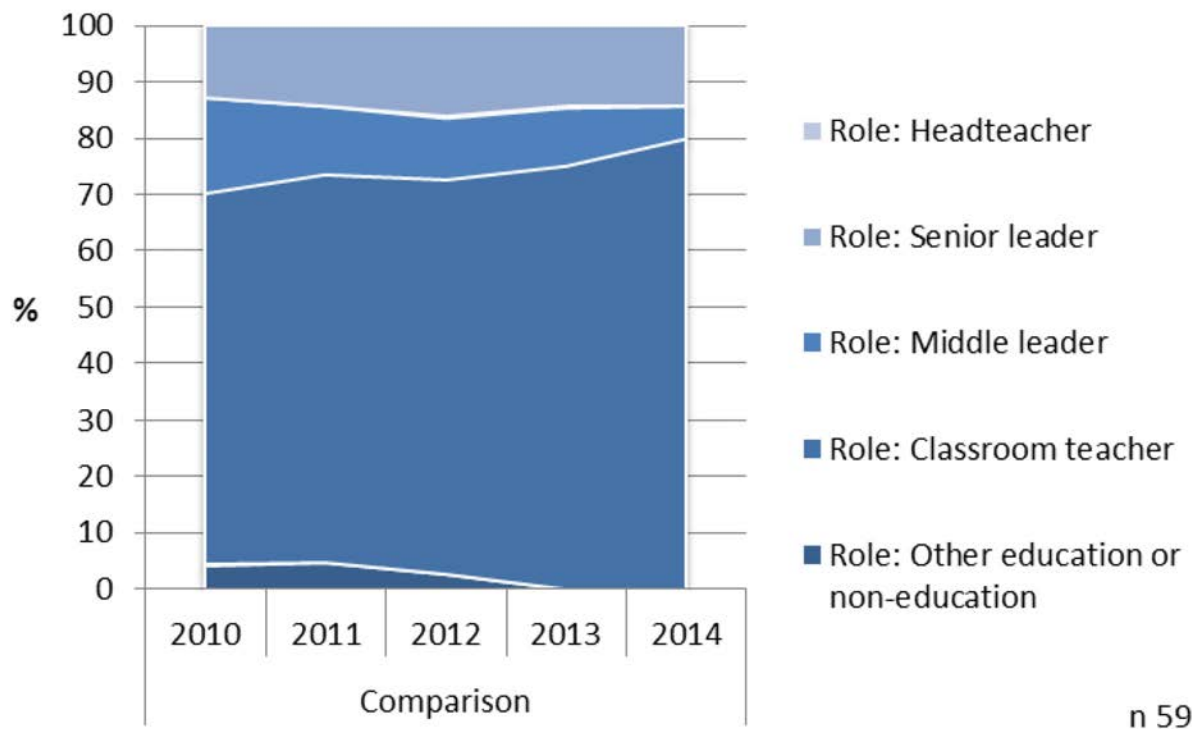
The progression of HPSL participants was also compared to the progression of school teachers and leaders starting the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) in the same year. It should be noted that the HPSL programme is considered to be a pre-NPQH programme, although participants are able to join an NPQH programme during their time in the HPSL programme.

2011 Cohort progression

Over time, and particularly from 2012 onwards, there was a tendency for teachers in the comparison group to more frequently be working part time than HPSL participants. The main significant differences emerged on roles and payscales, however. From 2011

onwards, participants in the programme were much more likely to be in senior leadership positions than their counterparts in the comparison group.

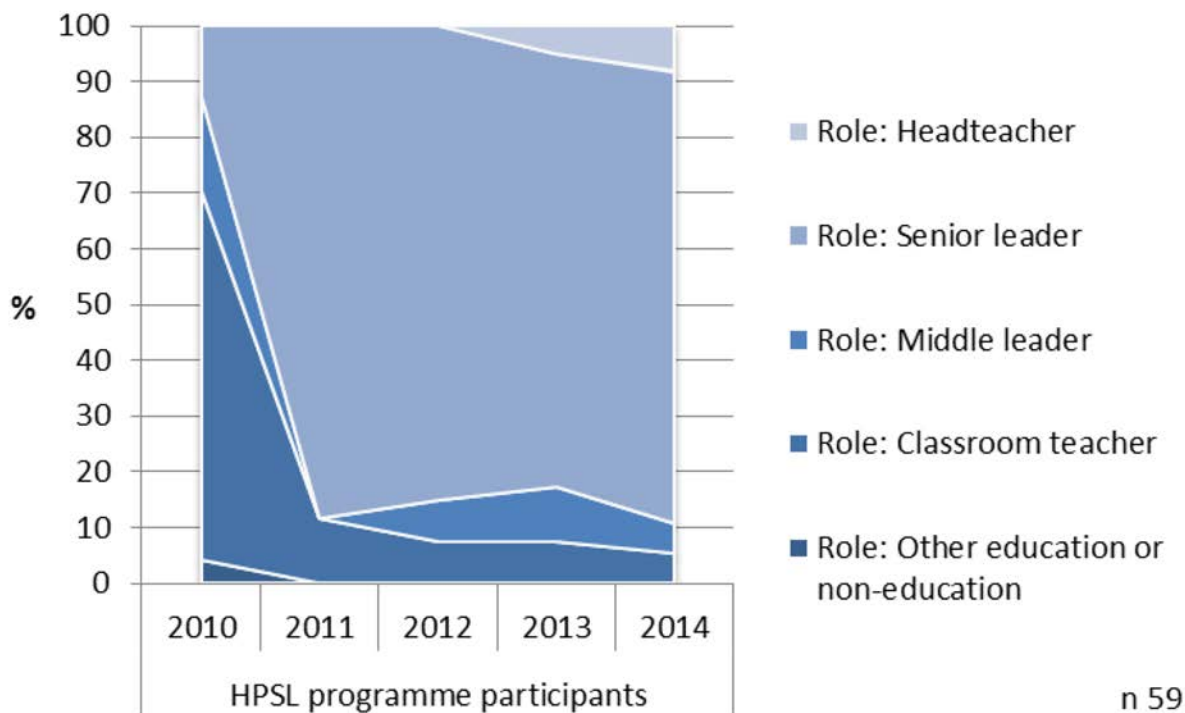
Figure 9: Comparator group for 2011 Cohort career progression by role



Source: Analysis of School Workforce Census data 2010-2014

By 2014 almost 90% of the HPSL participants group were in senior leadership and headteacher roles, whereas for the comparison group this proportion remained under 20% in all years. The main move into senior leadership happened in 2011, but subsequently there was significant movement into headship in 2013 and 2014.

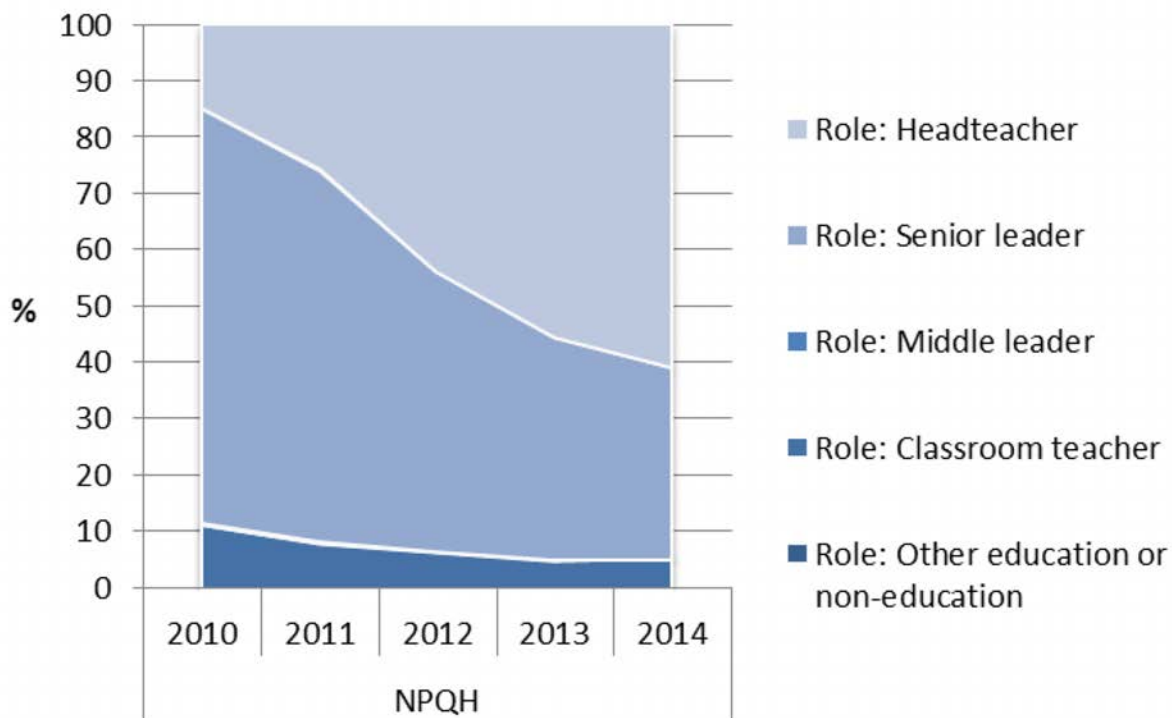
Figure 10: HPSL participants, 2011 Cohort career progression by role



Source: Analysis of School Workforce Census data 2010-2014

At baseline, NPQH participants differed from HPSL participants in a number of ways. They were more likely to be female and were on average older than HPSL participants. As a programme that caters for all school phases, NPQH had a majority of participants from the primary sector. Notably, almost 89% were already in senior leadership or headteacher roles on entering the programme, compared to just under 13% for HPSL participants. This was reflected in paycales. Following participation NPQH participants start to move into headship positions, the proportion in headship increasing by between 5% and 10% a year. Starting from a lower baseline, HPSL participants more often moved into senior leadership rather than headship positions initially, though overall their progression was more rapid than that of NPQH participants.

Figure 11: NPQH participants 2011 Cohort career progression by role

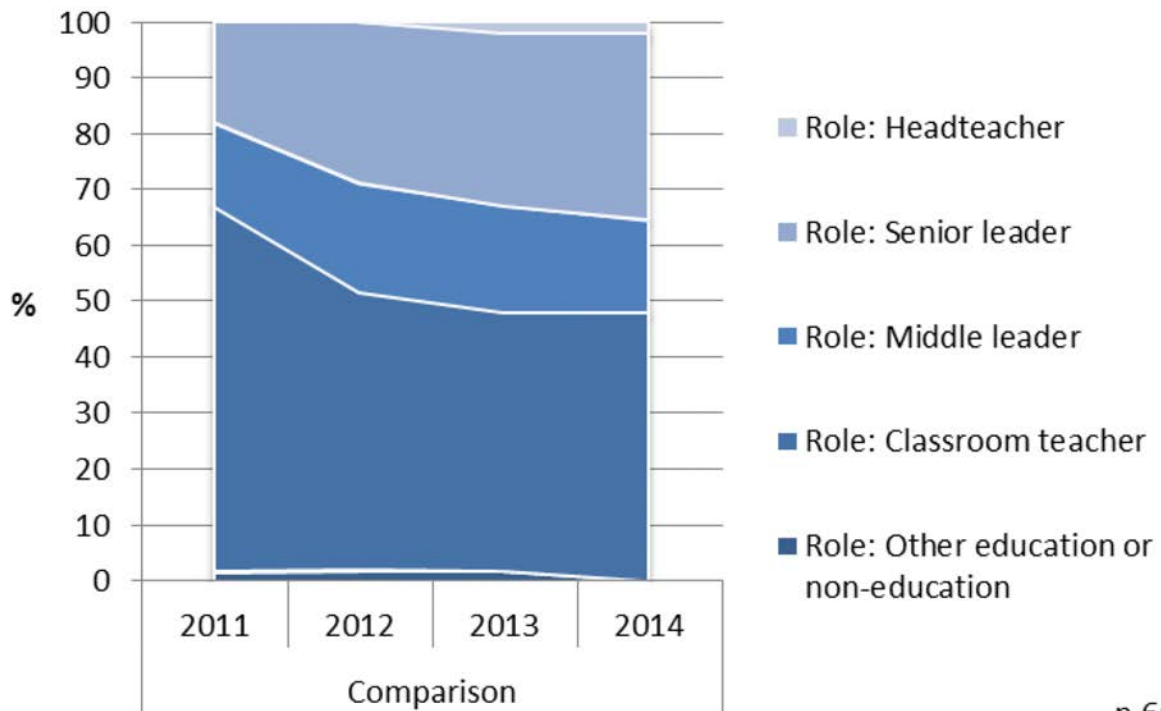


Source: Analysis of School Workforce Census data 2010-2014

2012 Cohort progression

The 2012 cohort showed a similar trend to the 2011 cohort. Both the comparison and HPSL groups showed movement into senior leadership, but the change was significantly greater for the HPSL group, with more than twice as many HPSL participants than comparison group teachers in senior and headteacher roles by 2014. Again, it was notable that the major change in both groups already occurred in 2012, though there was a further growth from 78% to 92% of participants into senior leadership by 2014. The role changes were reflected in differences in payscales.

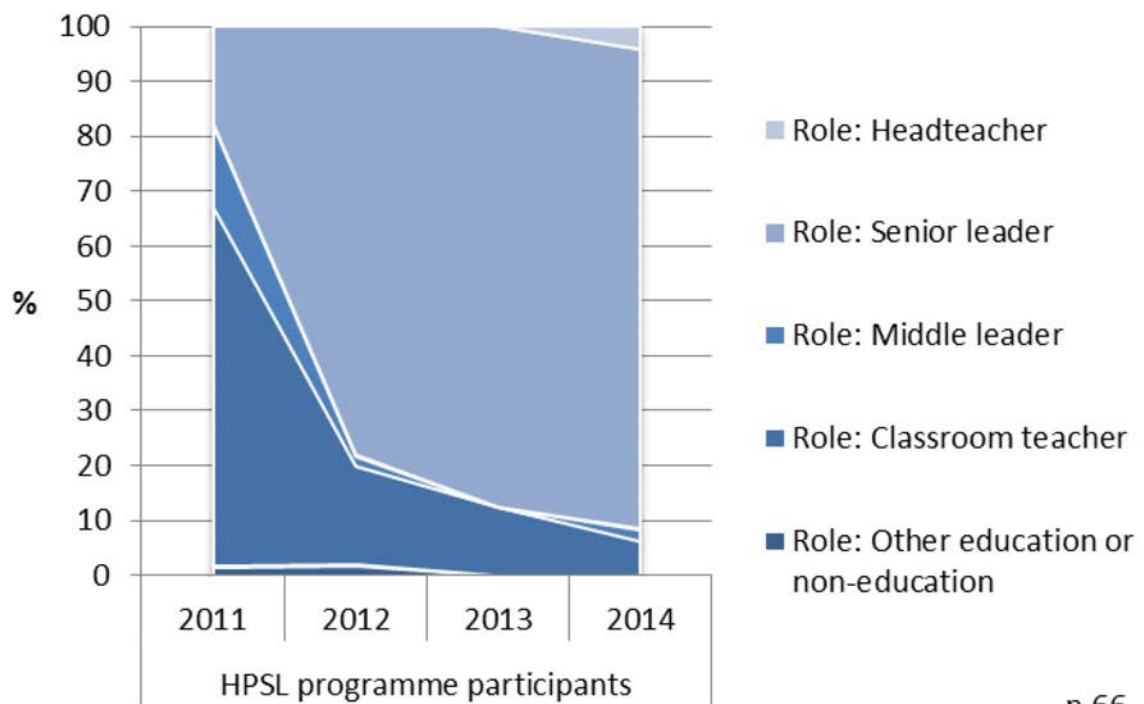
Figure 12: Comparator group for 2012 cohort career progression by role



n 66

Source: Analysis of School Workforce Census data 2010-2014

Figure 13: HPSL participants 2012 Cohort career progression by role



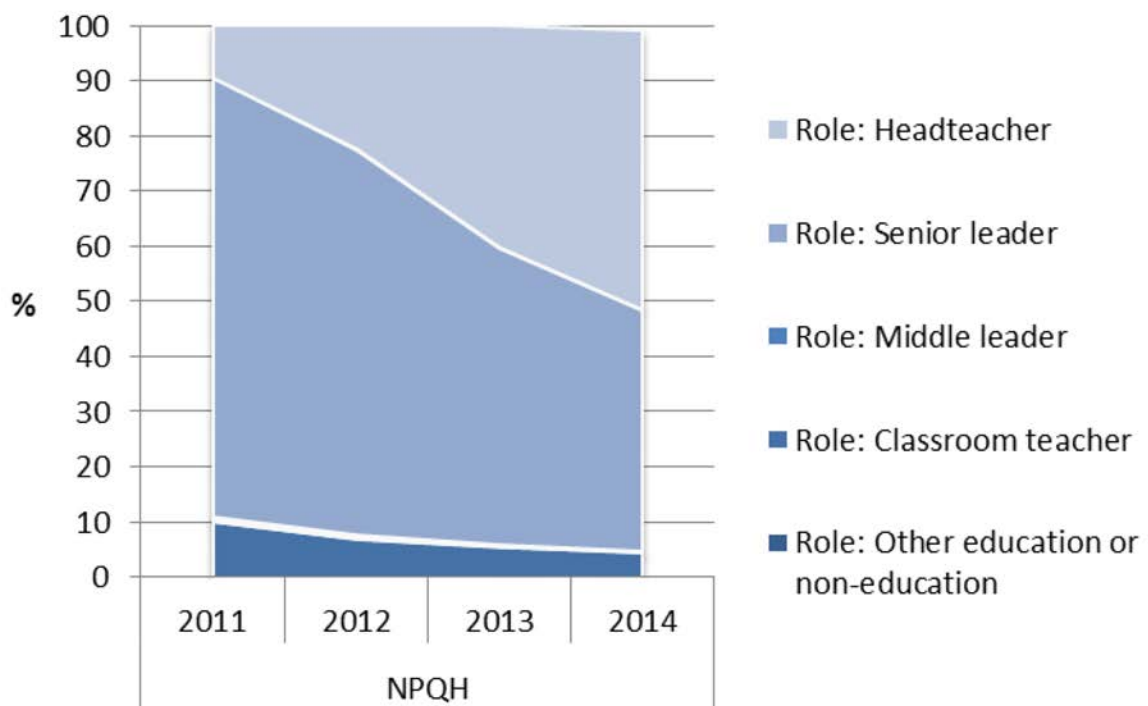
n 66

Source: Analysis of School Workforce Census data 2011-2014

The 2012 cohort showed a similar trend to the 2011 cohort with regards to its comparison with the NPQH cohort. Again NPQH participants were older and more likely to be female

than HPSL participants. In this cohort NPQH participants were, however, far less likely to be BME. At baseline, 80% of NPQH participants were already in senior leadership roles, compared to just 18% of HPSL participants. A further 9% were already Headteachers or Principals, compared to no HPSL participants. Again, NPQH participants, unsurprisingly in light of their starting position, moved into headship, with the proportion of headteachers in this group increasing gradually from 9 to 50% over the four year period studied here. HPSL participants moved into senior leadership, the proportion rising rapidly from 18% to 78% in the first year, and then gradually increasing further to reach 87% by year 4, with a further 4% moving into headship.

Figure 14: NPQH participants 2012 cohort career progression by role

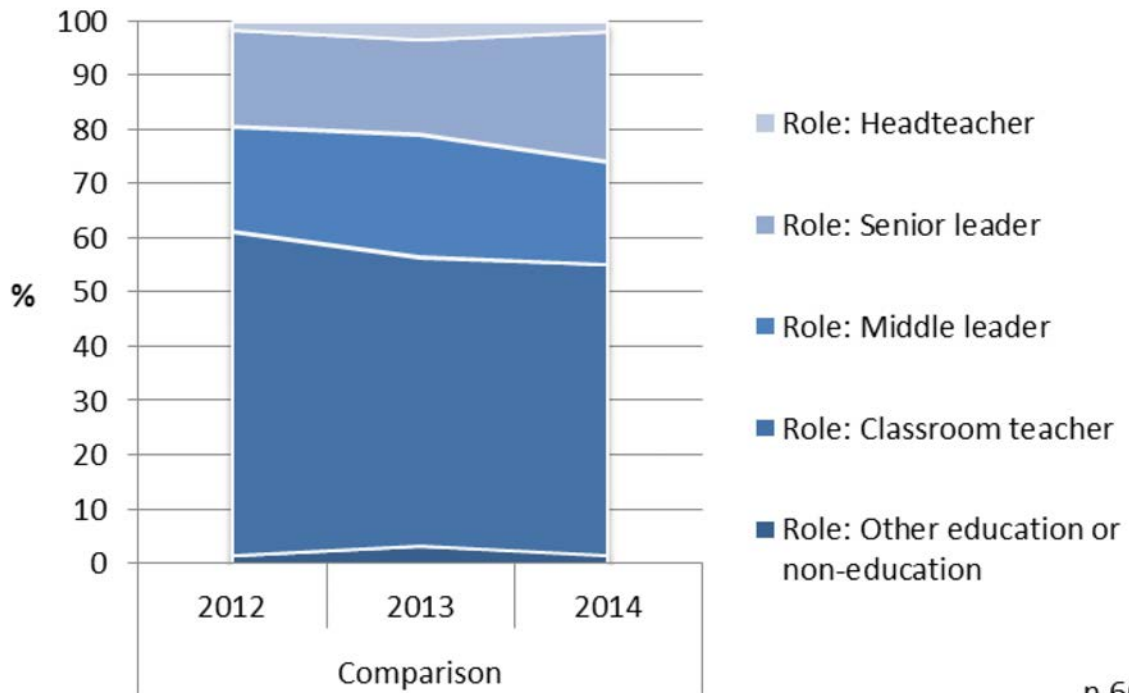


Source: Analysis of School Workforce Census data 2011-2014

2013 Cohort progression

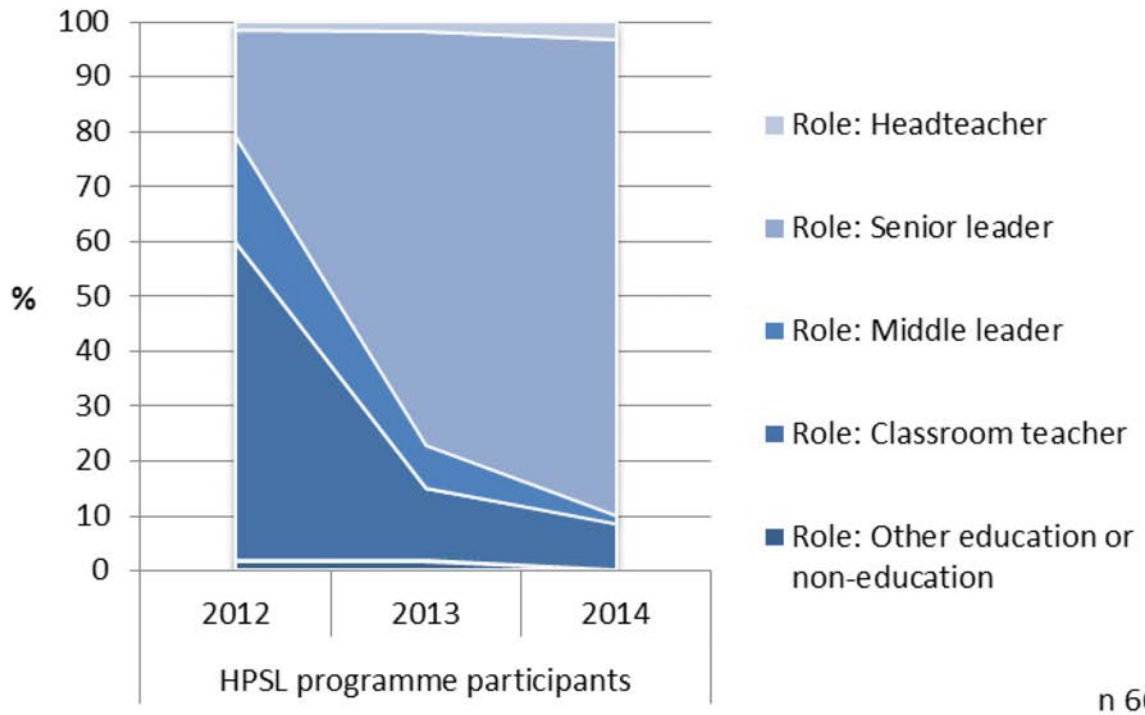
For the 2013 cohort, there were again only limited changes to demographics of the HPSL and comparison groups following the baseline year (2012), and the two groups did not differ significantly on demographics or phase in any of the studied years. In terms of roles, however, there were significant differences. Comparison teachers saw limited movement into senior leadership roles over time (from 19% to 26%), while for the HPSL participants there was strong movement into senior leadership roles in particular (from 19% to 87%). The main change happened in 2013, but there was additional significant movement into senior leadership in the following year (from 77% to 90%) These differences were again reflected in the payscales.

Figure 15: Comparator group for 2013 cohort career progression by role



Source: Analysis of School Workforce Census data 2012-2014

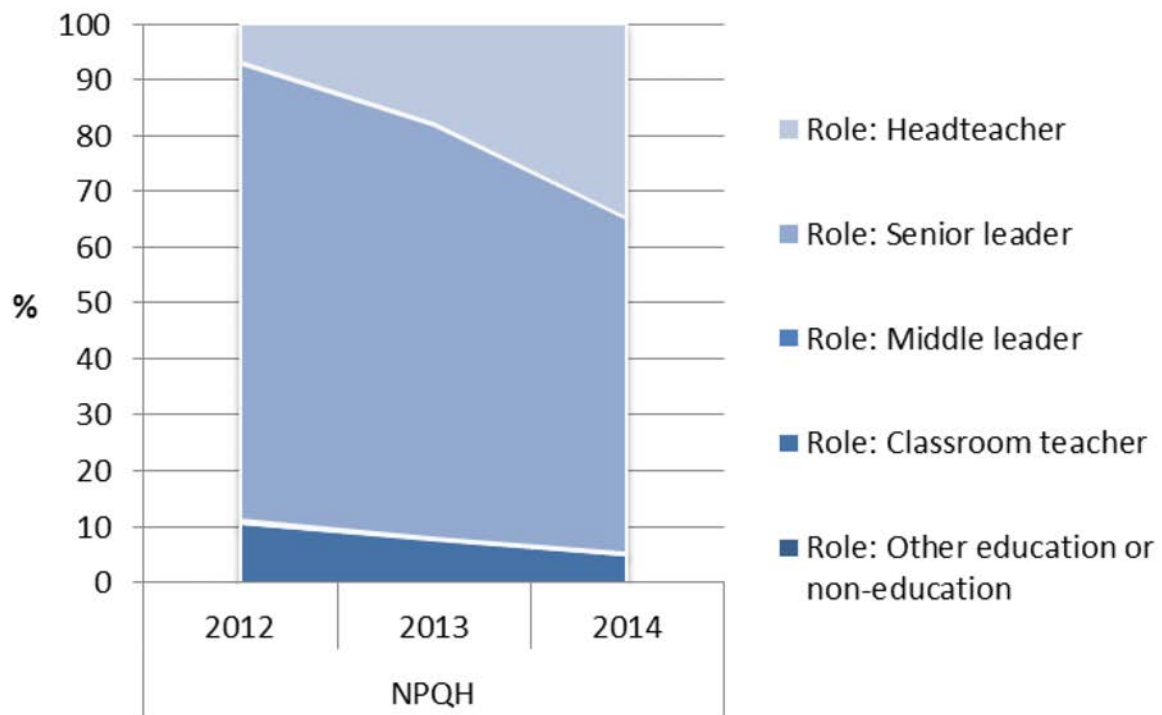
Figure 16: HPSL participants 2013 Cohort career progression by role



Source: Analysis of School Workforce Census data 2011-2014

The 2013 cohort showed a similar picture in relation to the contemporary NPQH cohort, with NPQH participants more likely to be female and less likely to be BME than HPSL participants. They were also older, and more likely to work in primary schools. They were also far more likely to be in senior leadership positions when they started the programme. Over time, they moved gradually into headship positions. HPSL participants moved more rapidly into senior leadership positions, though less frequently into headship.

Figure 17: NPQH participants 2013 cohort career progression by role



Source: Analysis of School Workforce Census data 2012-2014

The movement of cohort 2014 into their residency roles is also detailed in the full technical report on this analysis alongside descriptive analysis of the recent career progression of earlier cohorts. (Muijs D and Mugendawala H, 2016)

Progression to leadership in challenging schools

The analysis of School Workforce Census data shows that HPSL participants across cohorts 2011 to 2013 who had moved into senior leadership continued to work in schools that were far more disadvantaged than the national population. This remained the case across the years following programme participation. In particular, they worked in schools with higher proportions of pupils eligible for Free School Meals, higher indices for multiple deprivation affecting children, and a far higher proportion of pupils who did not have English as their first language. However, they tended to work in schools with higher proportions of girls and higher levels of attainment than the national average. (Muijs D and Mugendawala H, 2016)

A large majority of HPSL participants reported that they had continued to be employed in a challenging school after their initial residency year, despite the fact that the majority had also moved schools since their residency year.

Table 4: Participants' schools after residency year/ after the Future Leaders programme

	2009-2011	2012-2013	2014
Total	63	101	79
Working in a challenging school	84%	85%	89%
Working in their residency school	17%	33%	53%

Participants views on their progression

A small group of survey respondents (35 participants) were already in or were about to start a headship at the time of completing the survey. A large majority (89%) of these respondents had achieved headship faster than expected, although a few respondents had found that they achieved headship when they had expected, or a year later than expected. A majority of those respondents who had already achieved headship, believed that their promotion to headship had taken place much faster as a result of their participation in the HPSL programme.

The majority (81%) of survey respondents who had not achieved headship at the time of the survey also believed that they had been promoted to their current role faster as a result of the programme. Respondents who estimated faster progression to headship, thought that they would reach headship between 1 and 6 years faster. A minority (16%) did not ascribe any change in the pace of their promotion to the programme, and a small number of participants thought that their progression had been slower as a result of the programme.

In-depth interviews elicited a similar range of responses from participants. Those interviewees who had achieved headship attributed their success to the support and learning they received during the programme as well as the support they continued to receive after completing the programme. Most of them believed that it would have taken them a significantly longer amount of time to secure headship had they not participated in the programme.

“I would not be a headteacher right now if it wasn't for the training and support that I got from the programme. It was fantastic and I am where I am today because of it”. (Participant)

Interviews found that some participants had progressed quite quickly from assistant head or other senior teaching roles to deputy head or head, and felt that the programme had been largely responsible for this, both in terms of skills, confidence and also practical support with applications and interviews. Many felt that they would have made this transition without this development programme eventually, but that it would have taken longer for them to develop the skills and the confidence that the programme had given them.

Participants also mentioned that networking was an important part of the programme which contributed in leading them to secure senior leadership roles.

Impact on schools

Participants carried out at least three whole school improvement initiatives during their three years within the development programme. Participants were required to complete these projects to a satisfactory level, showing that they had achieved specified outcomes in line with school improvement priorities and, particularly in their first year, demonstrating their readiness to progress to a substantive senior leadership role. This section includes, firstly, the findings of a matched comparator analysis of engaged schools (Muijs D and Mugendawala H, 2016), to understand any impact on pupil outcomes at a programme level, and second the findings of a desk-top review of evidence submitted by HPSL participants and their headteachers as a result of their projects, to understand any impact at a school level. Finally, some of the views of participants and residency heads are also presented.

Pupil outcomes comparator analysis

A comparator group of schools similar to those engaged with the HPSL programme¹⁴ was created using propensity score matching methods. Schools were divided into cohorts, based on the year in which participant leaders were first recorded in each of the schools, and matched to other schools based on their characteristics before the first employment of a participant in the engaged school.

Variables used to create the matched comparator group were school attainment levels, the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM), IDACI scores, the proportion of pupils speaking a first language other than English at home, proportions of pupil with special educational needs (SEN), the proportion of boys in the school. The matching process was successful in creating a balanced comparator group. Following the successful matching process, multilevel modelling was used to look at the relationship between being engaged with the HPSL programme and pupil outcomes.

Some caveats common to most analysis of this kind need to be taken into consideration, in particular that there may be other factors which distinguish HPSL engaged schools from schools not engaged with the programme, but which are not measured or measurable, for instance factors relating to existing school processes and leadership.

The details of the relationships between the other variables analysed and attainment are only applicable to this group of schools analysed, and reflect the additional impact of individual characteristics above the contextual impact of the school. These relationships

¹⁴ An outline for types of school deemed to be engaged with the HPSL is included on page 16. School results were analysed by cohort, schools were assigned to cohorts by the first year of any period of contiguous engagement with the programme.

are not generalisable to all schools. Full details of the analysis are found in the accompanying report by Daniel Muijs and Hamis Mugendawala (2016).

Outcomes for all pupils

For schools first engaged in cohort 2011 or 2012, key stage 4 attainment was negatively related to social background, gender and special educational needs (SEN). Being part of the HPSL programme was not significantly related to attainment and this finding was consistent across the years to 2015.

For the 2013 cohort there were again significant relationships of attainment with social background, gender and SEN. For this cohort of schools, HPSL participation was also significant and positively related to key stage 4 attainment in 2013 and 2015. The 2014 cohort showed significant positive relationships between being part of the HPSL programme and key stage 4 attainment in both 2014 and 2015.

The effect sizes were weak to modest. As in previous cohorts there was a negative relationship between social disadvantage, having SEN and being male and attainment in both years. This is not altogether surprising, as the indirect effect of leadership on attainment means that analyses looking at a direct effect of leadership development on attainment rarely show strong effects.

The picture for the key stage 2 2014 cohort, the only primary cohort of sufficient scale and with more than one year of engagement, was a mixed one. SEN is negatively related to attainment in both years, but gender, FSM and language spoken at home were only significant in 2015. Being part of the HPSL programme was significantly (but weakly) related to attainment in 2014 but not 2015.

Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

In order to look at possible impacts on disadvantaged students, we selected only students eligible for FSM for comparison. We found that in all cases IDACI became non-significant, as would be predicted. There was no evidence of a programme level impact on the attainment of disadvantaged pupils.

Impact initiative review

Analysis of school improvement projects, known to participants as impact initiative forms, was carried out by BMG (BMG, 2016). A total of 100 forms were analysed. Forms represented a spread of residency, year 2 and year 3 initiatives, as well as a range of different scores for the initiatives score, and school contexts. Given that completion of the form did not become obligatory until cohort 2012 there is a skew, to some extent, towards residency year forms in the documentary analysis.

Analysis of the impact initiatives forms provide credible evidence that participants and residency heads are making leadership choices in schools to make changes that directly contribute to the achievement of better outcomes for pupils in the challenging schools that they are working in.

Participants goals were often set as a result of a review of the schools improvement plan, sometimes in response to Ofsted recommendations, or at the recommendation of the head so that they would be consistent and in line with the school's wider aims and objectives. Participants articulated the rationale for their goals, including data-led improvement plans, informed by school performance data and comparison to other schools, pupil feedback, review of the quality of teaching and learning, or in response to new initiatives or evidence to change policies and procedures.

Example goals:

“Improve marking and feedback to ensure there is high-quality practice taking place consistently across all departments in school.” (Participant)

“To narrow the gap in achievement in Y10 between students eligible for Pupil Premium and those who are not.” (Participant)

“To ensure students are provided with effective feedback and targets.” (Participant)

Impact initiative targets set by participants in conjunction with their heads, were mostly related to: increasing attainment and closing the attainment gap; improving teaching and learning; and improving literacy. Other targets addressed attendance, quality of exam predictions, exclusions, or use of particular resources e.g. e-learning. Most participants identified three targets for their initiative; these often followed a single theme, varying by subject, pupil characteristics or year. Where targets related to increasing the quality of teaching the subject was, in many cases, not specified. The most popular focus for targets relating to attainment were maths and English.

Example targets:

“75% of students to achieve 5 GCSEs at grades A*- C including English and Maths.” (Participant)

“100% of most able pupils to achieve 3 levels of progress in all subjects and 75% to achieve 4 levels of progress in English and Maths.” (Participant)

In most cases participants had been able to meet their targets and of the impact initiatives analysed nearly two thirds of participants had met or exceeded at least one of their targets (amongst the third of participants who had not met any of their targets, they

were often close to achieving them). The impact initiatives proved particularly likely to be successful when they were related to implementing and embedding specific policies and systems and when linked to the improvement of teaching. A smaller proportion of achieved targets related to improvements in pupil's attainment at GCSE. Other achieved targets included key stage 3 attainment improvements and improvements to behaviour and attendance.

A third of participants had not met any of their targets, but there was often not a large gap in what had been achieved compared with what was remaining, for example, one participant set the target for 80% of students to achieve three levels of progress in English, and the outcome achieved was 79%.

Table 5: Outcomes of impact initiative targets

	n	%
Exceeded target	30	17%
Achieved target	77	43%
Partially achieved target	60	34%
Missed (with no signs of improvement)	11	6%
Total targets	178	

Source: BMG Research

Where targets were not met, participants related this to a range of issues including wider contextual factors within the school (such as changes to the curriculum, existing policies, or approaches to data collection) and changes to the Future Leader's role in the school.

In-depth interviews, also carried out by BMG (2016), provided additional information about participants' and residency school headteachers' views on the impact of participants in their schools. A wide range of school and pupil related impacts resulting from the programme were reported by participants and residency heads. These impacts were frequently as a result of the participant's impact initiative, but wider and sustained impacts as a result of other actions and ongoing work during subsequent time in senior roles, including headship, were also noted.

Participants and residency heads interviewed mostly felt that as a result of taking part in the programme and the theory and skills they had developed, they now had the ability to make improvements in schools and had evidence of times when they had:

- Improved teaching and learning at the school through the introduction of specific initiatives and coaching and developing staff.

- Improved the culture of the school by contributing to wider activities such as business planning, staff development, and ethos development.
- Helped reduce the attainment gap as a result of the improvement in teaching and learning, which in some cases had dramatically improved pupil's achievement rates.

Beyond the skills they had learned during the Foundations phase, the factors that participants and residency heads felt had supported the achievement of these impacts included ensuring that they had regular support from the LDA and their mentor, as this can help to ensure the participant receives regular advice and reflects on their practice. In addition, networking with other participants and new colleagues was also seen as important as it can ensure spread of best practice and source of support. Finally, some participants noted that they had engaged in wider learning and development building on the programme by reading relevant research and best practice literature, as well as taking part in further development activities.

Conversely, poor relationships with their in-school mentor or LDA or a lack of buy in from wider staff or the head were noted as key factors that had meant some initiatives had not had their intended impact, as the participant had felt unsupported and did not know where to receive additional support.

Whilst many of the most notable impacts reported were as a result of the participant's impact initiative, interestingly in some cases participants reported that they felt other actions had more impact. This was sometimes noted as due to the fact that if they had changed schools for their residency they were required to decide on an impact initiative before they knew the school needs and processes in detail. Those who had also progressed into more senior roles and headship also noted that they had now had more opportunities to have an impact.

Evaluation conclusions

Impact on schools and participant progression

Analysis of the relationship between participation in the HPSL programme and attainment provided limited evidence of the HPSL programme's impact on attainment. While there was higher attainment in HPSL schools than comparator schools, any difference was only statistically significant overall for the 2014 key stage 4 cohort and in two of three years for the 2013 key stage 4 cohort. The associated effect size was weak to modest. This finding was not altogether surprising, as analyses looking at a direct effect of leadership development on attainment rarely show strong effects. (Muijs D. and Mugendawala H. 2016).

However, analysis of 100 school improvement projects provides some evidence that participants' leadership in schools is contributing to the achievement of better outcomes for pupils. Their efforts were particularly likely to be successful when they were related to implementing and embedding specific policies and systems and when linked to the improvement of teaching.

Over time, there has been a significant movement of participants into senior leadership, and, to a lesser extent, headteacher roles. Compared to their matched comparison sample, HPSL participants have statistically significantly greater and more rapid movement into senior leadership roles. While promotion to senior leadership is part of the programme design, the analysis shows that this is sustained after the residency year. The evidence is suggestive of a programme effect.

HPSL participants across cohorts 2011 to 2013 who had moved into senior leadership continued to work in schools that were far more disadvantaged than the national population. This remained the case across the years following programme participation, and they continued to be more likely to be working in challenging schools than the comparator group.

Compared to NPQH participants, HPSL participants are less likely to be in senior leadership at the start of the programme. Cohorts of NPQH graduates tend to progress gradually into headship, 10-20% additional promotions each year, while cohorts of HPSL participants, starting from a lower hierarchical position, tend to move into senior leadership rapidly, 60-80% promotions in the first year.

Participant experience

A large majority of the HPSL participants rated both their satisfaction and the contribution of the programme to their leadership development highly, 88% and 91% respectively.

They generally felt that their training had prepared them well for the challenges of headship in a challenging school. Survey respondents wrote about the impact the programme had on their development as a leader, the high quality of the training and the high quality information and guidance on current evidence and best-practice.

Some survey respondents suggested that the programme could be improved by greater differentiation of the programme to better reflect the context of their school, or their personal circumstances and individual career plans. A smaller number of respondents had specifically praised the programme for its responsiveness or tailored personal provision. Other areas highlighted for improvement by some participants were varying quality in the experiences of participants in their training, residency year, or coaching. In some cases this was perceived to be related to region.

The survey of participants (NCTL, 2016) showed Leadership Development Advisor (LDA) support and Foundations training were most widely perceived to be important for participants' development, progression towards headship and their impact in schools. Important aspects of these were the high calibre of speakers and peers at the Foundation training, and the interplay between the support from the LDAs with the opportunity to lead school improvement through the residency year.

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college.evaluation@education.gov.uk or www.education.gov.uk/contactus

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