An Integrated Service in Action
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History
1940 – 2010
• Dependent on different government ministers/departments and impact of funding arrangements
• Involvement of doctors, dietician, social workers and teachers
• Programs for children, children with additional needs/rights, parent education, teaching students
• Training programs for educators and concentrated professional learning for staff

Integration vs Co-location
• Co-location is where different disciplines are available on the same site, but don’t work together under a common philosophy and policies
• Integration is where there are shared policies principles and philosophy and different disciplines work together to improve outcomes for children and families in a co-ordinated way.

Integration is multilayered & multidimensional
According to Press, Sumsion & Wong, (2010) the achievement of full service integration requires action at the levels of:
• Government policy;
• Governance;
• Leadership;
• Organisation culture & ethos; and
• Front line professional practice and team work.

Gowrie philosophy...
In 1997 we recognised that for young children care and education were inseparable. We sought to establish a structure that would support sound pedagogical practices together with a sophisticated understanding that wellbeing is achieved through emotional availability of the adults.

Leadership at the Gowrie
• Leadership was recognised as being central to successful integration.
• This was understood as whole of service leadership and leadership that is distributed throughout the team.
• We set up a management structure to distribute leadership throughout the organisation.
• We established a leadership development program for manages and teamleaders.
Leadership is concerned with creating the conditions in which all members of the organisation can give of their best in a climate of commitment and challenge. Leadership helps an organisation to work well

(Whitaker 1993)

‘Distributed’, ‘participative’, ‘facilitative’ or ‘collaborative’ models of leadership call for a shift away from the traditional vision of leader as one key individual towards a more collective vision, one where the responsibility for leadership rests within various formal and informal leaders

(Siraj-Blatchford & Manni 2006, p. 20)

Margy Whalley (2006) calls for shared leadership to be enacted through a ‘leaderful’ team.

Leadership Structure
At Gowrie and through TTiLG, systems have been established to support ways of working together

• Governance/Leadership
• Structure - roles & responsibilities
• Development & alignment of vision
• Policies and shared philosophy
• Commitment (EB)
• Resources

Tensions continue.....

Differing Professional and Theoretical Backgrounds
Barriers/challenges

• Theoretical beliefs
• Professional discipline
• Qualifications
• Attitudes
• Work culture
• Focus - child or parent
• Funding
• Access to records

• Culture of reflective practice
• Professional inquiry
• Systems & expectations for collaboration of the disciplines
• Professional learning
• Joint PD
• Dialogue

Implications for services

What can others learn from our journey?

Leadership and working toward integration has positive benefits for children, families and staff:

• A more involved staff team
• Learning from each other
• Exploring new ideas and willingness to accept change
• Shared purpose, goals and focus
• Upskilling of staff
• Improved professional identity of educators

References

• Whitaker, P 1993, Managing Change in Schools, Open University Press, Buckingham