

## Commitment to Women’s Leadership Development

*“EborHope TSA supported a positive, approachable and organised facilitation of the programmes, providing a safe and efficient platform to develop and progress. Through EborHope TSA I continued coaching and this has helped me feel more confident. Amanda Underwood, All Saints RC School York, WLPN 18/19 and Next Steps 19/20*

### 1. Background

Ebor Hope Teaching School Alliance (EHTSA) is not just committed to developing and encouraging its workforce, the vision and values go further by striving to empower the workforce to flourish and thrive, and they articulate the interwoven nature of every staff member’s development:

- We are not on our own as **growing together** is at the heart of our development. We are **committed to continual personal development** – for ourselves and on behalf of others. **All of us are learners.**

Growing together, as well as empowerment of self really shines through the diversity programmes, the teaching school has secured investment for over the past few years:

*“The best leaders are ones who build and take time to get to know the strengths of, diversely skilled teams and work out ways to utilise each person’s strengths to the fullest; one way this is reflected is in the complementary insights women and men have to offer.”*

Sarah Henderson, Barlby High School, 2019-2020 Women’s Leadership Programme

Three years ago, EHTSA began its journey of supporting women in leadership through a very successful ‘Women’s Leadership Programme and Network’ (WLPN) and the York Women Leading in Education Network. Since then, it has gone from strength to strength in securing equality and diversity funding from the Department for Education (DfE) for further cohorts of the WLPN as well as other programmes. Through these programmes EHTSA have, to date, supported over 75 women and 80% of them have either gone on to a promotion or are actively seeking their next promotion and state they have grown in confidence as a result of the programme they have engaged with.

### 2. The Programmes

- 2018 – 2019 - York Women Leading in Education Network
- 2018 – 2019 - Women’s Leadership Programme and Network (WLPN)
- 2019 – 2020 – WLPN – Next Steps
- 2019 – 2020 - Women’s Leadership Programme and Network (WLPN)
- 2019 – 2020 - Senior Leader Coaching Programme

## Programme Outlines

The table below highlights the aims and some of the key content of the programmes. All were advertised to women across the Teaching Schools Alliance network of schools to apply to participate.

| York Women Leading in Education Network (Coaching) (2018 – 2019)   | Women’s Leadership Programme and Network (WLPN) (2018 – 2019 & 2019 – 2020)   |
|--|---|
| <p>This network supported women to explore and apply for leadership roles in schools.</p> <p>It was successful in raising the profile and importance of supporting women with their careers and identifying more women with potential and drive to progress into leadership.</p>   | <p>Delivered in partnership with the Women Leading in Education programme these three network meetings enabled participants to hear female leaders talk about their own career paths this included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Previous programme participants</li> <li>● Assistant Director at York City Council</li> <li>● Senior Staff Members from a Multi Academy Trust, including a CEO.</li> </ul>   |
| Senior Leader Coaching Programme (2019 – 2020)   | WLPN Next Steps (2019 – 2020)   |
| <p>This professional coaching training focused on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Impactful coaching training</li> <li>● Having transformational conversations with women committed to developing as leaders</li> <li>● Impacting on the leadership development of women</li> <li>● Empowering colleagues to apply for promotions</li> <li>● Supporting colleagues to structure and establish coaching communities within their school.</li> </ul> | <p>This programme focused on the more practical skills needed to secure a promotion including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Exploration of personal Myers Briggs Type (Personality) Indicator</li> <li>● Developing self-awareness that might be crucial to self-directed change and learning</li> <li>● Applying knowledge of the MBTI to consider leadership styles, individual strengths and potential pitfalls</li> <li>● Guest speakers, CV writing, interview preparation and mock interviews.</li> </ul> |

Participant evaluation and case studies demonstrate the skills and knowledge they have developed because of these programmes:

***“ In the desperation to fill silences, leaders may believe that they are helping, but actually the well-meaning agreements or sympathetic statements become distractions... Encouraging dependence in colleagues is not leadership”***  
***Heather Wright, Barlby High School, Senior Leader Coaching Programme 19/20***

***“I know that it is possible for me to talk about myself in a positive way without sounding arrogant ... you aren’t saying how good you are, you are saying what you have achieved, and this isn’t boasting, it is based in fact”***  
***Alison Gadd, Graham School, Next Steps Programme 19/20***

On each of the WLPN programmes and the Next Steps Programme participants were required to develop a personal action plan, based on their individual needs for the duration of the programme. The plans varied in content, but all were focused on developing as leaders, some examples are below:

- Developing leadership skills
- Supporting NQTs
- Developing pedagogical techniques for sharing with colleagues
- Actively seeking out career development opportunities
- Develop ability to have difficult conversations at work
- Understanding self, in order to grow in leadership
- Develop confidence in leadership abilities

Progress and development of these action plans were referred to throughout the programmes and participants were asked to reflect on them in their 'after event' evaluations. These reflections proved invaluable in ensuring success with these clearly defined and bespoke action plans.

### Underpinning Principles

EHTSA ensured that each programme lived out TSA's vision of 'providing high quality opportunities to develop excellent practice', therefore, each programme required participants to commit to:

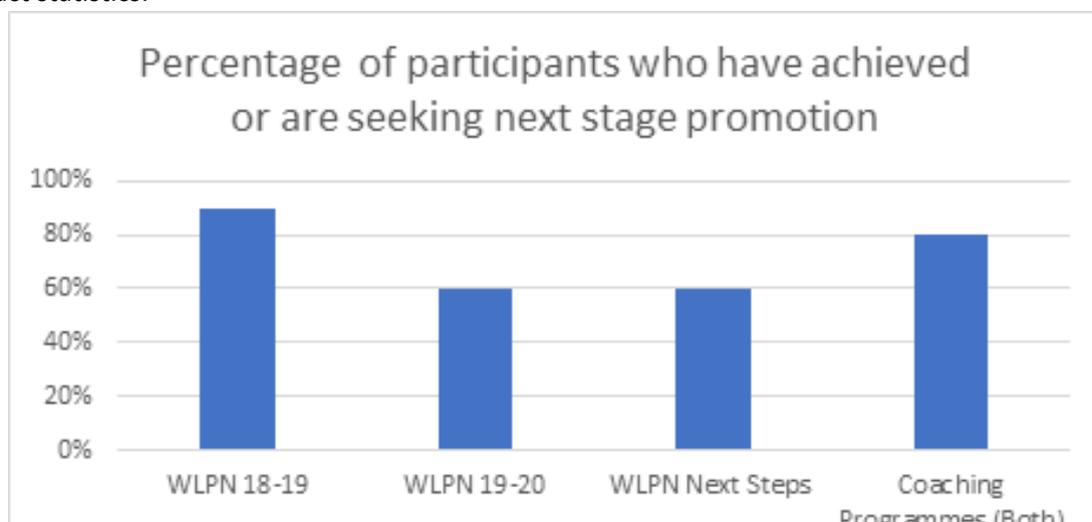
- Attendance at events
- Sharing learning in their school
- Completing baseline, mid-point and end line surveys
- Being an advocate for the programme.

Whilst, at first glance these may seem like administrative requirements, they proved to be pivotal to all the programmes' successes. Each element ensured commitment and reflection on learning. These commitments have set the foundation for the incredibly positive engagement in, and impact from, the programmes. The surveys were successful in tracking the growth of individual participants and encouraging them to think about the impact of their learning, their next steps and how they were going to share their learning with other women:

***The biggest insight I gained...was learning about imposter syndrome and how this effects women without them even being aware, I was shocked at some of the statistics shared on the course and I share these in hope that it helps other women.*** Grace Hamilton, Allerton Bywater Primary, WLPN 19/20

### 3. Programme Statistics

All the programmes were rigorously evaluated in terms of content, delivery, quality of input and impact. The quality of support delivered is unquestionable with over 90% of participants consistently rating the quality or delivery and session structure as good or better. The evaluation questions varied by programme, but below are some themes across programmes and individual impact statistics:



***“I applied for a Deputy Head post I did not get the role but just getting an interview was a huge step for me and one which I do not think I would have taken without this course.”***

**Rebecca Matten, Carr Infant School, Next Steps 19/20**

WLPN (2019 – 2020) asked some additional questions which strengthen the link between the programme and exploration career development, the figures below are percentage of participants who strongly agreed or agreed that the programme has:

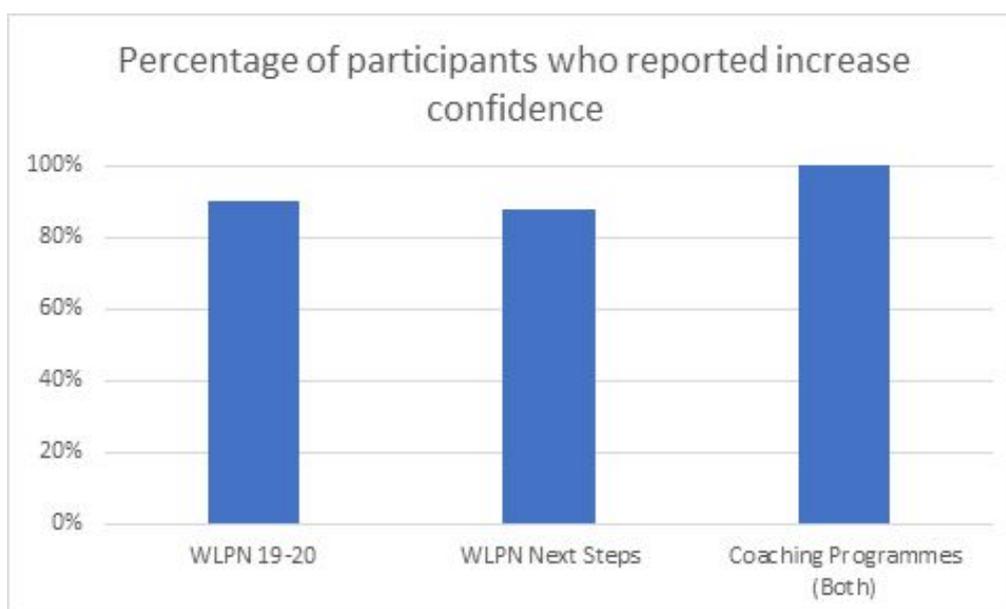
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|---|------------|
| Given me the opportunity to explore different leadership pathways   | <b>85%</b> |
| Enabled me to consider how I might develop leadership opportunities in my current role or a different role. | <b>94%</b> |

Similarly, the participants on the Senior Leader Coaching Programme (2019 – 2020) answered in powerful numbers that the programme has:

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| Encouraged me to reflect on my current leadership and how I might use skills learnt to have greater impact | <b>100%</b> |
| Enabled me to consider my leadership more broadly  | <b>93%</b>  |

Across all the programmes in the ‘end evaluations’ participants write of:

- Updating their CV
- Applying for promotions
- Exploring different career path options
- Improved self-awareness
- Recognition of limiting beliefs
- Commitment to leading and supporting others
- Creating opportunities for their own development
- Feeling more empowered and confident (the table below demonstrates this)



***“A personal focus is to always try now to push myself out of my comfort zone and have confidence in my skills, abilities and leadership.”*** Amy Wiles, The Marvell College, Next Steps Programme  
19/20

#### 4. Programme Outcomes - Developing Personally as Professionals

The programme statistics are compelling evidence that the programmes have been successful in supporting women to develop as leaders across EHTSA. But the programmes did more than develop a pipeline of potential school leaders, they were instrumental in building confidence in their abilities and commitment to the profession. The programme case studies make very powerful reading and they remind us that progress in learning and development of leadership is a personal experience and one which is not always about hard measurables but softer progressions that impact on the small everyday interactions these women have:

***“...imposter syndrome! I don’t know whether I feel it because of being a woman ... but I always feel like I shouldn’t really be where I am or receiving praise for things I’ve done.”***  
Katy Atkinson, Graham School

Participants regularly mention the barriers and limiting beliefs they have overcome (or are consistently working to overcome) to progress in their roles as emotionally intelligent and empowering leaders. Several participants commented on the impact of hearing about ‘imposter syndrome’. Katy, a participant on the WLPN 2019 - 2020 cohort sums up many of the comments: At the point of joining the programme Katy had been teaching for 12 years and had begun to think about applying for a role with whole school responsibility. She is now the SENCo! In her own words:

***“When you are working for a good team but feel a bit stagnant in your current role look up not out.”***

#### 5. Programme Legacies

Throughout the programmes participants wholeheartedly engaged with the drive of EHTSA to “develop the leadership of others by empowering them and building confidence, enabling them to achieve their goals and support others to do so”. Across all the programmes participants consistently talk about growing other people in their leadership and supporting them to do this in their schools.

Below are some comments from some of the programmes that encapsulates these commitments:

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|---|---|
| <b>Women’s Leadership Programme and Network (WLPN) (2018 – 2019 &amp; 2019 – 2020)</b>  |   |
| <i>“I hope to be an advocate for the programme and for women in leadership by encouraging and supporting anyone approaching the next steps of their career with practical advice...I also aim to model professional and proactive management qualities, whatever my job title.”</i> |   |
| <b>Senior Leader Coaching Programme (2019 – 2020)</b>   | <b>WLPN Next Steps (2019 – 2020)</b>  |
| <i>“Encouraging colleagues to look beyond their current positions. I think with a lot of colleagues</i>   | <i>“I will continue to look for opportunities to progress myself and I will also use what I have learnt to support others.”</i> |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><i>they really don't realise just what a good job they are doing."</i></p> <p><i>"I will endeavour to support and develop women in all stages of their career."</i></p> <p><i>"Encouraging dependency in colleagues is not leadership."</i></p> | <p><i>"I am keen to build other colleagues up in the process allowing me to pay forward the way that I have been built up by this programme."</i></p> |
|--|---|

EHTSA has had incredible success with delivering these high-quality programmes. They have impacted positively on the participants and the legacies of these programmes will be the growth of many more future leaders; a commitment from all of these participants (and in turn from the colleagues they nurture) to develop others, to 'pay it forward'.