

THE PRIMARY HEADTEACHERS' CONFERENCE

CULTIVATING WELLBEING AND INSPIRATION IN LEADERSHIP

Thursday 9th - Friday 10th October 2025

Hinxton Hall Conference Centre, Wellcome Genome Campus, Hinxton, Cambridgeshire, CB10 1RQ

Day 1

Time	Details	Location
9:15 am	Conference registration opens Tea & Coffee and Exhibition	Exhibition Hall
10:00 am	Welcome to Day One Cathy Longhurst, Headteacher, Mandeville Primary School & Carole Bennett, CEO, HFL Education	Frances Crick Auditorium
10:15 am	The Leadership Challenge – Doing more with less through purpose & belonging Vic Goddard, Head Teacher and Independent Thinking Associate Vic's keynote will explore how the young people we now serve bring new challenges in an environment of diminishing resources. It will highlight how fostering inclusion, and a sense of belonging is crucial to overcoming these challenges and achieving more with less. Introduced by Carole Bennett, CEO, HFL Education	
11:00am	Sponsor Dragons Den An opportunity to hear from exhibitors at the Primary Headteachers' Conference about who they are and how their products and services can help you. Compèred by James Roach CEO of the Inclusive Multi Academy Trust	
11:15am	DRUMBA Energiser	
11:20 am	Break	Exhibition Hall

Workshops	Rosalind Franklin (80)	Barbara McLintock (60)	Green Room (25)	Pompeiiian Room (25)	Library (25)
11:40 am	Strategic leadership of AI in your school Chris Carter, HFL Education	Talking Heads Anne Peck, HFL Education	Working collaboratively with governors in a changing and challenging world Cathy Irons and Jonathan Ellam, HFL Education	Handling complaints professionally: Dealing with difficult cases Paul Davies, HFL Education	How to better serve disadvantaged pupils Joanna Di Bella, HFL Education
12:25 pm	Lunch				
1:25 pm	Courageous conversations: Leading with confidence and compassion Anne Peck & Clair Hicks, HFL Education	Supporting resilience for SENCOs/SEN teams Louise Barrell & Becky Rothwell, HFL Education	Ofsted – how leaders can utilise the Ofsted toolkit to inform self-evaluation Lisa Massey & Kate Beaumont, HFL Education	Creating strong school communities Michael Catchpool & Sarah-Jane Ferguson, HFL Education	Navigating your way in Hertfordshire - finding the right support at the right time Carole Bennett & Heidi Otranen, HFL Education
2:10 pm	Break				
2:40 pm	Strategic leadership of AI in your school Chris Carter, HFL Education	Managing staff absence Chris Williams, HFL Education	Balancing leadership with wellbeing - making time for you Catherine Tallis & Linda Hardman, HFL Education	Working collaboratively with governors in a changing and challenging world Cathy Irons & Jonathan Ellam, HFL Education	A Headteacher's role in monitoring effectiveness of Safeguarding procedures Dominic Bedford & Lisa Massey, HFL Education
3:25 pm	Move to auditorium				
3:35 pm	Headline Sponsor Keynote Introduced by Anne Peck, HFL Education				Frances Crick Auditorium

3:50 pm	<p>Five Questions For Leaders: Thriving in Today's Schools Professor Zachary Walker, Head of Department for the Department of Psychology and Human Development (PHD) at the University College London Institute of Education (IOE)</p> <p>This provocative session examines the most incisive and stimulating issues facing leaders and reveals the thought-processes to thrive in leadership. Informed by the latest research, and grounded in practical experience, this talk balances the importance of recognising and honouring colleagues and learners with the performance demands of leading in a dynamic, rapidly evolving world.</p> <p>Are we willing to ask ourselves tough questions in order to provide the best for our teams?</p> <p>Introduced by Cathy Longhurst, Headteacher, Mandeville Primary School</p>	
4:35 pm	Closing thoughts and reflections – Anne Peck	
4:45 pm	<p>Conference day closes Residential guests check in</p>	
6:00 pm	New Heads Welcome	Green Room
7:00 pm	Drinks Reception	Library Bar
7:30 pm	Gala Dinner	Chestnut Suite

Day 2

Time	Details			Location
09:15 am	Conference registration opens Tea and Coffee served in Exhibition Hall			Exhibition Hall
09:45 am	Welcome to Day Two Anne Peck, HFL Education			Frances Crick Auditorium
10:00 am	From Adversity to Achievement: A Journey of Resilience and Empowerment Professor Katriona O’Sullivan Katriona's keynote speech will chronicle her journey from poverty, teenage pregnancy, and homelessness to earning a PhD from Trinity College Dublin and becoming an award-winning lecturer. She will share her struggles and how she overcame adversity, inspiring the audience with her resilience. Her story will provide valuable lessons and ideas on supporting those less fortunate to succeed. Introduced by Anne Peck, HFL Education			
10:45 am	Break			
Workshops	Frances Crick Auditorium	Rosalind Franklin (80)	Barbara McLintock (60)	
11:05 am	Courageous conversations: Leading with confidence and compassion Anne Peck & Clair Hicks, HFL Education	Managing staff absence Chris Williams, HFL Education	Supporting resilience for SENCOs/SEN teams Louise Barrell & Becky Rothwell, HFL Education	
11:50 am	Move to next workshop			
11:55 am	Balancing leadership with wellbeing - making time for you Catherine Tallis & Linda Hardman HFL Education	Talking Heads Anne Peck, HFL Education	Handling complaints professionally: Dealing with difficult cases Paul Davies, HFL Education	
12:40 pm	Lunch			
1:30 pm	Close of event & departure			

Session Details

This alphabetical list gives full details of each workshop session, enabling you to make an informed choice as you build your personalised programme.

A Headteacher's role in monitoring effectiveness of Safeguarding procedures

Dominic Bedford & Lisa Massey, HFL Education

This session focuses on equipping Headteachers with the skills to evaluate and enhance their school's safeguarding practices. It covers key areas such as policy implementation, staff training, and the importance of regular audits to ensure a safe environment for all students

Balancing leadership with wellbeing - making time for you

Catherine Tallis and Linda Hardman, HFL Education

This session will focus on you and your wellbeing. An opportunity to pause and reflect on your emotional and mental health, we will explore, through a case study example, strategies for managing stress and avoiding burnout.

Creating strong school communities

Michael Catchpool & Sarah-Jane Ferguson, HFL Education

This workshop focuses on building cohesive and supportive school environments. It covers strategies for fostering collaboration among staff, students, and parents/carers, emphasising the importance of engaging families in school activities and decision-making processes to strengthen the overall community.

Courageous conversations: Leading with confidence and compassion

Anne Peck & Clair Hicks, HFL Education

The focus of this session is to empower Headteachers to handle difficult conversations with clarity and empathy. It covers techniques for maintaining constructive dialogue, fostering mutual respect, and achieving positive outcomes even in challenging situations

Handling complaints professionally: Dealing with difficult cases

Paul Davies, HFL Education

This workshop will equip Headteachers with strategies to manage complaints effectively and maintain professionalism in challenging situations. It covers techniques for active listening, empathy, and assertiveness, ensuring that complaints are resolved constructively, and stress is managed efficiently.

How to better serve disadvantaged pupils

Joanna Di Bella, HFL Education

This workshop focuses on strategies to support the academic and personal development of disadvantaged students. It covers identifying barriers to learning, implementing targeted interventions, and fostering an inclusive school environment to help all pupils thrive

Managing staff absence

Chris Williams, HFL Education

The focus of this workshop is to provide strategies for effectively handling staff absences to minimise disruptions and maintain productivity. It covers best practices for tracking absences, supporting employees, and implementing policies that balance organisational needs with staff well-being

Navigating your way in Hertfordshire - finding the right support at the right time

Carole Bennett & Heidi Otranen, HFL Education

This workshop aims to help Headteachers identify and access local support services efficiently. It covers strategies for connecting with community resources, understanding available assistance, and ensuring timely support for students and families in need

Ofsted – how leaders can utilise the Ofsted toolkit to inform self evaluation

Lisa Massey & Kate Beaumont, HFL Education

This workshop focuses on helping Headteachers leverage the Ofsted toolkit to enhance their school's self evaluation processes. It covers practical strategies for using the toolkit to identify strengths and areas for improvement, ensuring continuous development and readiness for inspections.

Strategic leadership of AI in your school

Chris Carter, HFL Education

This workshop focuses on guiding Headteachers on the ethical considerations, safeguarding, and legal compliance surrounding AI adoption. It will explore defining a clear purpose for AI, developing effective policies, and maintaining crucial human oversight. Attendees will leave with practical actions to consider further in their schools.

Supporting resilience for SENCOs/SEN teams

Louise Barrell and/or Becky Rothwell, HFL Education

This workshop focuses on strategies to help SENCOs and their teams build resilience in their demanding roles. It covers effective time management, delegation techniques, and self-care practices to maintain a healthy work-life balance and enhance their capacity to support students

Talking Heads

Anne Peck, HFL Education

This session will provide delegates with current examples of inspirational leadership and the building of a positive culture, with Heads from across Hertfordshire.

Working collaboratively with governors in a changing and challenging world

Cathy Irons and Jonathan Ellam, HFL Education

During this session, we will discuss how school governors and trustees play a pivotal role as leaders of educational settings in navigating a myriad of challenges, including stakeholder engagement and effective partnership working.