



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**SYDNEY**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# **Investigating the Influence and Impact of *Leading from the Middle: A School-based Strategy for Middle Leaders in Schools***

Commissioned by The Association of  
Independent Schools Leadership Centre  
New South Wales

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Professional learning is likely to be more effective when it is perceived by teachers to be close to practice, focused on the work place, supported by the principal, and over time.

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## Preface

Christopher Day and Christine Grice report here on their investigation of the Association of Independent Schools of NSW Leadership Centre's *Leading from the Middle*. This school-based professional learning program focused on teachers, who were not members of the school's executive leadership team but who had formal responsibilities for leading and managing instruction for particular groups of teachers and were part of their school's formal school leadership structure.

The Report focuses on a particular leadership development program developed by AIS Leadership Centre, but the program and the findings reported here have much broader relevance beyond independent schools.

Though focusing in on a particular leadership position in AISNSW schools, Day and Grice adopt a holistic approach to school leadership, carefully positioning middle leaders and their development within schools' broader leadership arrangements and workplace cultures. While the Report is firmly anchored in middle leadership, the authors masterfully avoid an atomistic treatment of school leadership which is all too common. As a result, their account generates a rich and comprehensive picture of the challenges of middle leadership in schools and how it fits, or not, within formal school leadership arrangements.

There are several important lessons here for readers, regardless of the type of school they work in or with. To ensure you get reading the Report itself rather than being distracted by my musings, let me dwell on *three key lessons* that have broad relevance for anyone interested in improving school leadership.

1. The AIS Leadership Centre's *Leading from the Middle* program and the research findings reported here, highlight the social side of competence and capability in developing school leadership. Throughout the Report one is reminded of the importance of social interactions in building leadership capability in schools. By the social side of competence and capability, I mean social capital, a construct that emerged in sociology in the closing decades of the last century and one that has gained considerable traction not only in the education sector, but more broadly.

While human capital refers to the knowledge and skills that an individual possesses, social capital refers to those resources that reside in or emerge from the relationships among people. By virtue of who we interact with, we can gain access to resources such as knowledge, skills, and materials that make us more capable or productive.

Most readers will have heard the adage – 'it's not what you know, but who you know' – which only partially captures the power of social capital, because what we know depends in great part on who we know and how we engage and interact.

Throughout the Report we learn about the importance of social capital in developing middle leadership from middle leaders learning, and building their capability by interacting with one another, both within and across their designated areas of responsibility in schools, through to the critical role of relational trust in cultivating social interactions that build leadership competence and capability.

Of particular note here, is the role of social relationships in developing pedagogical leadership that enables change. In short, developing leadership capability in schools necessitates moving beyond an exclusive focus on the competencies and capabilities of individual leaders to engaging more broadly with the social side of leadership capability.

2. The Report captures the importance of systematically investing in the development of social capital as we strive to improve school leadership. While many studies document substantial returns to social capital in schools and school systems, relatively few have focused on identifying the conditions that facilitate social interactions that build capability. This is important because social interactions cannot be taken for granted in general and in schools in particular where educators tend to practice mostly behind closed classroom and office doors.

Day and Grice's findings capture some of the strategic decisions, structures and cultures that enable the sort of social interactions that contribute to developing leadership capability in schools. For example, creating and cultivating ongoing communities of practice and professional learning communities that enable critical reflection among leaders, mentoring, and school-based learning projects that address real local needs rather than contrived ones are some of the structures that the AIS Leadership Centre and the schools in this study invested in as they strove to develop the leadership capabilities of the middle leaders.

I draw readers' attention in particular to the importance of building structures that not only support interactions among leaders *within* schools, but also to creating structures that support interactions across schools and with other outside experts such as the AIS Leadership Centre team. Supporting social interactions that extend beyond the schoolhouse is essential because such interactions help minimize 'group think' and ensure a constant flow of new ideas into the school.

3. The Report captures the importance of attending to practice; that is the practice of leading and managing: improving leadership in schools is fundamentally about improving the practice of leadership. And the practice of leadership is not equivalent to the actions of any one individual leader or even the collective practice of any one leadership position, such as principals, or middle leaders in a school.

Throughout the Report, we are reminded about how understanding leadership practice in a school necessitates attention to the ways in which practice is stretched over multiple leaders from middle leaders to senior leaders. Further, time and time again in the pages that follow, the authors remind us about how leadership practice is also stretched over aspects of the situation - structures and routines such as formal leadership positions, school-based projects, professional learning communities, communities of practice, and so on.

A key take home from this Report is that developing leadership capability in schools is about developing leadership practice across the school, not only developing individual leaders.

There are many more lessons to be gleaned from the pages that follow, but I trust these three will whet your appetite to read on!

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# A The Research

## 1 Purposes

A purposive sample of principals, middle leaders and teachers in seven AIS Member Schools in New South Wales was selected, based on their recency in completing the AIS Leadership Centre *Leading from The Middle* program, and upon their consent. A total of one hundred and seven (n=107) participants were involved in the research.

The general purposes of the research were to investigate the influence of The AIS Leadership Centre program, *Leading from the Middle: a school-based strategy for middle leaders in schools*, its impact on the hearts, minds and practices of middle leaders; and to further explore their critical roles in schools in the light of its effects. The study findings contribute to knowledge of:

- i. effective design and delivery of professional learning programs for middle leaders (*Research Report, Sections 1, 6, 7, 8, 9*).
- ii. developing leaders' work in and beyond the middle: challenges of change (*Research Report, Sections 6.2, 6.3, 11*).
- iii. school structures and cultures as mediating influences (*Research Report, Section 10*).

## 2 Questions

The remit provided by the AIS Leadership Centre was to examine the nature and strength of the influence of key underpinning principles and precepts of the program in contributing to sustainable change at individual, group and whole school levels. This remit led to the formulation of three broad questions:

1. In what ways did the AIS Leadership Centre program contribute to the development of Middle Leaders? (*Program impact*)
2. In what ways, and to what extent, did each teacher's biography, their school's senior leadership, structures and cultures mediate? (*Contextual influences*)
3. What were the longer-term influences and impacts of the program on middle leaders and their schools? (*Sustainability of change*)

(*Research Report, Section 2*).



### 3 Defining Middle Leadership

Middle leadership is a relatively recent phenomenon in educational leadership literature, and the term is still perceived differently across national and sector contexts. This Report focuses upon middle leaders as teachers who are not members of the executive team but who have formal responsibilities for the management and pedagogical leadership of specified groups of teachers and whose positions in the schools are situated within their existing hierarchy.

**Middle leadership in this research is understood as a series of actions associated with the values, dispositions, qualities and skills required to lead effectively, carried out in and mediated by particular individual, social, organisational and policy contexts.**

*(Research Report, Section 3).*



### 4 Learning Communities

In examining the program in practice and the needs of its middle leader participants and their schools, we distinguished between:

- i. leading *in* the middle through building communities of practice in their existing spheres of responsibility, and leading *beyond* the middle. Leading *beyond* the middle is a school-wide enterprise beyond separate and smaller, more coherent communities of practice.
- ii. Communities of Practice and Professional Learning Communities

*Communities of Practice* are defined as “groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly... membership therefore implies a commitment to the domain, and therefore a shared competence that distinguishes members from other people” (Wenger & Wenger, 2015, p.1-2).

Professional learning communities “describe what happens when a school staff studies, works, plans, and takes action collectively on behalf of increased learning for students; and discusses what is known about creating such communities of professionals in schools” (Hord, 1997, p.1).

*(Research Report, Section 3.1).*

## 5 Selected literature

Middle leading as a relational practice of someone in a school with a positional title, with a teaching load Grootenboer (2018).

The act of middle leading happens in the spaces between school wide senior leaders and classroom teaching colleagues (Gregory Marshall, 2012).

Middle leadership is fundamentally different from principal leadership (Wilkinson & Kemmis, 2015; Wilkinson, 2017).

Leading from the middle may be seen as a systems strategy (Fullan, 2015); a form of leadership distributed to trusted others by the principal (Spillane, 2006).

At their best, middle leaders impact directly on the quality of teacher learning and development (Edwards-Groves, Grootenboer, Hardy, and Ronnerman, 2018), and indirectly on the quality of classroom teaching and learning (Day, 2016; Day et al., 2009) and student outcomes (Day, Gu & Sammons, 2016).

This is in part achieved through relational trust (Day, 2017; Edwards-Groves, Grootenboer & Rönnerman, 2016).

There are different forms of distribution (Leithwood et al., 2007).

The role of middle leaders has shifted within schools, from administration and management to pedagogical leadership, in part as a consequence of government reform (Cranston, 2009; Grice, 2018; Lingard, Hayes, Mills & Christie, 2003).

The degree of authority and influence on school-wide decision-making that middle leaders have differs (Fullan, 1993; Hallinger, 2007; Youngs, 2017; 2014).

There are six core conditions for success: principal support, professional development, culture, enthusiasm, drive and knowledge (De Nobile, 2017).

There are differences between leading *in* the middle and leading *from* the middle. Both are necessary if schools are to be successful in pursuing both functional academic outcomes and providing a broader personal and social education for their students (Hargreaves et al., 2018).

Regardless of form and function, the capacity for middle leaders to shift from leading *in* the middle to leading *from* the middle (in our terms *beyond* the middle) is dependent upon others.

Professional learning and development need to be tailored to their specific needs (Bassett, 2016; Cardno & Bassett, 2015; Gurr & Drysdale, 2012; Grootenboer, 2018; Irvine & Brundrett, 2016).

The quality of leadership programs is determined by the extent to which they are philosophically, culturally and practically attuned to system and individual needs, informed by research evidence, time-rich, practice-centred, purpose-designed for career stage, peer supported, context sensitive, partnership powered, transferable to practice, and outcomes oriented (Fluckiger, Lovett, Dempster & Brown, 2015).

Taken together, these findings may be said to underpin the design principles of the AIS *Leading from the Middle*.

(*Research Report, Section 3.2*).





## B The AIS Leadership Centre *Leading from the Middle Program*

### 1 Purposes

In the period between 2014 and 2017, a number of New South Wales K-12 schools opted to join an innovative professional development program offered by the Association of Independent Schools' Leadership Centre. The research-informed, school focused program built upon the existing 'National Flagship Program' for senior leaders, and was entitled, '*Leading from the Middle: a school-based strategy for middle leaders in schools.*' The program was designed for between 10 and 23 middle leaders from each participating school.

The program's stated intention was 'to contribute significantly towards developing participants' confidence, competence and vision in leading the learning and personal growth of students, staff and the communities in which they work'. (AIS Leadership Centre *Leading from the Middle* brochure).

*(Research Report, Section 1.1).*

### 2 Basis

The program was based on six key research and experience-based understandings of successful change for improvement:

- i. Whilst principals have a primary responsibility for creating and working with whole school culture, it is middle leaders who are the drivers of teacher level change in all but the smallest schools;
- ii. School improvement is achieved most effectively and efficiently by the creation and sustaining of learning communities by building the knowledge, skills and social capital of groups and individual leaders;
- iii. Within these, departmental improvement is achieved most effectively and efficiently by the creation and sustaining of communities of practice;
- iv. Commitment to participate is an essential pre-condition for effective professional development;
- v. Professional learning is likely to be more effective when it is perceived by teachers to be close to practice, focused on the workplace, supported by the principal, and over time;
- vi. External facilitation plays an important catalytic, critical friendship and support and challenge role.

*(Research Report, Section 1.4).*



### 3 Structure

The AIS Leadership Centre program sought to place departmental heads “*in a powerful position to exercise significant leadership within their department... if not across the school as a whole*” (Leithwood, 2016, p.124).

Fundamental to the success of the program was its structure, with members of the AIS Leadership Centre team providing five days of face-to-face formal learning to middle leaders on site at their school, or in a location close by, over a one-year period.

The first two days of the program occurred consecutively. On Day 1, individual and collaborative experiences were drawn upon to enable participants to explore and reflect on their ‘inner’ journeys: their leadership practices, personal purposes, roles, values, thinking preferences and strengths. This culminated in the crafting of a purpose statement for themselves and their role. On Day 2, the focus moved to the ‘outer’ journey of leadership. Here, participants were guided through a process to plan to develop a strategically aligned change project in their area of responsibility, as a result of consultation with a senior leader. The project was designed, directly or indirectly, to improve students’ and/or staff well-being and, through this, student outcomes.

Both Days 3 and 4 were designed to equip participants with the knowledge, understanding and support required to lead their school-based change project successfully. Day 3 focused on change knowledge, and Day 4 was designed to give participants opportunities to practice the skills required to have difficult conversations, using an open-to-learning conversations model. Both days were designed to model a ‘community of practice’, using clear feedback protocols and processes to enable individuals to reflect on both their inner and outer leadership journeys, with the support of colleagues.

The final day of the program was designed to involve all participants in presenting their leadership learnings in the form of an ‘infographic style’ poster of their project to members of their community.

To develop relational trust, each day commenced with participants connecting and sharing the progress of their leadership development. Prior to each day, middle leaders were expected to engage with pre-readings selected by the AIS Leadership team to enrich and extend the learning of each middle leadership group.

(*Research Report, Section 1.3*)

### 4 Intended Outcomes

The intended outcomes were that by the end of the program, participants would have:

- developed an expanded understanding of the elements of leading *in* and *beyond* the middle;
- cultivated a self-reflective approach to leadership, and greater awareness of and confidence in their leadership and influence;
- completed school-based projects, developed leadership capabilities on the job, and provided tangible results;
- created a culture of relational trust;
- constructed the basis of an on-going professional learning community of middle leaders across the school

(Based on the AIS Leadership Centre *Leading from the Middle* background information, Section 3).

(*Research Report, Section 1.2*).

## C Research Findings

### 1 Leading In and Beyond the Middle

- 1.1 The program developed the capacity for middle leaders to be agents of change *in* and *beyond* the middle (*Research Report, Sections 6.2, 6.3, 8.3, 11.1*)
- 1.2 Following the program 88% (n=50/57) of middle leaders saw their practices expanding and extending, from managing the task to leading the people within and beyond their traditional spheres of influence, especially in terms of taking initiatives, providing direction, resolving tensions and tackling conflict (*Research Report, Section 6.1*).

### 2 Professional Identity Change

- 2.1 Middle leaders that completed the program were more able to work 'in' and 'beyond' the middle within a newly established sense of agency and confidence (*Research Report, Sections 6.2, 6.3, 8.3, 10.4*).
- 2.2 Revised role designations provided a legitimization of new responsibilities and a sense of professional identity as learning leaders (*Research Report, Sections 6.1, 10.1, 10.4*).

### 3 Building Capacity for Change Leadership

- 3.1 Regular, formally designated opportunities for reflection in, on, and about practice enabled 91% of middle leaders (n=52/57 in 7 schools) to plan, review and reconsider their roles and existing practices as leaders, both in relation to student progress and attainment *and* effective working practices with colleagues (*Research Report, Sections 6.3, 8.3, 9.1, 9.2, 11.2*).
- 3.2 Participation in the program caused a shift in thinking towards a realisation that central to their roles was a responsibility for leading pedagogy that focussed upon improving teacher and student engagement and outcomes (*Research Report, Section 6.3*).
- 3.3 Where change was slow, it was a consequence either of individual or school lack of readiness, or change fatigue (*Research Report, Section 11.4*).

### 4 Creating Communities of Practice

- 4.1 The relative success of the program in participant schools was associated with the strength of commitment from principals and the executive team to support middle leaders in developing their capacities and practices further through the development of 'communities of practice' within their schools (*Research Report, Sections 7, 10*).
- 4.2 Trust was developed by middle leaders in the middle through building and sustaining collegial relationships, informal feedback and mentoring (*Research Report, Sections 9.1, 10.2*).

## 5 Leading School- based Projects

- 5.1 The projects contributed to middle leaders' enhanced sense of agency and identity in leading change in their schools (*Research Report, Sections 8.3, 9*).
- 5.2 The projects had a direct impact upon middle leader change and, for 58% (n=33/57 in 7 schools), improvement in student learning outcomes (*Research Section 9.3*)
- 5.3 Infusing the project into the life of the school was seen to be important for sustaining change beyond the life of the program (*Research Report, Section 11.6*).
- 5.4 Commitment to the project was reduced for those who didn't understand the program, and this was further exacerbated by schools that did not have a clear vision statement for their development (*Research Report, Section 8.3*).

## 6 The School Leadership Effect

- 6.1 The longer-term opportunities for middle leaders' to lead in and beyond the middle were influenced positively or negatively by existing school structures, cultures and power relationships (*Research Report, Sections 6.3, 10.1, 11.5*).
- 6.2 Principals saw the investment in professional learning for their middle leaders as being essential for school improvement. Our research did not find unsupportive principals, but levels of support varied (*Research Report, Section 7*).
- 6.3 The way that principals communicated the opportunity, their appreciation, and continuing investment made a difference to the commitment of middle leaders (*Research Report, Section 10.3*).
- 6.4 Deputies and senior staff played an essential part in enhancing or constraining middle leaders' opportunities to lead 'in' and 'beyond' the middle (*Research Report, Section 7*).





Participation in the program caused a shift in thinking towards a realisation that central to their roles was a responsibility for leading pedagogy that focussed upon improving student engagement and outcomes. Middle leaders saw their practices extending, from managing the task to leading the people, within and beyond their traditional spheres of influence.

## 7 External Support and Challenge

- 7.1 The creation of sustained learning spaces by the AIS Leadership team throughout the program modelled sustained, responsive, critical support for middle leaders' 'inner' journeys. This enabled the participants to reflect critically on their values, practices, roles and relationships, and build social capital, plan and conduct sustained school-based projects throughout the program. Not all participants responded positively to the challenges presented (*Research Report, Sections 6, 7, 8.2, 9*).
- 7.2 Whilst 65%, (n=37/57) spoke positively about the challenges of engaging with their 'inner journey' during the program, 26% (n=15/57) did not (*Research Report, Section 8.2*).
- 7.3 The opportunities for participants to engage together with externally provided materials contributed to the participants' knowledge and understanding of their roles and contexts (*Research Report, Sections, 8.1, 8.3*).

## 8 Variations in Contexts and Impact

- 8.1 School structures and cultures had positive or negative influences and impacts on the extent to which the program achieved success. (*Research Report, Sections 6.3, 10.1, 11*).
- 8.2 The capacity for middle leaders to shift from leading *in* the middle to leading *beyond* the middle varied and was influenced by differences in existing school contexts, structures and cultures (*Research Report, Sections 10.1, 11.1, 11.5, 11.6*).
- 8.3 Fifty six percent (n=32/57) of middle leaders who completed the program and were supported by their schools, were able to work more effectively 'in' and 'beyond' the middle (*Research Report, Section 11.1*).
- 8.4 Infusing the project into the life of the school was the result of a combination and accumulation of program and principal support (*Research Report, Section 11.6*).
- 8.5 When the development of a shared language was understood and supported throughout the school, levels of collegial understanding were increased and middle leaders were able to lead in and beyond the middle (*Research Report, Section 11.4*).

Leading in the middle was perceived to be a shift in focus, from the administratively functional tasks of management to leadership of classroom pedagogy and the further development of colleagues.

## D Twelve Research-Informed Claims

### 1. From Administration to Leadership

All middle leader participants who were interviewed (n=57) claimed that their thinking as a result of participating in the program had been changed about their middle leading practices from administration toward leadership in and beyond the middle (Research Report, Sections 10.4).

### 2. Investing in Sustained Professional Development

Investing in sustained professional learning that is perceived as relevant to organisational and individual needs is likely to enhance improvements in middle leadership (Research Report, Section 7).

### 3. Tailoring the Program

Professional learning and development programs are likely to be effective when they are tailored to the specific needs of the participants and their schools (Research Report, Sections 1.4, 3.2, 8.1).

### 4. Leadership Beyond the Middle

Enhancing middle leaders' understanding of the bigger picture and their role in change projects is likely to build their capacity to contribute to the school's vision (Research Report, Sections 8.3, 9.1, 9.3).

### 5. Pedagogical Leadership

Pedagogical leadership is more likely to result in change through the sharing of pedagogical knowledge and experience and the building of social capital in communities of practice, such as those established by the *Leading from the Middle* program (Research Report, Sections 3.1, 6.1, 11.2).

### 6. Trust

The development of collaboration, trust and support in change processes are key elements in building and achieving successful development. Trust is likely to be successfully developed through open collegial relationships, informal feedback and mentoring which sustains the influence of middle leading. (Research Report, Sections 3.2, 9.1, 10.2).

### 7. Reflecting on the Inner Self

Re-visiting their different educational purposes and values is likely to assist participants in developing self-knowledge and enhance their ability to lead colleagues (Research Report, Section 8.2).

### 8. Leadership Influence

The relationships and actions of the principal and school's executive team are likely to enable or constrain the development of middle leaders' work, especially in extending their role from leading in the middle to leading beyond the middle (Research Report, Sections 7, 10.1, 10.2, 10.3, 11.5).

### 9. School-Based Projects

Sustained school-based projects that are relevant to needs of the individuals and school are likely to have a direct impact upon middle leader change and an indirect impact upon student learning outcomes (Research Report, Section 9)

### 10. External Intervention

Successful professional development is likely to be enhanced when supported by program leadership teams from outside the school that espouse and enact sustained, values-led, critical friendship that enable existing school and individual beliefs and practices to be supported and challenged (Research Report, Sections 8).

### 11. School Support for Middle Leadership Development

Diagnosing schools' 'readiness' for change is an important pre-condition for successful participation (Research Report, Section 10.2).

Table 1 below is a tentative framework designed to assist schools in identifying school cultures and practices which are likely to be 'more', or 'less' able to foster and support middle leader development. The categories are derived from the findings of the research.

Note that:

- The categories under each phase may be extended by schools before or during their deliberations.
- Schools may use the categories under each phase as check lists. However, final judgements may be better made holistically, since there are likely to be differences in the relative positive and negative impact of individual categories upon middle leadership development.

**Table 1: A Framework for Diagnosing School Readiness for Middle Leadership Development**

	<b>Pre-Readiness Phase</b> Practices that constrain middle leading	<b>Developing Phase</b> Practices that enable and constrain the development of middle leading	<b>Improving Phase</b> Practices that develop and enable sustainable middle leading
<b>Cultural Norms</b>	Middle leaders' expectations and aspirations are restricted to their own area of influence	Middle leading is distributed in existing spheres of influence	Middle leaders lead collaboratively <i>beyond</i> the middle together with others
	Irregular meetings within middle leadership team	Regular meetings within middle leadership teams, but little focus upon pedagogy	Middle leaders meet their team regularly to discuss relationships between teaching and learning and individual student progress and achievement
	Miscommunication from minimal shared language	Shared language within select teams translating vision into understanding and action	Shared language across the school resulting in clear understandings, support, and action
	No scheme for mutual classroom teaching and learning observation	Some areas have schemes for mutual classroom teaching and learning observation	All areas have schemes for mutual classroom teaching and learning observation
	No middle leader mentoring or preparation for mentoring	Some middle leader mentoring or preparation for mentoring	Middle leader mentoring across the school
<b>Improvement Practices</b>	No participation in curriculum and practice inquiry projects	Occasional participation in inquiry projects which target middle leaders' own and whole school needs	Regular participation in projects with other middle leaders which target whole school development needs
	No collegial consideration of planning, teaching and learning and assessment	Occasional collegial consideration of planning, teaching and learning and assessment	Regular collegial consideration of school-wide planning, teaching and learning and assessment
	Minimal understanding and utilisation of student progress data in planning classroom teaching	Data utilisation led by the executive and facilitated by middle leaders	Data utilisation led by middle leaders with the executive and teachers in the middle leading team
	Student progress and outcomes not formally discussed	Student progress regularly discussed, but uncertain impact upon student outcomes	Student progress and outcomes regularly discussed in association with of teaching planning and practices
<b>Building Social Capital</b>	Principals and executive do not provide time for middle leaders to meet together to discuss issues of teaching and learning	Principals and executive provide time upon request for middle leaders to meet	Principals and executive provide time for middle leaders to lead teams in <i>and</i> beyond the middle
	Little evidence of relational trust in middle leadership teams	Mixed evidence of relational trust in middle leadership teams	Evidence of widespread relational and collective trust across the school
	Leadership is delegated* within teams	Evidence of communities of practice within the distribution of leadership in some teams	Strong evidence of school-wide communities of practice and extensive leadership distribution
	No participation in school wide decision-making about curriculum and pedagogy	Occasional participation in school wide decision-making about curriculum and pedagogy	Regular participation in school wide decision-making about curriculum and pedagogy
	Irregular provision of opportunities for sustained professional development using external facilitation	Limited provision of jointly planned opportunities for sustained professional development, using external facilitation	Regular jointly planned opportunities for sustained professional development using external facilitation

\*'Delegation' implies restricted powers of decision-making and autonomy, in contrast to distribution which implies extended powers of decision making and autonomy

## 12. Organisational, Individual and Program Influences on Middle Leaders' Professional Development

The capacity of an individual to lead successfully in and beyond the middle within an organisation is influenced by three key interacting variables: i) Organisational ii) Individual participants and iii) Program (Figure 2, below). The management of the dynamic interaction between these is likely to influence the extent of the immediate and longer-term impact of the program upon middle leadership practices. (Research Report, Section 11).

**Figure 2: The Influence and Impact of AIS Leading from the Middle on leading in and beyond the middle.**





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