

HertsCam influence in Iceland on World Teachers Day

5th October 2016



On World Teachers Day, 5th October, David Frost gave a keynote address in Reykjavik at an event organised by the Icelandic Teachers Union under the heading of 'Enhancing teacher professionalism through teacher leadership'. The audience of 250 included teachers, school principals, ministry officials, union workers and university academics. More people gained access through live-streaming on the Union's website. The invitation to speak had arisen from David's work with John Bangs for Education International and their chapter in the Flip the System Book edited by Jelmer Evers and Rene Kneyber, the Dutch teachers who spoke at the HertsCam Annual Conference in 2015.

David spoke for an hour about the role that teachers can play in educational reform, drawing heavily on our experience in HertsCam of supporting non-positional teacher leadership. The audience particularly appreciated two vignettes: one of them captured the essence of Kellie-Marie Townsend's TLDW project about the development of strategies for enriching young children's sensory experience. Kellie-Marie was a member of the Early Years TLDW group based at Ludwick Nursery School in Welwyn in 2015-16. Another vignette portrayed Lyndsay Gillot's project in which 33 teachers are currently being taught to play a musical instrument by students at Sir John Lawes School. Lyndsay is in the Year 2 cohort of the HertsCam MEd.

It was a happy coincidence that the panel whose job it was to make a response to David's lecture and to pose questions included both an Early Years Headteacher and a Music teacher. The discussion kicked off by this panel was facilitated and brought to a conclusion by Jon Torfi Jonasson, the ex-Dean of the School of Education at the University of Iceland.

On the day after this event, David led a seminar at the Teachers House, the building which housed the first teacher education college in Iceland in 1908 and now serves as the headquarters of the teachers' union. It seems that there is real commitment to developing support for teacher leadership in Iceland and the Union is poised to step in with a strategy, with the encouragement and help of HertsCam.