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education review

Professionalism  
Today



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summer 2005

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*Education Review* is produced by the Education and Equal Opportunities Department of the National Union of Teachers.

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Stoke Rochford Hall

# Preface

**T**he summer edition of Education Review is published to coincide with the NUT's National Education Conference (NEC). In recent years, the NEC has been held at Stoke Rochford, our Education, Conference and Training Centre, near Grantham. Tragically, the Centre was severely damaged by fire earlier this year and I would like to dedicate this edition of Education Review to the Director and staff. They have done so much, with the support of the local community, to make Stoke Rochford an enjoyable and successful place for meeting and learning. Not just for teachers, but for many other occupational groups which have used the magnificent facilities. The NEC hopes to return to Stoke Rochford as soon as possible.

The accompanying drawing was completed by Tracy Coryton during the NEC 2004. I expect Stoke Rochford to be partially open again in the near future so that visitors will once again experience the view that Tracy has captured.

I am delighted to introduce the articles in this edition of Education Review: 'Professionalism Today'.

The pace of change – social, cultural, technological and global – together with the massive increase in accountability – political, community, media, legal, collegial – ensure that being a professional has become a more complex and evolving process. No one reading this edition of Education Review could possibly imagine that initial teaching training alone can produce a teacher – the finished article.

The overall messages that emerge from the articles herein are that the expectations on teachers are continually changing and expanding; teachers are subject to a great deal of external pressure and are far from autonomous; they are expected to liaise and communicate with a considerable number of others, both within and outside the education tradition; and that a readiness to continually learn and develop is a fundamental part of being a professional.

We need to acknowledge the best traditions of being a professional – such as a service ethic, collaborative development of knowledge, a healthy level of autonomy, and respect for professional judgement – and adapt these to take account of changing circumstances. What might be called traditional values in a modern context. It is certainly my view that, whilst moving with the times, professionalism must transcend the vicissitudes of fads, fashions and the latest initiatives.

Teachers and their organisations, such as the NUT, have, for a long time, recognised the need for career-long learning and have pressed for an entitlement to CPD for all teachers; supported by adequate funding. Our recent publication 'Bringing Down the Barriers' includes specific proposals for

teachers' professional development and we look forward to taking this thinking forward in the debate on 'New Professionalism'.

Unfortunately, the coincidence of the General Election and our copy deadline caused Ruth Kelly, Secretary of State for Education, to decline our invitation to contribute. As a consequence we have given the first 'slot' not to a politician, but to a philosopher, Julian Baggini. He discusses a range of contemporary issues which add to any definition of professionalism. His thought-provoking identification of social and cultural developments which affect the way teachers see themselves and are seen by their pupils and others, provides an excellent introduction to the range of perspectives that follow.

If, as Julian suggests, teachers (particularly the younger members of the profession) are much 'closer' to their pupils than in the past, Trevor Phillips reminds us that the pupil population is continually changing. The cultural, ethnic and religious diversity of pupils brings a richness to classrooms but also new challenges to teachers. An important aspect of professionalism today must therefore be the ability to respond positively to that diversity through self-examination of assumptions, language and behaviour.

In addition, teachers must participate in a continual review of assessment and the curriculum and how these meet the range of needs and aspirations which pupils from different backgrounds bring to the classroom. Trevor puts no blame on individual teachers but highlights the continuing underachievement of some minority ethnic groups and suggests rightly that ensuring equal opportunities and access to learning for all is a vital element of professionalism.

Mary Bousted and Martin Johnson write from the perspective of one of the organisations within the current 'Workforce Agreement'. They believe that the Government deserves credit for recognising the inadequacy of current arrangements for teachers to be learners; but they are critical of the Government's solution which they describe as relying heavily on 'managerialist' mechanisms to encourage compliance with standards set by others. They say that schools can become learning communities for staff as well as pupils only through a commitment shared by all, including school leaders, and this cannot be imposed by regulation.

The General Teaching Councils in England and Wales are, of course, new and significant players in the current debate about professionalism. Gary Brace writes about the central role in professional development which GTCW is taking; whilst, Allyson Ingall, a deputy head teacher in Cumbria currently seconded to GTCE, describes the new Teacher Learning Academy being piloted in England to give professional recognition to teachers' learning.

Teachers' learning is certainly not confined by place or approach. Penny Lawrence, on behalf of Voluntary Service Overseas, highlights the international 'currency' of teachers' skills and reminds us of the huge learning benefits for teachers who take part in their placements. Andrew Bethell, meanwhile,

describes the new Teachers' TV which not only allows teachers to choose when to learn but also allows them to do so in their own homes, if they wish.

New learning and career opportunities are an inevitable consequence of change. Jennifer Jupe and Tom Milne highlight the opportunities for teachers arising from the specialist schools programme. What started as a potentially divisive 'status' for a small number of schools has now become the Government's aim for all secondary schools. Jennifer and Tom argue that the benefits extend far beyond just those teachers directly involved in the specialist focus.

The Government's 'Every Child Matters' initiative has enormous implications for teachers as services for children are expected to integrate and schools take on even more responsibility for promoting children's well-being as well as their attainment. Alison King summarises the implications of 'Every Child Matters' and the introduction of extended schools.

Kevan Collins praises primary teachers for their successful incorporation of the Literacy, Numeracy and then Primary strategies. He also urges further efforts to close the achievement gap linked to socio-economic status and identifies some of the primary leadership challenges ahead.

The fundamental questions about teachers' learning are how, when and with whom is it most effective. We have four excellent articles from contributors who, in their different ways, are involved in the detail of professional development. Philippa Cordingley, who as a consultant has made a vital contribution to the development of NUT's CPD Programme, highlights the proven value of mentoring and coaching in effective learning. She describes the new 'National Framework for Mentoring and Coaching' which she and her colleagues have drafted for the DfES. I am very pleased that Philippa will be training the tutors for a series of professional development seminars which we will be offering during the forthcoming school year focusing on effective mentoring and coaching in schools.

Penny Ellis and Penny Kershaw exemplify one of the benefits of working in a pair – the potential for mutual reflection and evaluation. They analyse four examples of INSET that they have provided in their area of special needs. In doing so they identify factors which increase the potential for teachers to learn from external consultancy and support.

Sara Bubb says that a composite approach to professional development is the most effective. Sara reflects on a Teach 'n' Chat for CPD Leaders/Co-ordinators which she tutored for NUT CPD Programme. This involved face-to-face seminars, input from an expert, implementation in schools and involvement in bulletin-board chatrooms. Based on the evaluations by participants, Sara concludes that it's the combination that counts.

Our final article is written by Ray Tarleton. He describes with enthusiasm how a group of schools has put 'Teachers as Researchers' into practice by

forming a Learning Institute. Ray provides a headteacher's vision – one which he is impressively involved in putting into practice - of how the profession might best develop for the benefit of schools and, most importantly, pupils.

I would like to thank our contributors and, as always, our book reviewers. Readers will notice that several authors draw analogies between professional development and food! The NUT has previously described CPD as the oxygen of the teaching profession and I am happy to think of it being 'fed and watered' by professional development. Certainly, CPD is the dish of the day at present with teachers, researchers, policy-makers and politicians all recognising that it needs to be more readily available and have greater coherence in the school sector. To use a culinary analogy myself, if the current rhetoric about the importance of professional development is the hors d'oeuvre, teachers will be looking for fair and equitable entitlement as the main course and adequate funding as the dessert.

Steve Sinnott



**Steve Sinnott**  
**General Secretary, National Union of Teachers**

# What professionalism means for teachers today

**Abstract:** *Julian Baggini proposes some new elements of any definition of professionalism in a contemporary liberal democracy. He suggests that teachers need to assert their professionalism as never before. In order to act in a professional way teachers need to achieve a number of “balances” in the face of changes to authority; personal and community identity; cultural diversity; the generation gap; fulfilling a role; and being accountable to targets set beyond the school. He concludes that these modern challenges are difficult and that teachers are justified in feeling proud when they succeed in rising to them.*

**A**lthough teaching has long been a profession, the concern with professionalism is, I would suspect, relatively recent. People become self-aware of their professional status only when it is at issue. When people say things like, “He was so unprofessional,” they are drawing attention to their own professionalism and that of the line of work they are in. Since the professional capabilities of teachers have never been more questioned, teachers understandably feel the need to assert their professionalism as never before.

Increased concern with professionalism also goes hand in hand with the tendency to see teaching as more of a profession and less of a vocation. In vocations such as the ministry, for example, the very idea of being “professional” sounds odd, because being a minister is not something that only affects one’s professional life. Likewise, when teaching was more unambiguously a vocation, it would have seemed strange to dwell on professionalism as an issue.

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## Julian Baggini

Dr Julian Baggini is an author and journalist. He is also editor of the *Philosophers’ Magazine*

## Etymological roots

The current situation can be illustrated by reference to the etymology of “professional”. Both “profession” and “professor” have their roots in the Latin for profess. To be a professional or a professor was to profess to be an expert in some skill or field of knowledge. Now, of course, it is others who bestow the title of professor or professional on you. It is something of a return to etymological roots, therefore, that professionalism has become an issue in teaching partly because teachers feel the need to profess their expertise, which is increasingly challenged, to others.

But what can teachers now profess about their work? Why is it unclear what professionalism means for teachers today? One’s professionalism is revealed by how well one is able to meet the specific challenges of one’s job, using skills, experience and expertise that are also specific to that job. You need a professional when it is not possible for just anyone to follow instructions and get the job done.

I would suggest this helps explain why professionalism is now an issue for teachers. The challenges that teachers face have changed, and with them the skills and expertise needed to face them. To explain what professionalism means for teachers today therefore requires us to attend to some key ways in which teaching has changed over the last 30 years or more. It will be my contention that professionalism for the contemporary teacher requires coming to terms with the ramifications of these changes and dealing with them accordingly. To make this case, I will detail six such changes and suggest how the teaching professional needs to react to them.

First, however, I should point out that I am not going to discuss the perennial bedrocks of teaching: mastery of one’s subject, a grasp of pedagogical methods and good classroom management. I take it as read that no teacher lacking in these departments can be a good professional. My concern is rather changes that affect how the job of the teacher can be done and why these present particular challenges to teachers’ professionalism.

## The death of deference

Few would doubt that one of the biggest changes to occur in teaching has been the loss of the absolute respect the teacher once commanded. Even when I was at school in the 1970s and 1980s, the authority of the teacher was unquestioned, even by parents. Now parents can be even less respectful than their children.

With this loss of authority has come a loss of status. Teachers used to be automatically looked up to in the community. Now, alas, they are probably more likely to be looked down on. Among graduates, for example, people who go into teaching are often considered boring and unambitious. There can be suspicion of people who seem keen to go back to school.

For teachers, this presents a major challenge; not least because, on the

whole, they support the broader social changes which have led to the decline of their own authority. We generally think it is a good thing that the cap is no longer doffed to certain people just because of the job they do or position they hold. Many teachers will have joined the anti-Iraq war marches, for example, showing very little respect for their political leaders. So whatever problems this change presents, turning back the clock is not an option, realistically or ideally.

The ability to deal with this change is therefore one indicator of a teacher's professionalism, since the ability to lead and control a classroom is a skill specific to teachers. It requires a delicate balancing act: a teacher must be able to lead, keep control and command respect, but cannot rely on natural deference or bullying tactics to achieve this. The professionalism of the teacher is tested by how successfully they can display authority without being authoritarian.

### **The erosion of identity and vocation**

One of the few ideas to come out of the loosely defined movement known as postmodernism and have wide resonance is the sense that identity has become more plural and fractured.<sup>1</sup> My grandparents, for example, knew who they were and what their place was. They had a clear social status defined by class; an unambiguous nationality; the mother and father had their clear roles in the family; and in their working lives they would start in a job when they left school and probably stay in that line of work until they retired.

## **What could be worse than your date thinking of you as Miss Jones?**

Now, however, identity is less clear cut. We move between social classes, which are in any case much less rigidly designated. Many of us have mixed national identities. We move more and so have less of an attachment to particular places. Household roles are less clear. Our jobs no longer define us as much as they once did. When teachers leave school at the end of the day, they usually don't want everyone they meet to think of them as teachers. (What could be worse than your date thinking of you as Miss Jones?) Our different identities have different places and we want to keep them there.

This has changed what it means to be a teacher. It is now but one identity we have, one role we play. To put it rather airily, a sense of "teacherness" no longer pervades the whole being of one who teaches. This ties in with the weakening of a sense of vocation. Most teachers do see what they do as being more than just a job. But it is not their whole life, by any means, and for many teachers now it is not even the job they will do for life.

Again, this is something that most teachers would not like to see entirely reversed. Teachers want (or at least dream of) a decent home/life balance, for

example, and are now less willing to undertake unpaid extra-curricular activities than they once were. Teachers have in part bought into the contract culture, where the job they do is clearly specified in their terms of employment and remunerated accordingly. This is not to say that teachers don't still do a great deal out of good will. But I don't think it is too fanciful to suggest that the phrase "that's not part of my job description" is heard much more today in teaching than it was, say, 50 years ago.

Dealing with this change professionally again requires a delicate balancing act. Without some sense of vocation, teaching becomes impossible. It is simply too demanding to be just a job, and anyone who tries to treat it that way will soon be ground down. After all, if you're just trying to earn a living, there are easier ways of doing so. Being able to keep this sense of vocation, however, without the job becoming your entire life (if you don't want it to) is not easy, and the professionalism of the teacher is tested by how successfully they can manage this balance.<sup>2</sup>

## Moral pluralism

An important and somewhat overlooked cultural change has been an erosion of moral certainty. The ethical values teachers were supposed to uphold used to be pretty clear (even if society was hypocritical about sticking to them). Now, however, moral values are problematic. We worry about imposing "our" values (whoever "we" are supposed to be) on others who may not share them. This is why religious schools are able to make a great deal of their strong moral ethos – they have a certainty about what roots their values which secular schools often do not.

The erosion of moral certainty is in many ways a good thing, as the values that were taken for granted were often hollow. Unfortunately, however, what has come in its place has too often been a kind of *laissez-faire* relativism, where we just accept everyone has different values and try to muddle through. However, without a clear set of values, schools cannot operate effectively.

Again, no turning back of the clock is possible here, despite what some religious schools seem to be advocating. What we need to come to terms with is not a hopeless relativism but the fact of moral pluralism. Pluralism does not maintain that "anything goes", but that there are many values that can be legitimately held and sometimes these may conflict with one another. Nevertheless, optimistic pluralists maintain that there is sufficient agreement between moral systems for there to be shared core values and for differences to be accommodated.<sup>3</sup> However, this creates a more complex environment within which teachers need to display their professionalism.

Dealing with this change professionally is extremely difficult, because as a society we are ethically illiterate. By that I don't mean we are all hopelessly immoral. Rather, we don't understand what ethics is and how to reason about it. Most people have a loose sense that morality is the law set down by God,

and if there are no such laws, we're free to do what ever we want. It is very hard for teachers to deal effectively with the demands of moral pluralism when they don't really understand what the term means.

In the longer term then, to fix this requires ethics to become part of the educational mainstream, and certainly of teacher training.<sup>4</sup> In the interim and in practical terms, schools have to develop a set of culturally sensitive yet firm values. Everyone needs to understand what these shared values are, teachers have to be clear about upholding them, and also be able to provide at least some compelling justifications for them if challenged. "This is what we do" is not enough. Because schools are in the front line of teaching values to growing children, this is a difficulty very specific to teaching, which is why an ability to negotiate this problem well is indicative of a teacher's professionalism.

### **Generational blurring**

It has been widely noted that the different stages in life are much less clearly demarcated than they once were. Younger people enjoy many of the freedoms of adulthood earlier, while older people continue to enjoy what were once seen as childish pleasures. Hence the phenomenon of "middle youth" where people in their late twenties and thirties may still go on weekend drink "binges", listen to rock music and so on.

The impact of this on teaching has perhaps been underestimated, since it serves to erode the distinction between student and teacher. Teachers share more in common with their students than they used to: they drink the same drinks, listen to the same music, watch the same television programmes and, I dare say, sometimes take the same drugs. This is part of what lies behind the tendency to see teachers, not as superiors, but equals and even "friends" with their students. Of course, this can be overstated. But saying that there has been a shift in this direction should be uncontroversial.

Dealing with this change professionally can be especially difficult for younger teachers, who may look and dress quite similarly to some of their older pupils. While it can be cringe-worthy when teachers try too hard to identify "with the kids", it is surely good if teachers can show a genuine shared interest with their charges. When a teacher can connect across the generational gaps without undermining their own position as first among equals, they display another of the hallmarks of the modern professional.

### **The cult of authenticity**

This is a society-wide phenomenon which has implications for everyone, not just teachers. Everyone now wants to "keep it real". People are encouraged to be open and express themselves. Hiding behind roles and titles is no longer seen as attractive or desirable.

Like many of the other changes I have described, this is largely a good thing.

But it does make life more difficult for teachers. In many ways, it is easier if you can just slip into your role as an educator and be accepted as that. But many teachers understandably want to be themselves in the classroom as well as outside of it, and students too have more of an expectation that they will be so. But when “being professional” means setting aside all the things that don’t relate directly to your work, there is challenge in combining the desire for authenticity with the demands of being a good teacher.

## **Surely the very idea of professionalism is empty if there is not some difficulty to achieving it**

Dealing with this change professionally requires accepting that we are never completely ourselves, whatever that may mean. We all behave differently according to whose company we are in, and there is no reason to feel one has compromised one’s authenticity because one holds back certain aspects of one’s character in the classroom. Indeed, one could also say that it is the ability to be different people in different contexts that allows a fuller authenticity, because different contexts allow different facets of the “real you” to come through. Some teachers, for example, exude an authority in class that they never do in other situations. Professionalism in this regard is displayed by being comfortable with the distinctive limits on and possibilities for self-expression in the classroom.

### **The growth of the measurement culture**

Pre-National Curriculum, teachers had more freedom to do their own thing. Now, they are confined in several ways. The National Curriculum restricts what they should teach. The evidence-based approach to pedagogical training also means that how teachers teach is more prescribed than it used to be, especially in primary literacy and numeracy programmes. League tables also mean teachers have to be more focused on achieving rigid outcomes, which again restricts their freedom in the classroom. On all fronts, what teachers do is being judged against fixed, external measures. That means it is easy to believe that the teacher’s professionalism is seen more in terms of how well they conform to these constraints, than in how well they display their own unique abilities, or take decisions for themselves.

For better or for worse, a professional teacher must be able to work within these prescriptive limits and deliver results. This is perhaps the most demanding feature of professionalism in general: the ability to do what is required to deliver on the corporate entity’s desired goals, whether or not these are your goals or whether you even fully approve of them. It is not professional to simply reject the demands placed on you and do your own thing.

But in counterbalance to this, the true professional never abandons his or her own judgement or values entirely. Professionalism is marked by an ability

to deliver in ways which are as commensurate as possible with your own vision of how you best work and what your values are. No true professional is happy merely to do the bidding of others. She will want, if possible, to share the insights and skills she has and influence the way the school is run; and also, as a member of a professional body, such as the NUT, to try to influence the way the entire profession is run. However, like it or not, if in the course of doing this she fails to deliver what her job description requires of her, she is liable to be judged as having failed professionally.

## Conclusion

A professional is someone who is able to deal with the challenges and tasks that are specific to the job they do, using skills, experience and expertise which are also specific to that job. As the challenges facing teachers have changed, so then has the meaning of professionalism in teaching. I have suggested that some of the biggest challenges a modern professional teacher must tackle concern the maintenance of authority in the absence of deference; maintaining a sense of vocation without allowing one's job to dominate one's entire life; the ability to promote firm, shared values in the face of moral pluralism; being able to acknowledge shared interests and experiences with students without eroding the teacher/pupil distinction; to be comfortable with the self one is at school, even though it is different to the self one is at home; and the ability to conform to the demands of a prescriptive system without losing sight of one's own values and distinctive skills.

This is not an exhaustive list, and nor are all the items on it of equal importance. It may be significant, however, that these hallmarks of the professional teacher have one thing in common: all have a sense of a balancing act to them. None are easy to achieve, because in all cases it is easy to go either too far or not far enough. But then surely the very idea of professionalism is empty if there is not some difficulty to achieving it! Which is why perhaps the least professional response of all is simply to moan about how hard one's job is. One is a professional precisely because someone without your experience and specialist skills could not just step into your shoes and do your job. This is where talk of professional pride is entirely justified. To meet these challenges is difficult, and teachers should be proud when they try, and succeed in, rising to them.

- 1 See, for example, Giddens, A. (1991) *Modernity and self-identity: Self and society in the late modern age*. Oxford: Polity; Holstein, J.A. and Gubrium, J.F. (2000) *The self we live by: narrative identity in a postmodern world*. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press
- 2 I am not sure how many, if any, teacher training colleges address this issue. If they don't, they could do well to help beginning teachers in this regard.
- 3 See, for example, Parkeh, Bhikhu (2000) *Rethinking multiculturalism: cultural diversity and political theory*. Basingstoke: Macmillan
- 4 A clear introduction that all teachers interested in this issue could start with, is Blackburn, S. (2001) *Being good: a short introduction to ethics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

# The new professionalism of schools.

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## Trevor Phillips

Trevor Phillips is Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality

**Abstract:** *Trevor Phillips calls for open discussion about the best ways of finding solutions to the underachievement of some minority ethnic groups of pupils. He reports the findings of a Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) survey about schools' interpretations of the amendment to the Race Relations Act (2001). He says that LEAs have a vital support role in helping schools meet their obligations. He calls for greater diversity amongst school staff and governors; and for all teachers to recognise their centrality in motivating pupils and making them believe they can achieve.*

I am a passionate believer that education is the most important influence on our children. My own experience tells me that teachers are the most important part of the education system. Often disruptive, I was taken aside by one of my teachers who bought me library tickets and introduced me to books. As a result I got a string of GCSEs, then A-levels and went on to study Chemistry at university. And I haven't stopped reading since.

That is why it is so important that we must find a way to end racial inequality that has been part of the education system since the 1950s. It is well known that the group the system continues to fail more than any other are black boys. I belong to the first generation of black male failures in the UK. I was lucky to be partly educated in the Caribbean; but most of my generation of boys came out of school underqualified and unemployable. So did our sons. And so it seems will our grandsons.

Let us be clear – the failure is in the system and not the result of a racist

teaching workforce. If that were the case we would not see Chinese and Indian pupils out perform their peers year after year. But the fact remains that school pupils of black Caribbean background have a 33% chance of achieving five GCSE Grades A-C; whereas pupils of white, mixed race or Asian backgrounds on average have a 51%, 49% and 53% chance respectively, with Chinese and Indian pupils achieving 75% and 65% respectively.

## Finding solutions

This clearly indicates the need for open discussions where we can identify solutions to help speed up change. However, debate on such sensitive issues can be difficult. When I recently pointed out that some targeted treatment for failing black boys in one American school had apparently produced positive results the reaction was instantaneous. The CRE became front page news domestically and internationally, editorials ranging from outraged condemnation to sober support.

This is not the first time in my two years at the CRE that we have faced this kind of controversy. The headlines rarely reflect what we have actually said. Complex proposals, including cash for more male black primary teachers, are reduced to “segregation”. Critics say that a journalist like myself should be wise enough to anticipate that the CRE’s words will be misused. But our silence would leave the debate over race and equality in the UK languishing back in the 1970s. Simply recycling the same solutions would leave the most disadvantaged communities handcuffed to the bottom rung of the ladder.

## **Let us be clear – the failure is in the system and not the result of a racist teaching workforce.**

However, beyond discussion about new approaches there is a lot that can be done to bring change to the education system. The amendment to the Race Relations Act in 2001 has meant that for the last three years public authorities have been faced with a legal obligation to do what they can to remove discrimination. Comprehensive guidance has been produced to support this process. This means that schools must do whatever they can to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equal opportunities and encourage good race relations – this obligation is known as the race equality duty.

Schools must look at all aspects of their organisation, identify areas that have an impact on race, and put appropriate measures in place to ensure equal outcomes. By approaching it in a dispassionate, business-like way, questions raised about the morals of individuals involved in the process are removed and replaced by a fact driven approach based on achieving targets.

The message that we need to get across is that race equality is not about people as individuals – about whether they like black or Asian people or not – it's what they do that matters. It's their actions, not their moral health, that will create change and mean the difference between success and failure for underachieving minorities.

### **Policy compliance**

One of the strengths of the race equality duty is that under it schools must prepare and publish a race equality policy. This should outline the school's responsibilities and commitments to its pupils and the community it serves, and the arrangements it has in place to achieve them. When this is fully implemented it will not only mean the school is compliant with the law, it will also help it achieve equal outcomes for its pupils.

In 2003, a year after the race equality duty became law, the CRE published the findings of a survey which assessed public sector organisations' compliance. A response rate of just 20% for the school sector was disappointing in itself (compared with an average response rate of 50% across all sectors). The results also gave cause for alarm. With just 83% compliance schools were the joint worst performing sector for producing a race equality policy.

## **One of the solutions to tackling inequalities in schools is to increase the diversity of the workforce and the governors.**

A detailed look at some of those policies by CRE officers found that most did not meet the minimum standard, and that many organisations were simply paying lip-service to the new law. For example, in most cases there were few details of the monitoring arrangements for assessing the impact of policies on different ethnic groups. It was also evident that many schools were not collecting or using ethnic monitoring data for their staff or parents. Without such information schools can only speculate about the causes of inequality and who is being affected. They are left with solutions based on guess work.

Where schools do collect ethnic monitoring information they are required to give it to their LEA which is then able to build a picture across the local area, tracking and assessing progress.

### **Policy and practice**

We must not forget the significant role that LEAs have to play. They should be supporting schools by providing advice and information about the duty; offering hands-on support to implement it; and providing guidance on the

type of information that needs to be collected and monitored. LEAs should also play a leading role in developing positive links between schools and local communities and promote and share best practice initiatives.

One of the solutions to tackling inequalities in schools is to increase the diversity of the workforce and the governors, so that pupils can see teachers and positive role models from their own community. In 2003 17.1% of school pupils across the country were from ethnic minority backgrounds compared with 8.7% of entrants to teacher training courses. In London ethnic minority teachers make up just 7.4% of the workforce compared with 43.5% for pupils. We need to see more black teachers coming through the system and should be prepared to take bold steps to make it happen.

## Beyond policy documents

It is now time to move on and look at what can be done. May 31 2005 saw the end of the first three-year review cycle of the race equality duty – a rolling obligation for organisations to review the policies that they have in place to provide their service – in this case, education – and describe the measures they will put in place to achieve equality.

Three years on we are now looking for organisations to go beyond the minimum legal requirement to simply publish a race equality scheme and assess the race impact of policies. They should now be setting themselves ambitious race equality targets, for example, to reduce the gaps between ethnic groups in levels of attainment, and work towards achieving them.

To make the most of race equality policies and for them to become more effective levers for change they need to become living documents. They should reflect current and future plans for implementing the race equality duty and therefore, like any business plan or strategy, should be monitored, reviewed and revised on a regular basis.

Throughout the last three years the CRE has provided comprehensive advice on how to publish, assess and review race equality policies. CRE commissioners and staff have addressed conferences and assisted many individual organisations with the development of their schemes. The race equality duty section on the re-launched CRE website [www.cre.gov.uk](http://www.cre.gov.uk) is now more developed, reflecting the stage we expect organisations to be at. There is a section which allows practical examples of best practice to be shared and adapted to fit other organisations.

The drive towards achieving greater equality should be the responsibility of every teacher. This is not just because we need to ensure better, more equal exam results and fewer exclusions, but also because education is probably the most important vehicle for social and cultural integration. Race equality is not just about monitoring data or writing a policy. It is about the way the curriculum is taught, how pupils are treated and the extra curricular activities that are offered.

If we are to reduce the disparities of outcomes that face many pupils from an ethnic minority, every teacher will need to take responsibility for delivering change. We cannot condemn another generation to failure. The race equality duty is a set of policies which enable organisations to drive change, but policies alone cannot motivate and inspire children. Irreplaceable in this role are teachers and other staff. We will always need them to motivate pupils and make them believe that they too can achieve.

# What will it take for teachers to become “new” professionals?

**Abstract:** *In its five year strategy the Government states that [Workforce reform] “will usher in a new professionalism for teachers, in which career progression and financial rewards will go to those who are making the biggest contributions to improving pupil attainment, those who are continually developing their own expertise, and those who help to develop expertise in other teachers...” (DfES,2004)*

*In this article Mary Bousted and Martin Johnson explore the universal qualities of teacher professionalism which the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) uphold. They relate these qualities to contractual conditions and workplace practices which would encourage their development. It reproduces, in full, the statement on New Professionalism passed by ATL’s Executive.*

## Introduction

Observers of the teaching profession are prone to misuse the term “crisis”, about teacher shortages or the retirement bulge for example. However, ATL considers the term to be appropriate for the results of the attack on professionalism in the recent past. Professionals use their skills and knowledge to exercise judgement in dealing with their clients, but important judgements about curriculum, assessment, and pedagogy have been removed from teachers. Recently qualified teachers have been trained to implement the decisions of others. If there is no rebalancing, the ability to make judgements will be lost and system performance will suffer in the long term. (ATL policy statement – New Professionalism – see ATL website)

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## Mary Bousted

Mary Bousted is General Secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers.

## Martin Johnson

Martin Johnson is Head of Education, Policy and Research at the Association of Teachers and Lecturers

It is ATL's view that, before a statement can be issued on what is "new" about teacher professionalism, the professional skills, knowledge and expertise of the current teaching profession must be recognised. Consequently, ATL argues that:

- Teaching as a profession is essentially intellectual, based on a high degree of general and systematised knowledge. This includes:
  - a depth of **knowledge about learning**: about how pupils learn, potential obstacles to learning, pre-conditions and dispositions to learning and about how learning develops; and
  - deep **knowledge of curriculum content**: knowledge of subjects and the relationships between them; understanding of wider content such as the development of thinking skills, problem solving, questioning and group working; and a knowledge of how pupils' understanding of particular content grows and develops.
- Teaching is also practical, and the profession has a **wide range of teaching practices** and methods.
- Teaching has a basis in care and responsibility for pupils' learning. This leads to the need for **knowledge and understanding of particular pupils** - as individuals, their interests, needs and potential obstacles to learning - knowledge developed through assessment and through relationships with pupils, families, communities and other professionals.
- The teaching profession needs **knowledge about the complex and compelling forces that influence daily living** in a changing world, including the political, economic, technological, social and environmental, in order to know what pupils need to learn both in the present and for the future.
- Finally, teachers have the **ability to adapt teaching practices and methods** to particular pupils, drawing on their theoretical understanding of learning, their knowledge of curriculum content and their knowledge of what pupils need.

## **ATL judges the current balance between professional autonomy and prescription by government and managers to be inappropriate.**

This professional knowledge and understanding is not static: it changes and develops over time. Some of the change happens externally to the profession: knowledge of how the brain works; developments in subject knowledge; changes in political, social and cultural attitudes which affect either the way that subjects are taught or the way in which children are perceived.

ATL accepts that like all professional employees, teachers must balance professional values against their responsibilities to the organisations in which they work. Like all public servants, teachers must balance their proper autonomy against the proper powers of government. In a context of increasing involvement of parents and the wider community in the world of education, the profession has a responsibility to demystify professional work and to develop relationships of trust with pupils, parents and the wider community.

Building on teachers' knowledge and skills, the profession has a responsibility to debate policy and practice further and to speak with authority on issues of social justice and the role of education. This does not take place in isolation, but needs the support of both employers and professional communities at school level and at wider local and national levels.

In short, ATL judges the current balance between professional autonomy and prescription by government and managers to be inappropriate.

## **The Government's agenda**

The Government deserves credit for recognising the inadequacy of current arrangements for teachers to be learners. This was well set out in the report by the Teacher Training Authority (TTA) to the Secretary of State in January 2005. There is widespread agreement that substantial improvements in the supply of, demand for, and quality control of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) are needed to develop a learning culture in staff rooms. It is to be hoped that the Government can find and suitably target resources to enable CPD to become a central feature of every teacher's work.

Two elements in the Government's rationale are worth noting. Firstly, it recognises the overwhelming evidence that, to the extent that educational success is due to the system rather than external factors, the individual classroom is the key site. Therefore, achieving the best possible practice from every classroom practitioner becomes the key aim.

Secondly, the Government is approaching this aim through heavily managerialist institutions; with formal mechanisms of inspection, assessment and appraisal, measuring performance and setting targets, and offering rewards for those who improve and sanctions for those who do not. The successful professional in this context is one who works efficiently and effectively in meeting standards, for both teachers and pupils, which are set by others.

## **ATL's critique**

Government policy has attempted to standardise practice, showing a lack of trust in the profession and a denial of complexity. It conceptualises CPD as a management tool to ensure good classroom practice, and is seeking to embed it within the management tool kit, including performance management, pay

progression and contract. Items of training are to be imposed on teachers according only to immediate corporate needs.

ATL rejects this concept, and adopts a longer-term perspective in support of a different attitude. In the long run, a model of good practice involving central recognition followed by local imposition is untenable. Teaching has to be a learning profession, but also an innovating profession. The Government's role should be to recognise and optimise the spread of good practice arising from classrooms. Local communities of teachers must be equipped to reflect on their practice, and to try out new ways of improving learning.

Managerialism in general is a barrier to reflection, and a managerialist approach to CPD will prevent it. While the Government and the school should each have a say in a teacher's further learning, particularly if they are funding it, each individual teacher should have a major say. Some observation of and discussion about others' lessons is undoubtedly valuable; but so may be a further degree or other post-graduate qualification, although perhaps more indirectly. Further study or research produces opportunities for review and reflection which strengthen the individual and the community of teachers.

ATL also rejects the Government's identification of CPD as the only aspect of professionalism which requires development. Review and reflection may be pointless in an environment where the teacher is or feels powerless to innovate, where decisions and changes are always imposed from above. The national bank of expertise will decline unless changes are made to restore proper autonomy. ATL fully accepts the need for due accountability of public servants, but this requires radical rationalisation and rebalancing against the need for professional autonomy.

## **ATL's agenda**

In order to enable and support classroom practitioners' autonomy and professional capacity, changes need to be made to ITT; to the sites and nature of curriculum development; and to the excessive and overlapping systems of teacher accountability. This is an ambitious and long-term agenda which ATL will address.

The Government has identified CPD as a priority for attention, and ATL will contribute to this agenda. Schools can become learning communities for staff as well as pupils only through a commitment shared by all, including leadership, and this cannot be imposed by regulation. However, the necessary sustained programme of change may require support from changes in regulations and contracts, not least in order to secure equity across schools.

The present contract has some bearing on CPD and evidence of its contribution to professionalism is not encouraging. Participation in professional development is already a general contractual requirement and a threshold standard. The five non-contact days are generally thought (though not contractually required) to be for

CPD. None of these appear to have had a significant effect, and the TTA is committed to reviewing the effectiveness of the five days.

ATL agrees with the TTA that these 'five days' are generally an inefficient use of teacher time and seeks their replacement by an obligation to take part in CPD, without any increase in the number of days of pupil contact. This must be complemented by an obligation on the employer to provide CPD opportunities, which should make clear that teachers' CPD plans require co-determination.

## **The national bank of expertise will decline unless changes are made to restore proper autonomy.**

They must be part of new arrangements to reprioritise CPD within working time, so that a minimum amount of CPD time per year can be guaranteed.

ATL seeks a pattern of provision which enables teachers to plan a variety of activities, perhaps in an annual cycle, both on and off-site, combining both immediate needs and long-term personal development. Co-determination requires that CPD funds are under the control partly of the school and partly of each teacher. Teachers must also be entitled to some release from teaching to enable activity such as classroom observation.

The Government also seeks to link pay progression and career paths more closely to participation in CPD. ATL accepts that this is worth exploring in principle; but rejects any attempt to introduce such a link before opportunities for all teachers are available in practice, the TTA strategy has been implemented and resources are in schools.

Such levers may be necessary but are likely to be insufficient to ensure good practice, in terms of both quantity and quality, in all schools. ATL believes that it will be necessary to employ existing regulatory mechanisms for this purpose. In particular, OFSTED inspections should comment prominently on the quality of each school's CPD strategy.

### **ATL's vision**

It is worth repeating that ATL rejects a concept of new professionalism which is limited to teachers being required to undertake development which relates to short-term aims as directed by the school or, less still, by the Government. In the context of workforce reform, teachers are the lead professionals who should be equipped and empowered to lead a continuing debate within their schools about curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment.

The Government's acceptance that central imposition is not a long-term sustainable strategy leads inexorably to such a position, with the caveat that teacher autonomy must be mediated by accountability to a range of interests. However, movement towards this objective requires change on many fronts,

not least an explicit abandonment by the Government of its outmoded managerialist model of schools as organisations.

The Government should intensify activity in support of more distributed leadership within schools, a greater commitment to staff development, and the creation of a culture of innovation which must go together with the generalisation of good practice and the elimination of bad practice. It must recognise that, however important it is for trainee teachers to be able to recognise standards and levels, it is equally important for developing teachers to engage with academic disciplines such as the philosophy, psychology, sociology, and politics of education.

Individual teachers will wish, and should be permitted, to engage in this to varying extents. ATL asserts, however, that the collective intellectual power of the teaching force should be recognised as a major national asset and utilised to create a more vibrant education system, one which is more attractive and therefore more successful for learners.

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# Building a CPD entitlement for teachers in Wales

**Abstract:** *Gary Brace outlines the work of the General Teaching Council for Wales (GTCW) in developing a culture of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) amongst teachers. This has been one of the core objectives of the Council since its establishment. The article examines the background and development of the guiding principles of the Council's CPD activity; it then goes on to describe the operation of the CPD funding programme which the GTCW administers. Finally, Gary summarises the most recent work of the Council in the creation of a Professional Development Framework for registered teachers in Wales.*

## Continuing Professional Development: key principles

There is a clear link between quality and professionalism. As Day (2000) says "...high quality education is simply not possible without the continuing career-long committed professionalism of teachers." At the same time professionalism is not a fixed entity; after initial education and training it must develop further. As Horne (2001) put it "teachers' sense of professionalism is partly based on their willingness to learn throughout their career."

Continuing Professional Development has been a priority for the General Teaching Council for Wales since its formation in September 2000. Indeed, one of the Council's first major publications was "*Continuing Professional Development: an entitlement for all*" (2002). This set out the key principles which should underpin the professional development of teachers and highlighted the key issues which would need to be addressed in order to turn these principles into a reality for all teachers in Wales.

These principles are:

- CPD should be defined broadly to include all formal and informal learning;
- teachers have both an entitlement and a responsibility towards their own CPD;

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## Gary Brace

Gary Brace is the Chief Executive of the GTC Wales. Before taking up his post in 2000, he worked at the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) and the Curriculum Council for Wales. Prior to that, he taught for 15 years in a comprehensive school and a sixth form college

- a CPD framework must reflect the needs of individual teachers as well as the requirements of schools and local and central government;
- high quality professional development must be available to all teachers throughout their careers, irrespective of geographic location in Wales; and
- there is a close relationship between CPD and the performance management process.

These have become the guiding principles for the work of the GTCW in the area of CPD. In consultation, the Welsh Assembly Government also accepted these principles.

### **Funding teachers' needs**

In the summer of 2001, the Council was invited by the Welsh Assembly Government to pilot and evaluate a series of projects which gave teachers the opportunity to participate in CPD activities designed to meet their own individually identified professional development needs. Funds for the three pilot phases were provided by the Assembly Government and administered by the General Teaching Council for Wales. There were three phases of pilot funding ending in March 2004. (2001-02 = £1.5m, 2002-03 = £5m, 2003-04 = £5m).

The Council commissioned independent evaluations (see GTCW website) of each pilot phase. These found that the CPD activities undertaken had a positive impact, and were particularly successful in:

- raising the quality and quantity of CPD for teachers in Wales;
- developing a work and profession-based culture of CPD;
- promoting teaching as an evidence-based profession;
- contributing to school improvement; and
- fostering collaborative work between teachers and between schools.

It was found that “Teachers appreciated the worth placed on them as individuals and on their professionalism, and valued the opportunity to take responsibility for their own professional development. (James, R.; Egan, D., 2004)

The conclusion was that “the Phase 3 Professional Development Pilot Project has provided unique funding opportunities for teachers and schools which, overall, have been very successful in:

- promoting good quality individually initiated and collaborative forms of CPD in the schools of Wales and fostering a positive climate for CPD to flourish;
- enhancing the personal effectiveness and professional competencies of teachers; and
- securing improvements in planning and provision in schools.”(James, R.; Egan, D., 2004)

Importantly, there was also “evidence to indicate that the volume, nature

and quality of the activities are having positive effects on the wider development of the education system in Wales. “

Following these positive evaluations, experience of the pilot phases, and a consultation, the Welsh Assembly Government decided to provide funding for the GTCW to administer a CPD funding programme on a permanent basis from April 2004. The Council will be administering a £2 million programme for the financial year 2005-06, rising to £3 million by 2007-08.

### **Administering the CPD fund**

From the outset, the CPD funding programme was intended to be an answer to development needs identified by individual teachers. Similarly, teachers are responsible for identifying the content and focus of CPD activities. The Council does not define or prescribe the content areas of CPD activities. The operation of the CPD fund then accords with the Council’s philosophy in that genuine, “bottom up”, initiatives which are owned by teachers are at its core. For this reason also, the GTCW administered fund is unique in Wales.

The other main source of developmental funding; the Better Schools Fund (BSF) is a “strategic” or “top down” fund. Its time-limited objectives are set annually by the Assembly Government in response to what are seen as national requirements. Funding under this scheme is administered by local education authorities.

In administering its programme, the Council makes available a variety of funding streams to enable teachers in Wales to organise CPD activities which meet their own professional development needs, identified within the context of schools’ performance management systems. As at March 2005, some 15,000 teachers had already participated in activities funded by the Council. This represents over 40% of the registered teacher population in Wales.

## **The operation of the CPD fund then accords with the Council’s philosophy in that genuine, “bottom up”, initiatives which are owned by teachers are at its core.**

The Continuing Professional Development funding streams for the 2005-08 period and their outcomes so far are:

■ **professional development bursaries** – up to £600 for a professional development activity of the teacher’s choice including visits within and outside the UK (up to £1000 available for visits outside Europe) to observe good practice and exchange ideas.

Over 6,000 teachers have received funding to undertake activities such as attending courses, visiting schools, and shadowing colleagues. For example,

a primary Deputy Head with responsibility for pupil behaviour was able to research and receive coaching in a system of “assertive discipline”. He was then able to introduce this system to the school.

- **teacher research scholarships** – up to £2,500 to undertake action research.

Over 400 teachers have undertaken action research projects. One such project involved investigating effective means to develop children’s coordination skills to enable them to learn the basics of letter formation.

- **teacher sabbaticals** – up to £5,000 to undertake a prolonged period of study or develop transferable skills in a different environment.

Over 26 teachers have taken the opportunity to develop transferable skills by undertaking a placement of up to half a term. Teachers have participated in sabbaticals at the BBC Education Department, the National Museum and Gallery of Wales, and the National Botanic Gardens of Wales

- **professional networks** – up to £8,000 to enable groups of teachers to collaborate on a regular basis.

Over 280 networks have been funded across Wales. For example, a group of Cardiff teachers formed a network to develop approaches to promote racial harmony through the curriculum. A wide range of resources and ideas was generated which members have now incorporated into their practice.

Teachers who receive funding are required to write a brief report which is

## **A Framework would recognise the different stages in a teacher’s career and link these to professional standards and professional development.**

intended to facilitate their critical reflection on the impact of the activity on their own personal and professional development, and, where appropriate, on their class, colleagues and school. In addition, teachers need to include details of how they intend to share information about their CPD experiences with others.

### **Dissemination**

Building upon the success of the pilot phases and the permanent establishment of the individually focussed CPD fund, the Council has now reached the stage where it can give a renewed focus to the effective dissemination of innovation and good practice developed through funded CPD activities.

Dissemination strategies utilised currently include the following.

- *CPD Wales* e journal – a database of past projects and their final reports. In

December 2002, the Council launched the CPD Wales e-journal to disseminate the activities undertaken by teachers as part of the pilot projects. The e-journal publishes the titles of all activities that receive funding and a small number of reports are published in fuller form. The e-journal is available in both English and Welsh (<http://www.gtcw.org.uk/cpd/information.html>).

- *Teaching Wales* – the Council’s professional journal regularly publishes case study summaries of particularly successful or innovative projects. All registered teachers receive three issues of *Teaching Wales* every year.
- Facilitating teacher participation in conferences and events. Teachers have, for example, presented their work at the International Professional Development Association (IPDA) Cymru Conference and the Wales Education Conference and Exhibition.
- Liaison with local education authority (LEA) CPD coordinators. The Council makes every effort to keep the LEA coordinators up to date with activities in their authorities in order to facilitate networking and information sharing.

In order to develop a more strategic approach to the funding, dissemination and co-ordination of CPD in Wales, the Council has recently established a CPD Advisory Group, with representatives from LEAs, teacher unions and higher education. The Council is now introducing local and regional conferences – the first two such events being planned in conjunction with Swansea / Neath Port Talbot and Cardiff LEAs.

## A Professional Development Framework

A key element of the Council’s advice paper “*Continuing Professional Development: an entitlement for all*” was the need to establish a Professional Development Framework for teachers in Wales. Such a Framework would recognise the different stages in a teacher’s career and link these to professional standards and professional development.

Following widespread acceptance of the concept of a Professional Development Framework, the Welsh Assembly Government invited the GTCW to take the lead in its development. The Council subsequently established a Task Group with membership drawn from the teaching profession, teacher unions, the initial teacher education and training sector, local education authorities, Estyn, and the Assembly Government to progress this work.

The Council has recently consulted with all 38,000 registered teachers in Wales (as well as other stakeholders) on the key principles which might underpin a Professional Development Framework. The main emphasis of the Framework is on providing a structure designed to ensure that teachers can receive the best professional development possible. The Council’s advice

paper on a Professional Development Framework is due for publication in July 2005.

## The Future

GTCW agreed that “continuing professional development, or lifelong learning, will be the cornerstone of teacher professionalism.” (Horne, 2001)

By 2007, it is hoped that Wales will have a fully fledged, quality - assured continuing professional development framework for teachers which will enable teachers to receive formal recognition and credit for professional activities and work-based experiences.

The Welsh Assembly Government has already undertaken important initiatives in relation to providing teachers with CPD opportunities. By building on this valuable start, the Council considers that it will be possible to achieve a significant improvement in the continuing development of teachers and ultimately on the quality of education which is afforded to pupils and young people in the schools of Wales.

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# The GTCE Teacher Learning Academy – a personal view

**Abstract:** *Allyson Ingall gives a personal view of her experience of the Teacher Learning Academy pilot. She begins by indicating how CPD policy and teacher expectations have changed during the course of her career, highlighting the increased importance now attached to work-based learning and peer observation. She then outlines key elements of the Teacher Learning Academy, notably its progressive framework, core dimensions and approach to verification. She concludes by indicating how the Teacher Learning Academy has the potential to embrace and join up the wide range of CPD opportunities available to teachers; and could provide evidence for teachers in the context of the new professionalism agenda.*

## The changing face of CPD

When I first started teaching in the early 1980s professional development was somewhat scarce. The NQT induction year, then called the probationary year, was a casual affair that varied considerably within and between education authorities. In my case it comprised attendance at a 3-day residential where sessions could be largely viewed as “tips-for-teachers”. This was followed by an observation in the summer term from an LEA representative with no focus and little feedback other than “you’ve passed!”

Subsequent professional development was largely viewed as “going on a course” which, at best, tended to focus upon an area of interest rather than a perceived need. There was no expectation that knowledge gained would be shared with colleagues or have any discernible impact on teaching and learning.

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### Allyson Ingall

Allyson Ingall is an experienced primary school teacher and deputy head from Cumbria. She is currently seconded as a Link Adviser to the General teaching Council for England (GTCE.)

Entitlement to such courses was inconsistent within and between schools and, largely due to school budgets being handled centrally, little or no effort was placed on establishing value for money or the cost-effectiveness of such activities.

During my career this situation has changed in many ways, not least through the wide ranging ramifications of the Education Reform Act (1987) and, more specifically, as a result of the introduction of the induction year. There has been a distinct shift from external professional development through course attendance to internal professional development and the sharing of professional practice. Following an increase in Government imposed initiatives and strategies, each with funded training opportunities, schools have become reluctant to release teachers for further training sessions. With little or no time funded for school-based follow-up to initiative training, many teachers have worked long hours planning and implementing these initiatives and thus become even more wary of taking on any further training that isn't explicitly directed from central government.

## **Learning is undoubtedly enhanced by opportunities to observe other colleagues.**

Furthermore, when CPD strategies have emerged with the potential to meet individual and institutional needs – such as bursaries, sabbaticals, Best Practice Research Scholarships and, above all, the Early Professional Development pilots – they have been short-lived.

### **Work-based learning and peer observation**

Whilst many teachers have long since implicitly acknowledged that much of their most significant professional learning is derived from their day-to-day practice, credibility for such forms of professional development has only recently begun to take hold. The General Teaching Council for England's (GTCE, 2003a) Teachers' Professional Learning Framework (TPLF) states,

“Learning runs right through a teaching career. It takes place every day, formally and informally, through a wide range of learning experiences, deepening and revitalising teachers' skills, abilities, values and knowledge”.

Such learning is undoubtedly enhanced by opportunities to observe other colleagues. The current focus on observation developed initially through LEA controlled Leading Teachers but also, in more enlightened schools, by teachers being released (through various means) to observe colleagues at work and to engage in some form of professional dialogue.

This arose, in part, from a lesson observation model derived from the OfSTED framework, but there is now more than just anecdotal evidence to suggest that teachers rate such activity most highly. GTCE's publication "Peer Observation", produced in conjunction with the NUT (GTCE, NUT, 2003b), recognised the importance attached to this by teachers in the GTCE/MORI/Guardian "Teachers on teaching" survey (GTCE,2002) .

Interestingly, efforts by central government to share "good practice" through video clips (as typified through much of the "lunchbox" type training typical of the Literacy, Numeracy and, more recently, KS3 strategies) often backfired as teachers became sceptical of what was perceived to be a one-size-fits-all approach to good practice. Where they were successful, the use of such video clips was both set in context and, more crucially, followed up with an opportunity for teachers to discuss what they felt worked and what didn't. The value of professional dialogue i.e. talking about teaching and learning, and its potential for impact on professional learning, continued to gain credibility and has been further emphasised by the importance now attached to coaching and mentoring.

The first EPPI (Cordingley et al, 2003) systematic review of existing research about the impact of CPD – commissioned by the NUT with contributory funding from GTCE – provided evidence to support this changing culture. It found that collaborative CPD is at its most successful when it is;

- owned by teachers
- relevant to the context
- built on existing expertise
- collaborative and supported from within the school
- able to access external expertise, and
- able to provide opportunities for professional recognition and accreditation for workplace learning.

## **The Teacher Learning Academy – Core dimensions**

Against this backdrop the GTCE's Teacher Learning Academy was conceived and is currently in its second pilot year. The pilot involves around 20 LEAs or groups of LEAs as well as a range of other partners including NCSL, the NUT, Subject Associations, Training Schools and providers of international CPD opportunities. With an independent evaluation currently being carried out by the NFER, the aim is to develop a national system for the professional recognition of teachers' learning with a particular focus on learning embedded within daily practice. Opportunities to link this recognition to academic accreditation are also being explored with various Higher Education Institutions with the aim of interested teachers being able to seek 30 points towards a Masters degree on top of professional recognition from GTCE.

The Academy has six stages. Each stage is defined using six core dimensions:

- engagement with a knowledge base;
- accessing peer support, coaching and/or mentoring;
- planning of professional learning or change activity;
- carrying out a change activity;
- evaluating the impact of the change activity on practice and on own learning; and
- disseminating what has been learned.

Teachers are required to provide evidence of their learning against these dimensions at a level appropriate for the stage at which they are working. This may be based on work related to role, performance management objectives, school improvement priorities, or more traditional forms of CPD provision. Trained verifiers, predominantly school based practitioners, subsequently evaluate the evidence against the criteria. The intention is that much of the evidence will have been produced as a consequence of teachers doing their job, and reflection and analysis that derive directly from that.

The learning process embodied within these core dimensions is a familiar one. It echoes some of the EPPI findings, with teachers encouraged to develop a clearer, manageable focus for their learning by considering what they know already and identifying where they might find out more. Such a knowledge base can include, for example, literature, research findings and pupil data, but its appropriateness may well stem from its foundation in the evidence of accessible practice. The dialogue with others, including coaching and mentoring, supports learning throughout the process and may be both formal and informal. The GTCE's publication "The Learning Conversation" (GTCE, 2004) – offers further insights into the ways in which this can be achieved in different contexts.

When planning what they intend to do and what they hope to learn, teachers are encouraged to maintain dialogue with others throughout. Teachers are also reminded to build in flexibility, ensuring that they can respond to and learn from the unexpected. For some teachers and schools, this requires a culture change; for many, it represents a welcome acknowledgement that evaluation followed by a change of direction is a core element of reflective or evidence-based practice and critical enquiry.

Dissemination at the end of the process is understandably important, and the criteria at each stage require teachers to extend their sphere of influence. However, dissemination is also relevant throughout planning, carrying out and evaluating a project. Communication with others along the way is an important part of the reflective process whereby teachers both increase their own understanding and influence the practice of others.

## Recognition

GTCE's Learning Academy is open, within pilot locations, to all qualified

teachers who are registered with the Council in England. The beauty of the TLA lies in its simplicity. Provided teachers can demonstrate the desired level of coverage of all 6 core dimensions at the designated stage, recognition is awarded. Rooted in daily professional practice, there is no expectation that teachers should jump through artificial hoops to prove their competence.

Variety of learning styles is acknowledged and encouraged with a range of evidence being acknowledged as professionally and, in an increasing number of HEIs, academically credible. Examples of evidence have included photographs, video and ICT evidence; as well as evidence produced during the course of teachers' daily practice such as lesson plans, minutes of meetings, reports, policies and annotated planning documents. At Stage 1 evidence must be discussed and referred to in a dialogue with a colleague. This forms part of the submission process. Beyond the first stage, reflective practice through the use of a learning journal or similar is encouraged.

**The beauty of the TLA lies in its simplicity. Rooted in daily professional practice, there is no expectation that teachers should jump through artificial hoops to prove their competence.**

At the heart of the Teacher Learning Academy, alongside the progressive framework and the core dimensions, is the commitment to the development of a verification model which is both rigorous and professionally relevant. Its relevance comes not only from ensuring that submission requirements support and enhance teacher learning but also from the key role the verifier can fulfil. The aspiration is that verifiers will be predominantly school-based practitioners, thereby reinforcing the notion that this is recognition of teachers by fellow professionals. This will help to build capacity within the profession to offer bold support and discussion about the quality and potential of each other's practice.

### **Alignment with existing CPD programmes**

With an emphasis on teachers' professional learning based on their daily practice, the opportunity to have their work professionally recognised is something that teachers in the Teacher Learning Academy pilot have seized upon. As knowledge of the Teacher Learning Academy increases in terms of its philosophy, robustness and credibility, its currency is strengthening. From the outset teachers, school leaders and others have sought reassurance that it would "join up" an increasingly complex landscape of CPD provision, qualifications and other programmes, rather than add to the confusion. For

that reason, alongside its focus on enhancing and recognising the full range of work-based learning, the project has also sought to align and integrate its processes and requirements within existing and developing CPD programmes.

The recent partnership with the National College for School Leadership in the context of its Leading from the Middle programme (LftM) is a good example of how this has been done. At the beginning of the pilot, individual teachers in partner locations chose to develop submissions to the Teacher Learning Academy drawing on the evidence of their learning through LftM. Now that the core dimensions have been mapped against the various elements of the programme, Cohort 4 and 5 participants can more easily develop a submission over the period of their engagement with LftM.

In the case of the partnership with the NUT and its *teacherstogether* programme this approach is being taken a step further. The requirements for the TLA at Stage 1 have been matched to the evidence already produced by course participants.

Teachers and school leaders have been similarly innovative in seeking to integrate Teacher Learning Academy processes into their approaches to school improvement planning, CPD leadership and performance management. The evidence-based approach to career and pay progression shows no signs of abating and achievement of specific stages of the Teacher Learning Academy has already been cited as evidence in threshold applications.

Newly Qualified Teachers, familiar with Career Entry Profiles, are already in the mindset to continue to track their development against a set of professional standards. As an increasing number of NQIs access their statutory induction entitlements, the process followed is entirely consistent with Stage 1 of the Teacher Learning Academy.

## What next?

Further links with the revised pay and career structures implied by the new professionalism agenda have yet to be established. However, the Teacher Learning Academy has the potential to provide evidence of teachers' sustained professional learning; their involvement in the mentoring and coaching of others; and of the impact of these on their practice. Clearly this could have the effect of increasing the value of this new currency of recognition within the profession.

NFER's evaluation report is scheduled for January 2006. This will inform decisions about the future direction of the project. It is clear already though that the pilot is bringing its own benefits to participating teachers. One Birmingham teacher said "I was reminded of why I went into teaching". The challenge will be to ensure that the TLA remains manageable, professionally relevant and accessible to all teachers; whilst also securing credible and rigorous verification systems.

What the Birmingham teacher had valued so much about her experience was the chance to focus, with colleagues from several schools, on learning

about Philosophy for Children and then explore how this could be used to support the language development of her pupils. When asked how it reminded her of why she went into teaching, she talked about making a difference and enabling children to learn. What she liked about the Teacher Learning Academy was that it supported that process, particularly through collaboration with colleagues. It had not made additional demands on her that got in the way of her professional learning.

It will certainly be a challenge to create a national system that keeps it that way; but what better initial endorsement could there be?

Further information is available at [www.gtce.org.uk/tla](http://www.gtce.org.uk/tla)

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# Teachers making poverty history

## Penny Lawrence

Penny Lawrence is Director of International Programmes at VSO.

**Abstract:** *Penny Lawrence describes how Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) offers a unique opportunity for teachers to work overseas and share their skills and knowledge to help some of the poorest countries in the world. As well as the positive contribution of VSO teachers to the developing world, volunteering also brings benefits to the UK and the individual teachers themselves, in the form of professional development, renewed enthusiasm and a global dimension to the classroom.*

## What is VSO?

Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) is an international development charity that works through volunteers. It offers unique opportunities for teachers to work in developing countries, not only to share their skills but also gain new and valuable experience.

Founded in 1958, VSO has sent over 30,000 people to work overseas. Originally for graduates and school leavers, VSO has, in response to requests from overseas partners, developed its placements into focused assignments for people with more professional experience.

Financial aid should only be one element of tackling poverty. Poor countries need skills and knowledge to use the aid they are given, otherwise the cycle of poverty will never be broken. VSO is a charity that not only tackles the symptoms of poverty; but one which campaigns for action on the causes of poverty and for the rights of teachers in developing countries.

VSO is committed to education as a fundamental human right and a powerful tool in the fight against poverty - as recognised by the international community through the Millennium Development Goals (The World Bank Group, 2004). As part of VSO's strategic plan it aims, through the placement of volunteers, to increase the accessibility, gender equity, relevance and quality of education for disadvantaged people in poor countries (VSO, 2002).

Through its close work with Ministries of Education and its grassroots approach to development, VSO knows that it is not just teacher shortages that

are preventing the Millennium Goals for education being reached. *Valuing Teachers: What makes teachers tick?* – VSO’s policy research report on teachers’ motivation in developing countries – found that there is a failure of education policy frameworks and systems in developing countries to retain and motivate teachers (Fry, 2002). Therefore the emphasis of VSO’s work in education is on long-term capacity building of individuals, schools and education systems at local and national level. Volunteer placements feed into this strategy.

VSO works by receiving requests from overseas partners for volunteers. In the education sector these are Ministries of Education, universities, non-governmental organisations and charities. Volunteer placements are focused on teacher training, school management and policy building, rather than just service delivery, so they will have the biggest impact.

### **What are the benefits of doing VSO?**

An independent study by the Institute of Education on VSO education placements found that teachers volunteering overseas benefit the UK education system. *Time IN: The impact of a VSO placement on professional development, commitment and retention of UK teachers* (Unterhalter et al, 2002) found that volunteering with VSO offers teachers significant professional development opportunities that are hard to match in UK.

Volunteers develop experience in much sought after skills; for example in management, leadership, cross-cultural working, curriculum development, teacher education and professional development, raising students’ attainment, inclusion, communication and influencing skills.

Through the challenges and opportunities of a VSO placement, teachers are offered a new stimulus and the opportunity to share their skills, sometimes at a regional or national level. As one volunteer said, “[The VSO placement was] the most positive experience in my professional development. I gained lots of confidence throughout this year.”

## **Education is a fundamental human right, and a powerful tool in the fight against poverty**

VSO teachers return to the UK with renewed enthusiasm for teaching. They are well placed to contribute their unique cross-cultural insights to promoting global education and global citizenship agendas in schools – highlighted as good practice in the publication *International Strategy* (DfES, 2004) and as an area of teacher and resource shortage in schools by OFSTED (OFSTED, 2003).

The *Time IN* report found that teachers who have done a VSO placement overwhelmingly return to education in the UK and then stay longer in

education than their colleagues who have not done VSO. Seventy three per cent of working-age volunteers returned to education after their VSO placement, compared to retention estimates for teachers who have not done VSO of 40-60 percent (DfES, 2002; Smithers and Robinson, 2001).

The research in the report *Time IN* led to VSO being endorsed as a personal development opportunity by the DfES, the General Teaching Council for England, five leading teacher unions and 57 Local Education Authorities (LEAs).

## Opportunities for teachers

VSO education placements are diverse, ranging from working at a government policy level to implementing methodologies for children with special education needs. Volunteers work closely with their local colleagues to share their skills and work together, so when the volunteer leaves the knowledge is not lost.

Currently there are 500 VSO volunteers working in education placements around the world. They are working in teaching, teacher training, developing government policy, special education needs, further and higher education, resource development and librarianship skills, English language teacher training, and primary and secondary education.

Increasingly VSO recruits heads, deputy heads and teachers with experience of management to work as education managers. In the financial year 2005/06 the number of VSO education management placements has risen from 28 to 69. These education managers will help the Ministries of Education face the challenges of extreme lack of resources, poor infrastructures, a demotivated and often irregularly paid teaching workforce, plus the HIV/AIDS pandemic. All of these are having a knock on impact on the quality of teaching that is being provided.

In Cambodia the VSO programme has just been awarded funding from the World Bank to recruit 50 volunteers in the next five years. These volunteers will work with the Ministry of Education in provincial offices of education and teacher training centres to help staff implement changes to improve the management and leadership of schools as well as teaching methods. Matt Innes, a volunteer in Cambodia, says:

“The teachers and directors are very keen to have training so they’re very receptive. For many of the teachers it’s been a revelation that when children are having fun, they learn better. It’s very moving to see teachers who are so motivated by what I’m saying”.

Special needs education volunteers train local teachers or work as advisors to Ministries of Education. Their responsibilities include: implementing national curriculums; assessing the requirements of both individuals and integrated classes; developing suitable teaching and learning materials; and undertaking

field visits to assess and train local colleagues. Julia Clements, who worked as an integration support officer in Thailand, says:

“My job involved visiting schools and advising teachers on how to integrate children with special educational needs. Although this is very similar to my old job in the UK, where I was an educational psychologist, the major difference was I had to work in Thai! There were times when I felt frustrated at the low expectations that people have of children with special needs but my work helped to challenge those beliefs and that was incredibly rewarding.”

## **What impact does VSO have on education worldwide?**

One of VSO’s largest programmes is in Ethiopia with 114 volunteers currently working there. The majority of volunteers in Ethiopia work in education from school level to policy and curriculum reform. Many work as part of the Higher Diploma Programme which, through a licensing programme, aims to improve the skills and professionalism of teacher trainers in Ethiopia. In 2004 alone VSO volunteers trained 1,363 Ethiopian teacher trainers who, in turn, will train more than 11,000 student teachers. These teachers will go on to teach nearly 800,000 children. The Minister of Education, Wzo Gennet Zewide, says:

“I won’t forget for the rest of my life the help provided by VSO volunteers that I needed for the transformation of education. There is a meeting of minds between VSO and the Ministry which has produced such valuable strategic work.”

In Rwanda VSO has built on its strong relationship with the Ministry of Education. Initially VSO provided international volunteer teachers in classrooms to ensure as many Rwandan children as possible had access to education in the immediate aftermath of the genocide. As Valentin Utaruhijimana, a graduate taught by VSO teachers, says:

“What volunteers are doing in Rwanda must be appreciated. We don’t like being spoon-fed but we need their help. We need to be able to learn from volunteers.”

During 2005 VSO is supporting the Rwandan Ministry in addressing quality teaching and its management. Specifically, support is given to initiatives around teacher development and education management as well as building capacity on integrating HIV and AIDS awareness and gender equality issues.

In Kenya, VSO is supporting special needs education, enabling disabled

children to access mainstream education. Over the last three years there has been a demonstrable impact on access as the annual enrolment of disabled children in the focus districts has increased by over 50 per cent. This model has now been adopted by the Government for the whole of Kenya in 2005.

In Zambia VSO together with its partner, Kabompo High School in Northwestern Province, identified gender inequality as a main barrier to girl students achieving acceptable pass rates. VSO volunteers and Kabompo High School worked together to design a girls' empowerment programme to give girls practical ways of tackling gender inequality. The development of the programme was based on close links with the wider community to find out exactly what problems girls face in and out of school. This ensured that the programme addressed the specific needs of the girls.

### **More support for teachers who volunteer**

VSO is lobbying the UK Government to support teachers who volunteer overseas. To achieve the ambitious Millennium Development Goals the DfES must support VSO in its work by developing and encouraging teachers to volunteer overseas.

## **Teachers who have done VSO overwhelmingly return to education in the UK and then stay longer in education than their colleagues who have not done VSO.**

There are three key actions the Government and LEAs can take to support teachers and education managers to volunteer. Firstly, they can provide an accreditation scheme, so the skills and experience gained while working with VSO are acknowledged, maybe as a contribution to Advanced Skills Teacher status. This would help volunteers who can find it difficult on returning to the UK to get a job at the appropriate level that acknowledges their experience overseas. The *Time IN* report has shown that head teachers who employ returned VSO volunteers universally consider working with them a positive experience. The returned volunteer teachers are considered to have a strong understanding of learning processes and how to manage and facilitate learning.

Secondly, in response to volunteers having to take a break in pension contributions when they are overseas, the Government should acknowledge that they are continuing their professional development and acquiring skills that are useful to the UK education system on their return, and reimburse or credit their pensions.

Thirdly, as is the case in Northern Ireland where teachers are allowed an unpaid career break of up to three years while their job is kept open, VSO

would like LEAs in England, Wales and Scotland to provide leave of absence for teachers to volunteer overseas.

VSO itself is looking to offer more flexible, shorter-term, volunteering opportunities in addition to the one-year placements already in place for primary teachers.

## Education in the UK

As said, VSO volunteers bring their experience and skills back to the UK. They are valuable to the schools where they are employed; but also the wider education community can benefit through VSO's Global Educators Register.

The National Curriculum encourages schools to prepare pupils for living in a global society. Guidance for schools says that a global dimension in lessons can help children of all ages link their lives with children internationally, examine their own values and attitudes, and give them the knowledge and skills to play an active role in the global community (DfEE, 2000).

Teachers in the UK can access our register, free, to find returned volunteers who can help them develop this global dimension to their curriculum, provide first hand accounts of life in the developing world; and help build partnerships with schools overseas. The register is available at [www.britishcouncil.org/globalschools](http://www.britishcouncil.org/globalschools).

## Thinking about volunteering?

For those in the early stages of thinking about volunteering, VSO has published *A Guide to Sabbaticals in Education* (VSO, 2003). The guide offers teachers practical advice on approaching their employers for leave of absence. It includes answers to frequently asked questions about such issues as the impact of sabbaticals on pensions; keeping up with education developments here while overseas; and eligibility to attend refresher courses upon return to the UK.

To enable volunteers to go overseas, VSO offers a comprehensive financial and training package which includes: a local wage; accommodation; flights; travel and health insurance; national insurance contributions; visas and work permits as well as grants and holiday allowance. Volunteers receive between 7 and 16 days of training before beginning their placement, as well as orientation and language training on arrival in the country.

For more information visit [www.vso.org.uk](http://www.vso.org.uk) or call 020 8780 7500.

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# From restaurant to supermarket: how Teachers' TV can promote a more collaborative and interactive CPD network

*Abstract: Andrew Bethell "sells" Teachers' TV – wholly funded by the Government but editorially independent – as reflecting an alternative CPD model for teachers, governors and support staff in England. He suggests the channel helps to move from top-down transmission to a more flexible and self-determining peer-to-peer approach to professional development and thereby helps teachers to take more control of their own learning.*

**A**t a recent event to explain Teachers' TV to a large group of potential CPD partners, one advisory team leader told us that she was worried that if Teachers' TV was a success it would put her out of a job. It was a flattering projection of our impact; but even if we do prove to be very popular and make a real impact on

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## Andrew Bethell

Andrew Bethell is Director of Programmes at Teachers' TV. He taught for 16 years in Hackney and Brent as a Head of Year, Head of English and Head of Sixth Form. He then founded and ran Double Exposure, one of the country's leading producers of educational and mainstream documentary programmes.

teachers' professional development, she should stick with the day job. This is a good time to be in CPD and if it works Teachers' TV should make her life easier.

Teachers' professional development is changing fast and everyone wants a part of it. As LEAs have diminishing resources, many agencies including the NCSL, the QCA, the GTC, the Specialist Schools Trust as well as the NUT have stepped into the breach by offering an even greater range of continuing professional development opportunities. At the same time, the DfES continues to invest heavily in training to help deliver the National Strategies.

With so much CPD going on, it is not surprising that there is a heightened interest in identifying the most effective ways of delivering it; especially at a time when the profession is re-discovering its confidence (thereby becoming more demanding) and the technology is opening up more ways for teachers to control their own learning. Teachers' TV is certainly making use of some new technology, but will it allow teachers to take control?

## **A new approach**

Ask most teachers what they understand by continuing professional development and they will say "courses and training days". Courses have been an effective staple of in-service training and have delivered some impressive improvements. They work when there is a need to share a particular approach or explain changes. They can be an efficient way to disseminate the "voice of the expert". They bring teachers together, usually outside the workplace and, where the pedagogy of the course-giver has improved, they promote dialogue and real learning. They represent, however, a top-down "transmission" approach – what the Americans tend to refer to as "drive-by" training and offer only short-term engagement outside the classroom. Often requiring absence from school, supply cover, travel, and sometimes accommodation, it can also be an expensive approach.

## **With so much CPD going on, it is not surprising that there is a heightened interest in identifying the most effective ways of delivering it.**

Teachers' TV offers an alternative - what might be called the "supermarket" model of CPD. If the "external course" model is rather like eating out - getting away from your own kitchen and letting someone else do the cooking - Teachers' TV is much more like shopping at a supermarket. Since many supermarkets, like Teachers' TV, are open 24 hours a day, the decision about when to go shopping is up to the shopper. For some, this means a regular weekly visit at a time that suits them.

In the same way, the channel makes training accessible round the clock and allows teachers to partake at a time that suits them. The schedule is highly repeated, with programmes appearing up to six times a week at different times during the day and across the weekend. The schedule has been carefully structured to encourage a regular appointment to watch programmes that meet a particular need. This is a profoundly different power relationship between CPD provider and consumer, which heightens the consumer's ownership of the learning experience.

You may be free to buy what you want, but you do need to know where to look, which is why the layout and labelling on the channel is just as important as the carefully planned layout of a supermarket. We have divided the schedule into three zones: Primary, Secondary and General. Targeted CPD programmes go in the Primary and Secondary Zones, where they are clearly labelled according to Subject, Role and Key Stage. Once you are in the right zone, there are programmes labelled, for example, KS3 Science or Primary SENCOs. And to make it easier still, when you find the label that matches your requirements you will find three or four short programmes all relating to that subject, topic or role. This is the block approach based on clusters of 15-minute programmes, a length which is proving very popular.

In marked contrast to the “restaurant model” – where you are committed to a day, half-day or two hours of training planned by someone else – the supermarket model means that you can pick just one 15-minute event. Early audience research suggests that although teachers initially said they would not watch more than 15 minutes at a time, in fact they are putting two or three 15-minute snacks together and turning them into a meal. Because it feels easy to make a 15-minute commitment, the next 15 minutes seem worth a try and then perhaps the next: “After all it’s only another 15 minutes”. Several teachers have described the current schedule as “strangely addictive”!

### Further advantages

Another advantage of the Teachers’ TV model of CPD is that it encourages teachers to move out of their direct area of professional interest. When the choices are laid out and easily accessible, you do try things that you would never normally eat. Primary teachers seem to learn from watching secondary programmes. English teachers get fascinated by maths lessons and find that there is more transferable technique than they were expecting. The traditional models of CPD rarely allow this cross-over. Our approach promotes a more democratic and holistic approach to school improvement. The senior manager watching the programme about the struggling NQT may as a result become a more responsive mentor and more sensitive manager generally. The SENCO watching a programme on how to organise parents’ evenings might realise how her specialist expertise could improve the whole-school parental access policy.

The General Zone also encourages teachers to broaden their interests. To extend the supermarket image a little further, what we have done is include programmes which may not be on your regular shopping list but may tempt you to take something which will provide tangential stimulation or enrichment. It could be the weekly educational news or a documentary about autism, advice on securing a better work-life balance or useful guidance for advancing your career.

If the Primary and Secondary Zones are “appointments to view” then the General Zone is “drop-in TV”. Or, to use another media metaphor: the Primary and Secondary Zones are “lean forward” CPD whereas the General Zone is “lean-back” TV. A documentary about women and Islam may not be on the training syllabus but it makes a good watch in its own right (especially at 10pm, when it might be the only decent documentary on offer across 200 channels). At the same time, a programme like this helps raise multi-cultural awareness and could provide the vital insight that helps unlock a complex dispute around Muslim dress.

Finally, the General Zone is the part of the channel that feels most like the other mainstream channels. Even if the CPD payoff here is harder to measure, it is the place where we hope to generate in teachers a pride of ownership in their channel. As yet no other profession has its own dedicated television service, let alone a profession that has for many years felt itself undervalued and misunderstood.

## Sharing TV

At risk of working the supermarket metaphor to death, there is still one more analogy to be made. The experience of eating at a restaurant ends when you pay the bill, whereas after shopping at the supermarket, which is just the beginning, you take your shopping home, prepare and cook it and usually share it. The same model applies to Teachers’ TV.

Through recording or on-line down-loads<sup>1</sup> it is possible to take programmes into school to share with colleagues. In this way programmes promote peer-to-peer school-based training. The science teacher can share a programme on how to safely perform dangerous experiments with her colleagues in the department, agree to try them out and meet again to discuss successes and failures. The NQT mentor can record programmes on behaviour management and use them as a basis for a mentoring session with the school’s NQTs. This sharing is a key aspect of the Teachers’ TV model. It is where the channel’s output should interact with existing CPD communities.

Increasingly there has been a significant on-line component in CPD. On-line courses offer many of the same elements of convenience and choice that Teachers’ TV is able to offer. However, there is also some evidence to suggest that teachers find it hard to sustain motivation when simply working through

course materials on line. Teachers' TV aims to provide its narrative-based observational case-studies to enhance on-line courses, and will be looking to collaborate with on-line course providers. Equally there is much benefit to be had from on-line CPD communities. Teachers' TV will soon be actively promoting the creation of on-line communities around certain programmes. However, we propose to take yet another step.

## Sharing Learning

One of the most significant aspects of Howard Dean's hugely successful if ill-fated popular campaign for the American Democratic nomination in 2004 was what he called "meet-ups". Individuals logged on, debated and even contributed cash; but people learnt about his position and built up proactive groupings through meeting up in each others' front rooms. In the same way, Teachers' TV is looking to encourage ways which small groups of its audience can be encouraged to gather together; initially through on-line communities using the programmes as a catalyst and then locally to share their experiences of implementing the strategies described and the lessons observed.

As a pilot for this approach we have already set up a partnership with the new Science Learning Centres, whose advisers have had input into the

## As yet no other profession has its own dedicated television service.

programme content. These programmes will then become the focus for small groups of like-minded science teachers to meet at the centres and engage as a group with the programmes. These small-scale learning networks are another way in which Teachers' TV can help develop new dynamic peer-to-peer models of CPD.

The programmes themselves also require a carefully thought-out view on how teachers learn. We know that teachers learn a lot from seeing each other at work. This is one of the channel's strongest selling points because we are able to span the country. A PSHE teacher in Scunthorpe has told us how she watched a programme where a PSHE teacher in Southend used multiple-learning activities to teach a KS3 class about drugs. She picked up several techniques that she could put into practice and the follow-up programme on how the Southend department developed its approach caused her to revitalise her own department's approach to PSHE.

That is what Teachers' TV does best. We are constantly developing better ways to observe what happens in the classroom, to encourage straightforward imitation but more importantly to provoke self-evaluation and analysis by watching teacher's own practice. We are developing what we call "the match-

commentary approach” to classroom observation, using the best of the televisual armoury to subject lessons to visual analysis. For example, we use expert commentary, slow-motion replays and interviews with the players. In the follow-up programme, we see the teacher concerned offering her own self-evaluation.

## What we show

As we were putting the channel together, a recurring question was: “If the channel is about sharing good practice, how do you know what good practice is?” Would we make our choices based on intuition, or prioritise evidentially proven practice? The answer is that we will do both. We need to search out practice that academic research has proven to be effective or OFSTED inspection data point to as effective teaching contributing to school-improvement. On the other hand, we are also committed to showing practice that is less than perfect or takes place in a context that is far from ideal. Our programmes should be the beginning of a learning journey, not the end.

Finally, I’ll return to the concerned advisory team leader with whom I began. Whilst Teachers’ TV does offer an exciting alternative to the one-way restaurant models of CPD, we are very much hoping that conventional CPD providers, whether they be individuals or agencies, will also shop at our supermarket. We were recently approached by an LEA wanting us to film the county-wide roll-out of its restorative justice approach to behaviour management.

We are keen to record this kind of CPD initiative, but more importantly we were able to tell the LEA co-ordinator that we have two excellent programmes on restorative justice which could become useful resources for spreading the word in that county. In the same way, we hope that the advisory team leader will plunder our aisles, down-load our programmes and use them to enrich the course meals that she will continue to serve. Teachers’ TV is not a threat to conventional CPD but an exciting new opportunity.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Almost all the CPD programmes that appear on the channel are available to stream on line or, once a teacher has registered on the Teachers’ Television website, to down-load. This is already proving popular, with programmes ending up on school servers and even in one case being accessed via PDAs for on-the-go in-service training.

# Impact of the specialist schools programme on the teaching profession

**Abstract:** *Jennifer Jupe and Tom Milne promote the benefits of specialist secondary schools. Referring to relevant reports they highlight in particular the opportunities for teachers arising from the specialist schools programme. The aim is that those benefits extend to all teachers not just those who are teaching the specialist focus subjects.*

**S**pecialist schools are at the heart of an educational movement that is transforming secondary education. They are funded to strengthen and enrich selected areas of the curriculum, creating a centre of excellence within each school awarded specialist status. The school must then harness the teaching excellence and sense of purpose that this generates to increase attainment throughout the school. The school is required to share its specialist expertise with other schools and the wider community.

The specialist programme is developing apace. More than two thirds of England's secondary schools are already specialist. By 2008 there will be a fully specialist system, with all schools having developed at least one specialism. An increasing number of special schools will develop specialisms in the coming years – and work more closely with mainstream partners. And, as the 14-19 Education and Skills White Paper makes clear, every specialist school will, over time, be expected to develop vocational learning in its area of

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specialism, further embedding specialism as the organising unit of the secondary education system. (DfES, 2005)

As with any major initiative, there are reservations about the specialist schools programme within education circles, including the teaching profession, a point to which we will return. What is indisputable is that the programme offers rich opportunities to teachers and learners. The several areas in which specialism valuably impacts on teaching are the focus of this article.

## Opportunities

The first area of opportunity is that open to the teacher who has a passion for his or her subject. Specialism is an invitation to participate in, and benefit from, the development of subject pedagogy. Specialist schools are expected to pioneer new teaching and learning strategies, develop use of ICT, and enrich the curriculum offer in the school's area of specialism. In effect specialist schools "model teaching excellence" and "raise expectations about what constitutes good 'science' or 'arts' teaching." (University of Warwick, 2004)

## The programme offers rich opportunities to teachers and learners.

At the same time schools are encouraged to participate in the extensive Specialist Schools Trust support networks that underpin the specialist programme; so that as a specialist school develops new practice the advances are rapidly disseminated throughout the secondary system, and the school has, itself, the opportunity to benefit from the pioneering work of others. Specialist schools frequently serve as pathfinder and test-bed schools in their specialist area, work on curriculum development with awarding bodies, and participate in national initiatives – all broadening and adding interest to a teacher's work.

A number of science colleges, for example, are developing links with Science Learning Centres (SLCs), serving as local hubs, developing and delivering SLC course material, or sitting on advisory panels; others are involved in piloting new courses such as 21st Century Science. Furthermore, the specialist programme is carefully designed to enable schools to draw on a wide range of national resources beyond the traditional boundaries of the school system. Specialist schools draw heavily on national subject resources, for example, working with universities, subject associations and professional bodies to help extend the school curriculum and keep teachers abreast of current research and thinking.

## Local links

Schools are likewise encouraged, through the specialist process, to engage with local cultural, sporting and community groups and organisations. Specialist

arts colleges, for example, are expected to make links with artists, performers, choreographers, theatres, galleries etc. to enrich curriculum provision within the arts. Many schools establish sustained relationships with individuals and organisations that allow teachers to learn from the creative practitioners. These relationships help arts teachers to re-energise their own practice and, again, to keep up-to-date with contemporary developments in their art form. It is also true to say that artists and arts organisations can and do benefit from working with teachers.

In the area of business links, the specialist programme has placed an added emphasis on business and employer involvement in schools, with the result that the range and depth of education-business interactions tend to be greater than before the specialism was introduced. Even so OFSTED indicates that links with businesses need to be strengthened. (OFSTED, 2005)

It would be a natural next step for specialist schools to develop their business partnerships a stage further by securing active business and employer contributions to the delivery of vocational education. There ought, for example, to be opportunities for business “ambassadors” from all sectors of the economy to work with schools (or more realistically, clusters of schools) on vocational and work-related learning in particular occupational areas.

## Across the curriculum

A key aspect to a school’s specialism is that it serves to “support and reinforce high quality teaching and learning in other areas of the curriculum”. (DfES, 2004) The school is duly held accountable for improvements in whole school attainment. Although certain specialist subjects might permeate a school more quickly and easily than others (ICT being the obvious example), teachers in all subject areas are finding ways to work productively with colleagues in different departments, with the result that the whole teaching staff within a school can be encouraged to reflect on teaching practice and to learn from one another.

Taking the example of arts colleges once again, arts practitioners are increasingly learning to use the arts to unlock creative approaches to teaching and learning across the curriculum – active learning strategies, for example, that are a natural part of the performing arts repertoire – and to use technology developed in music and sound recording, multi-media, film, video and digital imaging to enliven and enrich teaching of other subjects.

## Teacher development

The specialist system also holds rich potential as a source of subject-based teacher training and continuing professional development (CPD). In part this CPD is delivered through the regional and national school networks already described, but more powerful still may be the potential for school-to-school

teacher outreach (observation, demonstration, coaching and debate) across a local area.

The current model of collaboration within specialist school families usually involves partnerships with one or two other secondaries. This needs to be expanded so that there is collaboration within groups of several local schools embracing a range of specialisms. (Specialist Schools Trust, 2004) In this way the full range of specialist resources can be made accessible to each and every student and teacher.

A straightforward model would see a leading teacher in one of the focus subjects of each of the specialisms represented in the partnership supported a day a week for outreach work across the participating schools. Language Advanced Skills Teachers, for example, often drawn from Language Colleges, already act as LEA consultants in many authorities, leading on INSET for colleagues in other secondary schools.

Teachers can also apply to become Specialist Schools Trust “Lead Practitioners,” a role designed specifically to disseminate the benefits of specialism throughout the secondary system. (see Specialist Schools Network website) Collaboration between teachers and students in partner schools familiarises *all* the teachers involved with different teaching contexts and approaches to common benefit. Teachers can also enjoy the added motivation and inspiration that comes from shared purpose with colleagues.

## Secondary/Primary links

Specialist schools are required to form links with surrounding primary schools. These may provide a source of subject expertise and resources for primary school teachers as well as an opportunity for secondary school teachers to learn about the strengths of primary teaching and plan Year 7 courses with a clearer sense of progression.

Teachers in language colleges, for instance, work with primary colleagues to align language learning methodology with literacy and numeracy strategies. Language colleges are also expected to offer programmes to support primary feeder schools in working towards the 2010 goal that all KS2 pupils have a curriculum entitlement to language learning. To this end language college teachers are leading work with primary teachers, foreign language assistants and advanced teaching assistants to develop a growing workforce of teaching staff with the confidence to teach languages at primary level.

## Community involvement

A significant proportion of work undertaken in specialist schools relates to the wider community and includes both the school’s involvement in the community and that of the community in the school. In particular, specialist schools provide learning opportunities in their specialist area tailored to a

community's particular needs and interests.

Language Colleges located in multicultural communities, for example, are enabling students (and adults) to learn their heritage languages. In many cases they run classes for hundreds of learners after school and on Saturday mornings, helping children who speak community languages to benefit more from their linguistic abilities.

## **This has been of great benefit to many teachers and helped a wider cross-section of the community to experience teacher professionalism at first hand.**

Through a school's community programmes a teacher may work variously with staff in businesses of all shapes and sizes, social services, hospitals and other public services, amateur interest groups, and other community organisations, learning in the process about teaching age groups extending from crèche and family learning to adult education. This has been of great benefit to many teachers and helped a wider cross-section of the community to experience teacher professionalism at first hand.

### **Special and mainstream**

Exciting new opportunities are being made available to encourage the greater participation of special schools in the specialist schools programme. The central purpose of this (in addition to developing the schools themselves) is to promote outreach to mainstream schools in order to build skills and expertise in special needs provision within the mainstream teaching workforce.

As well as the option of developing a subject specialism, which is open to all special schools with secondary school age students, there are four additional "special specialism" options. These are communication and interaction; cognition and learning; behavioural, emotional and social difficulties; and sensory and/or physical needs. Each of these is being piloted. Special specialist schools would form an important part of the local area school partnerships earlier described.

The specialist schools programme is also helping to promote good practise in inclusion. It is also giving more systematic attention to ethnic minority achievement avoiding reliance on general impressions about the performance of different groups of pupils previously identified by OFSTED. (OFSTED, 1999, OFSTED, 2001) Schools located in multicultural communities now have a framework which places ethnic minority achievement at the heart of the school planning process and links it to educational objectives and targets.

### **International links**

Finally, the development of an international dimension to schooling is an

important and growing aspect of the specialist schools programme. The potential benefits from increasing interactions with schools and educationalists in other countries are obvious and profound. In addition to sharing education practice these benefits will include inculcating staff and pupils with international perspectives and fostering inter-cultural understanding.

The Specialist Schools Trust is running a project named iNET – international Networking for Educational Transformation – which aims to promote international exchanges between schools across the world and in which all specialist schools are invited to participate. The international dimension is an area that will surely expand rapidly in specialist schools: technology will increasingly make it possible for teachers and school children to communicate with their peers in other countries.

Language colleges are leading the way. They are expected to “develop partnerships with schools abroad, promoting an international ethos that values different cultures, and to participate in international programmes.” (DfES,2004) Enhanced teaching opportunities include professional development derived from projects with overseas schools, international networking, and expanding possibilities involving virtual learning environments. There are also leadership opportunities as an international links coordinator, based around development of an international school ethos. This role is not necessarily confined to linguists.

## Benefits

The purpose of this summary of the specialist schools programme has been to highlight the real and potential benefits of specialism to the teaching profession. It describes, of course, an idealised vision of specialist schools and a secondary education system built around school centres of subject excellence.

All teachers in specialist schools can and do benefit from the opportunities that specialism and the specialist system provide. While it might at first appear that specialism would affect only, or predominantly, those staff directly involved with teaching focus subjects, the potential is there – through whole school transformation, subject networking, teacher outreach – for the effects of specialism to run much wider.

The Education and Skills Select Committee recently called for further research into the precise way that specialism improves schools. (Education and Skills Committee, 2005) While welcoming further research there may also, as often is the case, be a self-fulfilling dynamic to consider. That is to say, more important than deconstructing the specialist process, or making comparisons with hypothetical alternatives, may simply be to work to ensure that specialism achieves its full potential. Specialism is a mechanism (there may be others, but that is not the point) with the capacity to develop many of the core components of good schools and a self-improving school system.

A recent OFSTED report argued that being a specialist school “makes a difference” and attributes this in part to “being part of an optimistic network of like-minded schools.” (OFSTED, 2005) Specialist schools and their teaching staff have indeed become more outward-looking. They are not teaching in isolation but are collaborating and working with other teachers and professionals via extensive Specialist Schools Trust support networks. School leaders have a responsibility to “look after” teachers involved in outreach and community work so that their load in school is balanced with the demands of their work outside the school day. Where this works well, there are teachers who are more creative, reflective, stretch themselves further, and find the job more rewarding... ultimately, better teachers.

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## Alison King

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# How integrated services for children will affect the teaching profession

**Abstract:** *Alison King summarises the implications of "Every Child Matters" (DfES, 2004). She emphasises the role of schools in promoting children's well-being as well as their attainment. Alongside the introduction of extended schools the implications of Every Child Matters will require effective collaboration between schools, local authorities and other local agencies. New networks, effective liaison, regular feedback and meaningful consultation will be essential to the success of these new ways of providing improved services for children. The broad picture is illustrated with examples from Norfolk.*

## **"Will there still be schools in five to ten years' time?"**

This was a rhetorical question I heard put at a conference recently. It sounded bizarre for anyone to spend time or breath on such a ridiculous or radical suggestion. While various public institutions may evolve and become extinct, surely schools are eternal? The questioner was not, as it transpired, foreseeing a future without education – quite the reverse. He was suggesting that places

where children and young people go to learn everyday will not only be educational environments, but will also have something more.

The *Every Child Matters* agenda has profound implications for schools and teachers, along with other professionals and organisations working with and for children. Its aim is to create greater alignment or integration of services to improve outcomes for children and young people and make sure they don't fall through the cracks between services. In *Every Child Matters: Change for Children – Schools*, the Government acknowledges that “pupil performance and well-being go hand in hand”. It recognises the wider implications for learning of, for example, health issues or whether young people feel safe. (DfES, 2004)

Obviously, apart from “teaching”, as many would understand it, teachers already, on a daily basis, are dealing with many aspects of children's well-being. This includes work to prevent bullying and discrimination, keeping children safe, promoting healthy lifestyles, monitoring attendance, encouraging pupils to behave responsibly, giving them a voice in the life of the school and encouraging them to be considerate and helpful to others. Teachers also play a wider role in helping communities to value education by actively engaging and helping parents to support their children's learning and development.

## **The *Every Child Matters* agenda has profound implications for schools and teachers.**

Government sees *Every Child Matters* within the context of its broader desire to see universal public services offer a more personalised approach to individuals. Of course, good teachers have always provided personalised services. Effective learning and personal fulfilment can only occur where the teacher understands the pupil's capabilities, learning styles, aspirations and interests etc., as well as the broader family and environmental circumstances which a child experiences. Teachers are also engaged with developments around individual learning plans for children and young people.

### **Attainment and well-being**

Through *Every Child Matters* schools, as the main universal service provider to children and young people in a neighbourhood, will be expected by local and central government to be part of a wider system of services to support children's well-being. This is not as an alternative to focusing on attainment, but as an essential part of ensuring that all children are ready and able to learn and fulfil their potential. This is at the root of ideas for “extended schools” to “help pupils engage and achieve, and [to build] stronger relationships with parents and the wider community.” *Every Child Matters* and extended schools will also provide the means to support “closer working between universal

services like schools and specialist services so that children with additional needs can be identified earlier and supported effectively”.

We are looking to all schools, over time, to provide a “core offer” of extended services either on site or across a cluster of local schools and providers. For primary schools this core offer will include study support, family learning and parental support opportunities, and better referral systems to multi-agency support where needed. For secondary schools, the core offer will be similar, encouraging schools to open up facilities such as sports, arts and ICT.

## **Local government and professionals at the frontline recognise that there are some apparent tensions in implementing these *Every Child Matters* developments.**

In Norfolk we have many primary and secondary schools already offering breakfast and after school study support. New sports and arts facilities are being developed in schools specifically with the needs of the wider community in mind. Some schools, such as Great Yarmouth High School and Earlham High School in Norwich, are working with their partner primary schools to create better joint working between a variety of support workers. We are beginning to see the real benefits of this in targeting the needs of particular children and their families.

In addition, the Government’s recently announced ten year strategy for childcare sets out the ambition that by 2008 half of parents of children aged 5–11 will be able to access childcare at their child’s primary school, or at a nearby school or provider with supervised transfer arrangements, at least between 8am–6pm, all year round. Childcare will not necessarily be on the school site but could be provided locally in collaboration with other providers. All parents will have this opportunity by 2010. By 2008, at least a third of secondary schools will be open on the same basis offering a broad range of things for young people to do. It is envisaged that by 2010 all secondary schools will provide this offer.

### **Implementation**

Few would argue with the aims of *Every Child Matters* and local authorities wholeheartedly support them. But how are they to be realised on the ground? How is a “whole system approach” for child-centred services to come about? Where do teachers fit in? Is this another example of where teachers are expected to solve all society’s ills before breakfast – or as part of a (nutritionally wholesome) breakfast and after school club, at least?

No, it is about joining up better and providing teachers with the tools and

resources they need to ensure pupils are ready and able to learn. It will be crucial that Local Authorities' Children's Services and other local agencies like Primary Care Trusts and doctors collaborate effectively with schools to plan and deliver these services

Local government and professionals at the frontline recognise that there will be tensions in implementing *Every Child Matters*. Current government policy increasingly emphasises autonomy for schools and the establishment of academies and foundation schools to help drive attainment and standards will formalise this. At the same time it urges greater co-operation between schools and other agencies to deliver "extended schools" and for example, Education Improvement Partnerships.

Resolving these tensions will require a close coalition between teachers, headteachers, governors, local authority councillors who lead on children and young people issues, the new directors of children's services, and children's trust partnership arrangements. All will need to ensure that the effects of these tensions are minimised locally in trying to achieve the outcomes for children that everyone seeks.

Making sure that children get what they need and don't fall through the net depends on services working better together. The local context in which schools are working is changing as local authorities develop children's trust arrangements to integrate front-line services in response to the Children's Act 2004. Councils will work with local bodies and interests to assess the needs of children, agree priorities and commission local services to meet those priorities.

In Norfolk we have appointed a new Director and have been working through a project board, and Dartington research, to clarify the outcomes we aspire to for our children. We are currently consulting professional associations, schools and a wide variety of partners to ensure that the structure enables us to work in new ways with professionals and with children.

## Collaboration

From April 2006 each council area will have a Children and Young People's Plan that brings together all the local authority's and other partners' planning for children and young people. Schools are obviously one of those local bodies that councils will need to work with in this regard so that schools can feed their views into local service planning.

In Norfolk we have already started our planning for the new Children and Young People's Plan. This involves getting all local bodies to agree outcomes for all of our children. Different planning cycles, targets and styles could conspire to get in the way of this, but we are determined to ensure that the outcomes for children come first. Representatives of Norfolk schools were part of the multi-disciplinary team that drew up our agreed outcomes for children.

Schools, local professional associations and governors are now being consulted on what structures, support and activities are needed to ensure we achieve those outcomes. All Norfolk schools are preparing for the new inspection framework which requires schools to evaluate their contribution to the overall development of their young people.

Service collaboration and integration aims to provide more effective support for pupils with complex needs who require multi-agency support. This should be assisted by the Common Assessment Framework, designed to enable better targeted referrals to other specialist services when needed so they can respond more effectively. The framework will be introduced by local authorities in their areas by 2008.

Councils are beginning to develop with their partners the use of a lead professional to ensure that a child with additional needs receives co-ordinated support from different agencies. This is at the heart of Norfolk's emerging structure for Children's Services and will require considerable commitment to staff development. There are some real cultural challenges for us all in achieving this and we recognise that close working with teachers is the key to its success.

The Government also aims to issue guidance on the sharing of information between schools and other agencies about individual children. Ultimately, this could be supported by new databases containing basic information about each child or young person that will enable schools to make contact more easily with other professionals involved.

The *Every Child Matters* agenda requires more extended services to be located within schools and provides an interesting and significant opportunity for teachers to exert professional influence. In the Budget Report this year, the government explicitly acknowledged that:

Engaging the knowledge and experience of public service professionals in the design of public services has the potential to make services more efficient and tailored to users' needs. In developing future public service reforms, the Government will examine the way in which employees' and professionals' input is used in the design of policy and the provision of services, ensuring a constant flow of information and ideas between policy-makers and the front line. (HM Treasury, 2005)

## **Making it work**

Local authorities are keen to make this work in practice. In addition to the improvement in outcomes for children and young people for their own sake, there are clear institutional incentives. Councils will be inspected and judged on their work with local bodies to deliver the outcomes framework and on their capacity to improve services. Local authorities are being challenged, as

part of service and workforce reforms, to find means to listen better to the professionals who work for them on how they think services could be best improved.

How can teachers be effectively engaged in feedback on the design and improvement of services? There are a number of potential routes. Teachers can make suggestions direct to the council through local mechanisms the authority may have established with schools, e.g. networked learning communities, intranet forums, bulletin boards, e-mail etc. or other meeting networks for teachers within the LEA area. Part of the ongoing professional discussions that teachers have amongst themselves and with their senior management teams can provide primary feedback to headteachers and be related through their networks with the LEA. Another avenue may be through the teacher governor or to governors who are local councillors. Local branches of professional bodies and unions are also vehicles through which councils can receive views and debate improvements to provision. Whichever mechanisms are used, local authorities and wider children's trust arrangements, will need to ensure that two-way feedback with professionals is ongoing.

The Government is currently piloting discussions between schools, councils and local School Improvement Partners (SIPs) on a school's individual improvement priorities as part of a "new relationship with schools". This is designed to encourage a "professional analysis of how the school is serving its pupils and the priorities for improvement". The SIP is another regular contact that a school will have with the LEA and it makes sense for teachers to use this contact, who in many cases will be a senior teacher or head themselves, to feedback issues for investigation or service recommendations.

### **Additional burden?**

The Government has stated that "there is no intention to create additional burdens for school leaders or other staff" in the implementation of the *Every Child Matters* agenda. There are clearly workforce issues, though, in ensuring that teachers and other professionals are provided with the knowledge and tools they need to participate fully in the closer integration of services and, for example, the Common Assessment Framework and self assessment processes for inspection. These issues are in part explored in the DfES' consultation *Children's Workforce Strategy* along with ideas for a "Common Core of Skills and Knowledge", though many views still need to be gathered and details worked up. (HM Government, 2005)

Time will need to be found for teachers, along with other professionals locally, to learn about the new links and processes. The extended schools programme has further implications for the functions of headteachers and financial support staff, especially at primary level. The LGA and local government Employers' Organisation, along with other interested parties, are

among a network of bodies representing staff across children's services currently addressing these matters under the structure of the Children, Young People and Families Workforce Council (see CWDC website). We need to ensure there are adequate resources, effectively deployed, to deliver the ambition.

It is clear that schools will play a pivotal role in helping to deliver the *Every Child Matters* agenda for children. Schools are not going to disappear – far from it. They are going to be even more central in ensuring the well-being and achievement of children and young people in their local communities. The developments should complement and enhance, rather than distract from, teaching and learning.

This gives teachers, headteachers and governors an influential voice in planning and delivering the Every Child Matters outcomes. One by-product should be enhanced recognition of teachers' contributions both among local communities and with service planners. Local authorities look forward to working with teachers in new ways to gain improved outcomes for children.

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# Extending children's learning

**Abstract:** *Kevan Collins praises primary teachers for their effectiveness in using the national strategies to raise achievements in the core subjects English and maths. He emphasises the importance of building on this success and broadening it across the primary curriculum. He focuses on the importance of leadership and identifies some of the challenges ahead.*

The most recent Chief Inspector's Annual Report (OFSTED, 2005) said:

“Two thirds of primary schools are good or better and about a fifth of them are highly effective. The gap in good or better achievement between the core and other foundation subjects remains. Teaching and learning are good or better in just under three quarters of schools. Schools regard positively the vision expressed in *Excellence and Enjoyment* (DfES, 2003) the Government's strategy for primary education, but they have been cautious in acting.”

Since the introduction of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies in 1999, primary teachers have devoted a great deal of energy, time and resources towards raising standards in the two subjects that beat at the heart of the curriculum. Their investment has been rewarded. In 2004, 90,000 more children, when compared with 1998, entered secondary schools achieving levels of attainment in English and mathematics that will give them the very best chance of achieving the grades at GCSE that secure access to higher education and a life full of opportunity.

It's not surprising that educators from all over the world are interested to learn more about our progress. The recent international 'TIMMS' study (Mullis et al, 2004) of progress in mathematics in 49 countries indicated that our mathematics results are the fastest improving anywhere. The 2003 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) (Mullis et al, 2003) report demonstrated that our ten year olds are the third best readers in the world. The reality of this progress is felt in classrooms up and down the country where

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## Kevan Collins

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National Director of  
the Primary Strategy.

teaching is better and where children approach their learning with increased enthusiasm and confidence. We have seen progress in every kind of school and every kind of community. The Strategies have reached deep into our education system and touched the parts that have all too often been left behind.

Although a great deal has been achieved there is still much to do. Critics of the Strategies are right to demand more. We cannot be satisfied while 1 in 10 boys still leave primary school reading below level 3 or a quarter of our children are not achieving the levels we expect in mathematics. Maximising the progress of all children is our central mission and should remain the constant challenge.

## **The Strategies have reached deep into our education system and touched the parts that have all too often been left behind.**

Every school has its own story to tell and the majority have seen improvements. The next phase of improvement will be informed by better self evaluation and a recognition that every school is different and must be able to locate support that meets its needs. These needs are reflected in current national priorities. In my view, the three challenges identified below need to be given the highest priority.

### **Working on the curriculum**

Teachers need to keep the best of the regular, reliable focus of daily literacy and mathematics lessons whilst also paying attention to after the “11 o’clock watershed”. In particular, the curriculum designers in a school need space to support thinking about how to apply and make use of literacy and mathematics across and for the benefit of the rest of the curriculum. A balance needs to be struck between the development of skills, knowledge and understanding and the encouragement of strategic learning that cuts across everything we do.

### **Working on the gaps**

There are still big variations in children’s attainment – boys needing support with their writing; girls needing structure in methods of calculation; “disadvantaged” children still doing less well; and particular ethnic groups underperforming.

### **Working on the system**

In too many local authorities the services to support school improvement are fragmented and lack alignment. Better systems are needed to share best practice and promote innovation and collaboration.

Meeting these three challenges demands that we look ever more closely at what goes on in classrooms to refine teaching and be precise about what will raise standards for more children. New knowledge informed by the rich data available will need to be applied and tested as we track the progress of individual children.

Beyond our enduring fascination and interest in the business of learning and teaching in schools, the *Every Child Matters* agenda (DfES, 2003) takes us further. It creates the opportunity to address some of the barriers to learning that extend well beyond the classroom.

## Forward with confidence

We should face the challenges with confidence. The primary sector has proved itself capable of learning and change. It is capable of building and sustaining new alliances to deliver national priorities without losing sight of the local context and its proven commitment to the needs of all children.

Look at the progress made on the teaching of phonics. In the last seven years we have moved from a situation where children faced a lottery: in some schools phonics was not taught at all; in others, the remorseless slog through a letter a week was slow and painful; while in a few schools, phonics was elevated to the status as the cure all for all. Now phonics is established as part of the daily literacy hour and the demand for teachers' professional development in this crucial area remains very high.

The emergence of the Primary Strategy Leadership Programme is a wonderful example of how primary schools have been able to develop new and innovative ways of working. From a standing start two years ago, we now have one in ten of our primary heads giving up ten percent of their time to work with not just headteachers in other schools but wider leadership teams too. Critically, this is leadership for a purpose. The 2004 results indicate that schools included in this programme show better rates of progress than other maintained schools.

The targets that primary schools set for themselves in 2005 demonstrate a commitment to improvement and a confidence in our children.

Achievements provide the solid foothold for the next phase of the work. We need to acknowledge and better understand what has been achieved.

## A focus on teaching

The Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are based on core definitions of good teaching as being:

- informed by clear and well designed maps of learning
- structured to ensure a balance of adult led and independent activity
- supported by an array of assessment evidence to inform future teaching decisions
- informed by research and maintained and improved through high quality professional development

## Proposition

In 2004 11 per cent of girls achieved level 4 in English and only level 3 in Mathematics. Girls like this need to receive their entitlement of high quality daily mathematics lessons. However, they need more. They need to extend their understanding of enquiry or reasoning, they may need to develop better skills in self awareness and risk taking.

Likewise, the 7 per cent boys who conversely, achieved level 4 in Maths but only level 3 in English need good literacy hours. They could also benefit from attention to strategic aspects of learning like motivation and empathy. The recent publication *Learning and Teaching in the Primary School* demonstrates how aspects of strategic learning should be explicitly attended to as part of the broad and rich primary curriculum.

## Investing in teachers

Continuing to improve isn't secured just by knowing what to do. Critically, teachers need to work in environments where their learning and development is valued, change is managed and improvement is constant. The next phase will be harder, the incline is steeper and future gains are over and above the high standards we now need to maintain.

## Investing in leadership

Leadership is vital to meeting these challenges. The Primary Strategy is determined that we should learn from the expertise and experience of successful primary heads and, where possible, involve these successful school leaders in meeting the challenges ahead. Below are two examples of how this might happen.

## The Leadership Programme and Primary Strategy Learning Networks.

The 12,000 schools which will, by September 2005, have been involved in one role or another in the Primary Leadership Programme have paved the way for the planned work of "School Improvement Partners" as part of the New Relationship with schools. The headteachers involved have not only proven expertise but also the strengths of leadership and management to contribute to school improvement beyond just their own school.

In the coming year, the Leadership Programme will have an added dimension, initially small scale but perhaps a model for the future. A group of schools will work together to look at the steps they can take to ensure successful achievement of the "five outcomes". The group will contribute to policy development nationally on how schools need support in this area.

Also by September, 10,000 schools will have opted to establish a Primary Strategy Learning Network. Enthusiasm has exceeded initial availability for this opportunity. From previous work on networks, it is clear that successful

networks will need effective leadership. Wise networks will resist being over-democratic and appoint an experienced and successful head as leader of the network (or a couple as co-leaders).

## The future

This article began with a quotation from the most recent Annual Report of the Chief Inspector for Schools. The aims of primary education remain constant – the challenge is to deliver yet more for our children. The next phase is to build on the achievements to date and provide a broad, rich and enjoyable learning experience to deliver high standards for all. My wish would be that the Chief Inspector's report in 2008 will say:

“Almost all primary schools are good or better and many are highly effective. The gap that used to be seen in good or better achievement between the core and other foundation subjects is no longer the case. Teaching and learning are good or better in nearly all schools and 85% of children achieved the standards in literacy and mathematics they need to achieve at secondary school.”

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**Philippa  
Cordingley**

Philippa Cordingley is the founder and the Chief Executive of the Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE). She is a Board member of The Education Network (TEN), and the Institute for Public Policy Research Provision of Schooling project. She is also a member of the National Steering Group for the Networked Learning Communities Initiative and a school governor.

# The role of mentoring and coaching in teachers' learning and development

**Abstract:** *Philippa Cordingley introduces the new National Framework for Mentoring and Coaching. Having led the shaping of the framework, she draws on the evidence from research and consultation to explain some of the key principles which underpin the framework. She explores debates about successful implementation of mentoring and coaching and describes the supporting resources which accompany the framework.*

**E**very now and then ideas and processes have a moment in the sun. Practice that has been developing from the bottom up connects with the priorities of schools, local authorities, regional and national agencies, professional associations, and, even, of Government. Occasionally we are also fortunate enough to have good quality research evidence which justifies the investment and helps shape the way larger-scale initiatives mesh with practice.

At the current time just such a positive mix of priorities, resources and requirements has come together to support the development of mentoring and

coaching as a means of enhancing teachers' learning and development. The Government's model of professionalism as set out in its five year strategy reinforces and extends this development through its emphasis on the importance of teachers contributing to each other's professional learning. Not to miss an opportunity, the Government's related instructions to the School Teachers Pay Review body, refer explicitly to coaching and mentoring as an effective means of realising this pattern of reciprocal professional responsibilities.

This article describes the new National Framework for Mentoring and Coaching. The framework is designed to help bring coherence and clarity to the profusion of models, approaches and definitions of coaching and mentoring adopted by schools, CPD providers and a range of national agencies. The article illustrates how the framework and the related resources can be and are being used, in day to day practice and to support development.

## The National Framework

The framework comprises just four, one side of A4, summaries. These identify:

- ten principles;
- the key concepts (why, who, what, where, when);
- the skills (for coaches and mentors and the professional learners they support); and
- the similarities and differences between mentoring, specialist coaching and collaborative coaching - the three main types of coaching currently present in the English school sector.

The framework has been developed for the DfES by the Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE) through an extensive research, development and consultation process. All of the national agencies with significant CPD remits - National College for School Leadership (NCSL), General Teaching Council (GTC), the National Strategies, TTA and the DfES – contributed to the consultation process and have endorsed and adopted the framework. Each intends to use it from now on to shape the development of their CPD work.

The test of the effectiveness of the framework will lie in the extent to which it is used and the extent to which practitioners, different agencies and organisations develop shared understandings of the principles, skills and key concepts.

## The principles

Because the framework is based on evidence about the effectiveness of mentoring and coaching in relation to pupil learning, it is rooted in an outcome-focused approach to professional learning.

It proposes that effective mentoring and coaching involve a range of activities, embracing a series of core principles as the underpinning guides to action. These involve:

- a learning conversation;
- a thoughtful relationship;
- a learning agreement;
- combining support from colleagues and specialists;
- growing self direction;
- setting challenging and personal goals;
- understanding why different approaches work;
- acknowledging the benefits to mentors and coaches;
- experimenting and observation; and,
- using resources effectively.

## A learning conversation

The first principle states that “effective mentoring and coaching involve structured professional dialogue, rooted in evidence from the professional learners’ practice, which articulates existing benefits and practices to enable reflection on them”.

This contains no less than five interdependent concepts; but such complexity is justified by the underpinning evidence. More and more evidence is emerging about the importance of structured talk in pupils’ learning. Similarly, the evidence about effective CPD is that dialogue (supported by protocols to reinforce teachers’ learning purposes and embedded in shared experiences) is linked to successful outcomes.

Teachers have long been seen to be powerful talkers. Research is littered with evidence of teachers learning to talk the talk but resisting or being prevented from walking the walk. Discussion based on shared experiences and evidence gathered in the classroom ties teachers’ professional learning to their own interests and aspirations. It lets them talk about what they do and how they do it where, previously, that knowledge has been internalised. Mentoring and coaching are located in the real world where teachers juggle with competing concerns and issues in the context of their day to day teaching. They show how these need to be examined and interpreted in order to take on board new ideas and practices. Research emphasises the importance of dialogue between professionals in enriching, supporting and challenging each other’s learning.

## Experimenting and observing

Much, but by no means all, of the evidence underpinning the framework comes from large-scale and systematic reviews of the research about the impact of CPD. The second such review, to be published in June 2005 (EPPI 2), reinforced all of the findings from the first review but adds an important rider.

Dialogue *alone* does not bring about effective professional development.

Active experimentation with classroom practice was also found to be a consistent ingredient of effective CPD. When learning conversations can tap into evidence drawn from direct efforts to try out new approaches the risks of the “talking shop” are avoided and the dividends are strong. Hence the second principle: “effective mentoring and coaching involve creating a learning environment that supports risk-taking and innovation and encourages professional learners to seek out direct evidence from practice”.

### **Putting control in the hands of teachers**

Several principles in the framework are oriented towards recognising and reinforcing teacher ownership of their own professional learning. “Growing self direction” explicitly proposes “an evolving process in which the learner takes increasing responsibility for their professional development as skills, knowledge and self awareness increase”.

## **The Framework is designed to help bring coherence and clarity to the profusion of models, approaches and definitions of coaching and mentoring.**

The learning agreement principle suggests that when professional learners, coaches and mentors have clarity about the boundaries of their responsibilities they increase their sense of control and are able to develop trust.

The principle related to “understanding why different approaches work” highlights the importance of intellectual control. It proposes that “effective mentoring and coaching involve developing understanding of the theory that underpins new practice so it can be interpreted and adapted for different contexts”. Coaching and mentoring are not, thus, about picking up tips or routinely implementing others’ schemes and plans. They involve knowing enough about why things work in different contexts to be able to tailor them to the particular needs of schools, classes and students.

### **Interdependent contributions from colleagues and specialists**

One principle that leads to a lot of discussion and challenges some cherished assumptions is the one related to combining different kinds of support. The evidence from research suggests strongly that coaching and mentoring need to draw upon both peer and specialist support.

Some of the early evidence from practice suggested two somewhat opposing schools of thought. One group advocated strongly for coaching which makes available specialist knowledge about the teaching and learning or leadership

strategies being developed. Another argued just as vehemently that mentors and coaches need mentoring and coaching skills but no knowledge of the area of professional learning.

Careful follow-up investigations suggest that this is an over-polarised picture. Those who argue for coaching skills alone overlook the powerful role of peer or co-coaching in introducing and embedding specialist knowledge to the classroom over time. In day-to-day school settings collaboration between peer or co-coaches allows them to persevere with even very challenging learning projects despite competing priorities. They just don't want to let each other down.

## **Evidence from our fieldwork suggests that the gains are at least as great for coaches and mentors as for those they support; often even greater.**

Co-coaching offers a form of professional learning to complement specialist inputs. Peer coaching in fact increases the likelihood of practitioners drawing on specialist expertise. Those who argue for approaches which emphasise process over content skills seem to overlook two important factors. First every episode of coaching or mentoring deepens the knowledge and skills of the coach or mentor in the area of learning. Indeed evidence from our fieldwork suggests that the gains are at least as great for coaches and mentors as for those they support; often even greater.

Why should this be so? The opportunity to observe successful and less successful experiments; the opportunity to plan together with colleagues and to see those plans tested and to explore outcomes; are huge professional privileges. They offer a window into values and beliefs that shape teaching. The coaches and mentors can access such benefits just as easily as those they support; opportunities that should not be underestimated. The chance to do this with several colleagues allows the coach to build an all round picture of a particular teaching and learning issue. This represents deep specialist knowledge even if that wasn't the original intention.

The second reason why specialist knowledge in coaching practice is so often underestimated is that the prior learning and the self awareness of those learning to coach may obscure it. Most professionals involved in, for example, the Grow model of coaching are already skilled practitioners. But many will have internalised their professional knowledge and skills and thus be unaware of them. They will, however, be very aware of the challenge to their professional skills of learning to be a coach or mentor.

Time and again coaches and mentors describe vividly the difficulties involved

in asking open-ended questions instead of providing answers; in listening deeply to others' professional struggles; and encouraging them to find professional answers. In this context it is understandable that in the coaching process skills rather than content knowledge should dominate debate. This does not necessarily imply that content knowledge is not playing an important part. The positive contributions of colleagues who are specialists such as Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs) or strategy consultants bears testimony to how widely the value of such inputs is recognised in the real world.

To complicate matters further, in the field of leadership coaching the canvas of potential skills is very broad. Many leaders are also deeply self aware and motivated learners. Colleagues from industry with coaching skills can create very successful partnerships with such school leaders. The leaders' own self awareness and professional knowledge are often sufficient to create a swift and meaningful response to thoughtful questions. But where school leaders are less self aware or are open to learning only in "safe" domains, the lack of specialist knowledge may well inhibit progress. It may, for example, take skilled and persistent questioning from someone who understands the difficulties of leading learning and teaching processes across large groups of teachers to enable some school leaders (who may be comfortable in broader management domains) to step back and wrestle with the very complex and indirect business of providing pedagogic support and challenge.

We consulted extensively with practitioners, coaches and mentors and the national agencies. Combined with the consistent evidence from the systematic research reviews this consultation suggested to us that the seemingly irreconcilable stances on the relative value of specialist and peer inputs and the nature of the skills involved are easily and cost effectively resolvable. The importance and complementary nature of both contributions should be acknowledged. We therefore propose that "effective mentoring and coaching involves combining support from fellow professional learners and specialists; collaborating with colleagues to sustain commitment to learning and relate new approaches to every day practice; and seeking out specialist expertise to extend skills and knowledge and to model good practice".

## Skills

As the principles suggest, the skills underpinning mentoring and coaching are considerable – for the learners as well as coaches and mentors. The summary of skills identifies which skills are involved and how these evolve from one context to another. Thus, while mentors need to "relate guidance to evidence from practice and research", specialist coaches will do the same job by "facilitating access to research and evidence to support the development of practice." Co-coaches on the other hand need skills in "drawing on evidence from practice to sharpen development".

The full list of skills is extensive. It encompasses relationships, modelling, tailoring learning to goals, observing, analysing and reflecting, providing information (or sharing interpretation for co-coaches), recognising and reinforcing the importance of learners' control over their learning. Questioning and active listening skills are as fundamental to mentoring and coaching as they are to teaching and learning in classrooms; easy to list but hard to achieve!

### **Illustration and adaptation**

However challenging the principles and skills may appear, the key to their realisation is the extent to which they can be made familiar and useful in practical contexts. To this end the framework is supported by a series of illustrative 2-4 minute video clips, activities, case studies and tools and protocols. Learning agreements can be observed in practice through video clips. Active listening and skilled questioning can be seen – both good and bad practice – through video and animation. Or they can be explored through the illustrative activities and examples of protocols and talking frames collected during fieldwork and consultation. A sub-set of these activities is being prepared for the DfES website 'teachernet' and the full set is being field tested through a partnership between the TTA, the National Agencies and CUREE.

The principles and skills will need to be interpreted and adapted to fit in with existing ideas and practices, school and personal priorities, and the individual approaches of providers and facilitators. They are there to model and support the formidable challenges of professional practice and development. The framework provides a common language and some compelling ideas for personalising professional learning that are grounded in practice as well as rigorous evidence. Illustrations are based in real school settings. All of this comes directly or indirectly *from* teachers' own professional learning and has the capacity to nourish and support professional development in pursuit of the shared professional goal of enhancing student learning.

# From lip service to in-service

**Abstract:** Penny Ellis and Penny Kershaw evaluate INSET that was delivered in four different situations by an LEA team based in a facility that supports pupils with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). They evaluate the effectiveness of the INSET with regard to subsequent classroom practice. Consideration is given to the role of teaching assistants which the authors believe is not given enough weight in discussions surrounding the successful inclusion of pupils with SLCN. Finally, they propose conditions which appear to determine whether or not CPD will be effective.

**T**here is a wealth of literature examining the intricacies of educational change (e.g. Hargreaves 1994, Fullan 2001). CPD and educational change are clearly massive and complex fields that are far beyond the scope of this short article. It is our intention here, therefore, to examine one type of CPD, namely in-service training delivered by one SLCN facility using four examples of schools that received INSET.

Day, (1999) describes CPD as,

*“...all natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school and which contribute through these to the quality of education in the classroom...”*

We became concerned that although feedback given to us by schools was extremely positive, the nature and extent of transfer of strategies from CPD to classroom practice seemed to be incredibly variable. We wanted to investigate how schools could move from “paying lip service” to transferring in-service training to classroom practice.

We are based in a facility for primary pupils with speech, language and communication needs. The facility opened in January 2002 and is the second of two projects in East Sussex offering a combination of off-site and school-based support to twenty-six local primary schools. Alongside this teaching

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## Penny Kershaw

Penny Kershaw has been published by the National Autistic Society and NASEN. She is currently completing a Masters Degree in Education. Her main professional interest is autism. She has recently completed the Walter Hines Page Scholarship, a visit to TEACCH, in North Carolina, USA.

## Penny Ellis

Penny Ellis worked as a SENCO in the UK and supported the development of SEN in international schools in South East Asia. Penny has recently managed a facility for students with severe dyslexia whilst promoting inclusion in mainstream settings.

load is a remit to offer in-service training and support to the schools and families of pupils on our caseload. Staff at the SLCN facility include three full time specialist teachers, three full time teaching assistants and three part time speech and language therapists.

Training offered to date has included: training in specific areas of SLCN held at the centre and open to all teachers and support staff; whole school training in response to requests; parent workshops; and mandatory training for staff and parents working with specific pupils. In addition, ongoing support and advice, e.g. personal consultations and suggestions for resources, have been made available to staff.

### **Case-study one**

In our first example we visited a local infant school to deliver a presentation on “Speaking and Listening through Narrative” (Shanks, 2003). The scheme was well received by everyone and immediate response and feedback was encouraging. Resources were borrowed and used. The school wholeheartedly adopted the intervention. However, evidence showed that less time was spent on establishing narrative *language* skills with the focus being solely on the production of written work. A term later, there was no evidence of long term use of the framework.

### **Case-study two**

The second example involved supporting pupils with phonological (speech discrimination and production) difficulties. We had not been able to facilitate as much progress in this specific area as we had hoped. Schools cited difficulties fitting the phonology programme in with daily practice and curriculum expectations. They could not be persuaded that literacy skills would not be accessed until speech problems had been resolved.

## **The scheme was well received by everyone...a term later there was no evidence of long term use of the framework**

We decided to establish a target group in which all of the nine five or six year olds had severe phonological difficulties. For a pupil to attend this group his/her home school had to nominate a named person who had to be committed to being able to deliver a ten minute 1:1 daily session. To enable this we offered a half-day training course, a written weekly programme and resources, an opportunity for the person to observe our facility sessions once every eight weeks, as well as a monthly visit from our phonology assistant.

We also invited the parents to attend the training session. This approach was very dictatorial, out of character and a risk to administer; but somehow we needed to change attitudes and empower support staff to provide daily practice sessions to support these pupils. All of the schools and five parents accepted the programme and attended the training.

Immediate evaluations showed a greater understanding of the difficulties and more confidence in delivering a phonology programme. Six months later, with daily support, practice and understanding the pupils demonstrated significant individual progress and began to self-correct their own speech. As a result, there are now more adults in our local schools who are confident, knowledgeable and empowered to deliver phonology programmes.

### Case-study three

INSET was provided in a school that had a considerable number of pupils who fulfilled the criteria for support from the SLCN facility. Across twelve classes a minimum of six pupils were on our caseload during the evaluation period.

The pupils receiving support had difficulty with semantics (understanding) and the expressive organisation of language, e.g. word finding difficulties and problems forming sentences. We noted that, in general, there was a high degree of interest and commitment in all areas by the teaching assistants. However, both the class teachers and the SENCO regularly missed scheduled meeting times and did not attend any of the training sessions offered by us.

The quality of feedback was poor and/or negative from the teaching staff but high from the teaching assistants – even though they reported great difficulty in securing release time for consultation with us, sometimes attending these sessions in their own time.

A large amount of resources were either donated or loaned to the school. Only once in the evaluation year did a member of teaching staff make use of the resource library, whilst teaching assistants accessed it regularly. In addition, teaching assistants were observed using and extending strategies during 1:1 or small group sessions. The pupils on our caseload spent a substantial amount of time being withdrawn from class for individual or small group work with teaching assistants. Strategies directed at addressing SLCN in the classroom were not implemented by teaching staff despite resources being custom made and delivered in person.

### Case-study four

The final example in our evaluation was a large infant school. Three children received support from our staff during the evaluation period. A high proportion of the staff attended workshops at the facility and this enabled the school to approach SLCN consistently.

The SLCN that the children faced included social communication

difficulties, including autism, and phonological difficulties. One child with autism, proved to be especially challenging for the school because of his disruptive behaviour and lack of access to the curriculum as a result of poor verbal language skills. Not surprisingly this child attracted the most attention from staff who supported him as well as requests to us for consultations. In this case consultations were requested weekly from both teaching staff and teaching assistants. The staff supporting this child were able to offer detailed feedback. They were particularly keen to learn more about autism and share their own personal experiences of how they had extended suggested strategies.

## There are now more adults in our local schools who are confident, knowledgeable and empowered

All staff also made extensive use of the resource library and the school invested a considerable amount of time and staff hours to support the child's needs. The other two children also made excellent progress. Although they were not the focus of such intensive support mechanisms, brief consultations were requested on a weekly basis and suggested strategies were adopted within the classroom.

### Evaluation

The experience we gained whilst evaluating our INSET led us to investigate reasons why there appeared to be discrepancies in the transfer of knowledge to practice. We identified six possible reasons, listed below, why this may have occurred. These findings reflect current literature on the subject, e.g. Craft (2000) and Fullan and Hargreaves (1992), Hargreaves (1994).

- **“Contrived collegiality”** is essentially the cornerstone of what we have described as paying “lip service” to training and support. Despite positive evaluations by schools, the lack of transfer of suggested strategies in to classroom practice represents contrived collegiality at its worst, leading to ineffectiveness.
- The **culture of the school** may result in strong teacher individualism, resulting in teaching staff becoming isolated and/or asserting a high degree of independence with regard to their own teaching practice. Where individualism was exhibited by teaching staff, we found that teaching assistants could be more collaborative in their approach, working closely as a team.
- **Ownership** of pupils with SEN. In all our examples used in this article there appeared to be some confusion over who, ultimately, had lead responsibility for ensuring that the needs of specific pupils with SLCN were addressed.

Teachers were not always aware of our roles as staff from the support facility. At times there was confusion also about the role of teaching assistants within the classroom, especially if the teaching assistant was designated 1:1 support for a particular pupil.

- There is little doubt that the **workload** of teachers is growing. The increase in demands on each teacher's time could account for difficulties in assimilating new strategies into an arguably overloaded curriculum and finding time to discuss individual pupils with support staff. We would question whether current initiatives aimed at increasing the amount of time available to teachers will be sufficient to aid the transfer of support strategies for pupils with SLCN into classroom practice and therefore encourage inclusive practice.
- Whether or not changes to teaching practice are perceived as being **imposed or embraced** is crucial to the effectiveness of INSET. We found a distinction between situations where staff had made the decision to attend workshops or consultations and where they had been directed to do so. However, when attendance at workshops and consultations was made obligatory in order to receive support from specialist staff this seemed to motivate staff to follow the advice given. Staff were also highly motivated when they had a personal interest in SLCN. Staff who had been "forced" to engage with the specialist centre, usually by members of the senior management team, generally did not adopt the strategies provided.
- Without doubt, the most influential factor for successful INSET in our case-studies was the role played by **teaching assistants**. We discovered that teaching assistants could adopt strategies in 1:1 or small group teaching sessions. We found that teaching assistants could be more receptive to developing their practise and made more use of consultations and resources. We realised that all too often teaching assistants were the unsung heroes of inclusion.

## The experience led us to investigate reasons why there appeared to be discrepancies in the transfer of knowledge to practice.

Having considered the above reasons for successful or unsuccessful outcomes, we became aware that learning from CPD is the joint responsibility of those delivering INSET and those attending. On the basis of our evaluations we have compiled the list of considerations below to refer to when planning INSET.

### **Clarity or confusion?**

It is common to sign up for a course based on just a title. We realised that in order to begin to make workshops more effective, more information including the expected benefits to staff and pupils, must be made explicit in advance.

### **Practice or preach?**

We have always endeavoured to make workshops interactive. However, although the majority of participants favoured this approach there were some staff who would have preferred to have been given the information in a more straightforward “lecture” style. Ideally the format of each workshop should be made clear in advance and suited to the audience.

### **Level playing field?**

The level of understanding of the audience needs to be measured more effectively in advance. This will always pose a particular challenge to both providers and recipients of workshops and consultations. Evaluations from those attending our workshops could vary from “too complex” to “too simple”.

**“Learning from CPD is the joint responsibility of those delivering INSET and those attending.”**

### **Inclusion or intrusion?**

School cultures and the philosophies about teaching and learning held by staff can have a dramatic effect on whether or not suggested teaching and learning strategies are transferred to the classroom. If the strategies presented are not consistent with the prevailing ethos of teaching or for including pupils with SLCN then this poses a huge obstacle. If inclusion is not accepted as an educational objective this is particularly acute.

### **Cascade or fade?**

There needs to be more open and honest discussions about the practicalities of actually implementing strategies. Additionally, time should be devoted to how these strategies can be sustained beyond their initial implementation. This may play a large part in avoiding “lip service” in the future.

### **Adopted or adapted?**

We have found that most important to the impact of any workshop or consultation is the extent to which general principles are understood; combined with confidence to adapt suggested strategies for individual pupils.

## Process or product?

Learning is not isolated. INSET is a process not a product. There is always a need for follow up advice so that staff can consolidate strategies and engage in a certain amount of trial and error combined with further input from specialist staff.

## Lessons learned

We are now planning future training with these considerations in mind and we are aware that INSET needs to stimulate a process of continual learning.

It is our collective responsibility as educators to ensure that all INSET, training and professional development encourages a move away from lip service towards genuine in-service.

## Footnote

This article was presented as a workshop at the Second International Conference of the Learning Teacher Network in Prague, May 2005. (More details at [www.learningteacher.org](http://www.learningteacher.org)) We are grateful for support from the NUT's CPD Programme which enabled us to travel to and attend this conference.

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# After “Lunchbox” training – gourmet professional development

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## Sara Bubb

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Supplement*.

**Abstract:** *Having set the context, Sara Bubb reviews a Teach ‘n’ Chat professional development programme that she tutored for teachers leading/coordinating CPD. Face-to-face, out-of-school, seminars with an expert tutor; plus implementing their ideas in school; plus opportunities to take part in electronic dialogue with other teachers trying out similar approaches – in combination these provided a collaborative and sustained learning opportunity.*

*More teachers will need similar support and development opportunities if school-focused professional development is to have strategic coherence; and deliver in all schools the benefits that CPD policy makers in England hope the new approach will bring.*

**C**ontinuing professional development (CPD) is back on the agenda. For the sake of the profession, for the teachers being helped - for the millions of children who’ll learn more as a result – this is wonderful because teaching isn’t easy. Getting better at it isn’t just a matter of experience, or trial and error.

There is so much happening in the field of CPD. The *Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners* (2004) plans to boost demand for coaching and other forms of continuing professional development by turning teacher appraisals

into teaching and learning reviews. The idea is to make sure teachers receive the development that matches their needs and that career progression and financial rewards go to those who are continually building on their own expertise.

School self-evaluation and the short notice inspections every three years mean that school leaders will need to have an accurate picture of the quality of teaching and learning in their schools – and be constantly looking for ways to improve it.

Progress on the upper pay scale will depend not only on teachers showing that they have developed themselves but also that they are coaching and mentoring less experienced teachers. Those hoping to gain the new excellent teacher status will also have to demonstrate that they have provided regular coaching and mentoring to colleagues. People achieving the grade of excellent teacher will be expected to be involved in:

- induction of newly qualified teachers;
- professional mentoring of other teachers;
- sharing good practice through demonstration lessons;
- helping teachers to develop their expertise in planning, preparation and assessment;
- helping other teachers to evaluate the impact of their teaching on pupils;
- undertaking classroom observations to assist and support the performance management process; and
- helping teachers improve their teaching practice including those on capability procedures. (DfES 2004)

## What is effective CPD?

There will be more attention to the sort of CPD that we know works well. Collaboration within and between schools will be the name of the game. CPD will increasingly be school-based, with people coaching and mentoring others. Professor David Reynolds says, “When you are “buddied” with a colleague who is doing better than you with the same children in the same school, that is when the alibis stop” (2003).

The TIA says that the evidence is clear about the main characteristics of CPD that appears effective in improving teachers’ performance and in raising standards of pupil achievement:

- there should be a clear and agreed vision of what effective teaching looks like
- it should be based on the best available evidence of teaching and learning
- it should take account of participants’ previous knowledge and experience
- it should enable teachers to develop further experience in subject content, teaching strategies, uses of technology and other essential elements required for teaching to high standards
- it should be driven by a coherent long-term plan, so that it is sustained
- it promotes continuous inquiry and problem-solving embedded in the daily life of schools

- there should be support in the form of coaching and mentoring from experienced colleagues
- there should be an evaluation of impact on teaching and learning, which guides subsequent professional development efforts. (TTA, 2005)

### **But...**

Is it going to work? It could just be too cosy and result in staleness. There is more school based initial training going on than ever before and though it is mostly well intended, is it any good? Even where schools have a statutory duty to provide support, monitoring and assessment for teachers in their induction year the picture is patchy. In 2002, research found that a quarter of new teachers weren't getting their whole entitlement (Bubb et al, 2002) – and it's not any better now, in fact it may be worse.

The DfES changes to the Standards Fund mean that all the funding for CPD is disappearing into schools' general budgets rather than being ringfenced. Giving schools autonomy is fine but without a strong steer some school leaders may choose not to spend money on CPD. Or they may not spend it wisely, like the one who blew the annual allocation on an expensive weekend for the senior management team.

Professional learning has to be given high status. What messages are sent to staff when a training session is held after school in a grubby classroom? Abraham Moss High School in Manchester has a purpose-built staff development suite consisting of a library, meeting areas and workstations, as well as flexible areas for small and large group training. It is equipped with an interactive whiteboard, printers, photocopier and scanner, together with laptops for general use. There are also audio-visual facilities, including video cameras, for use in teaching and training programmes incorporating self-evaluation and observation projects. A full-time administrator arranges bookings for meetings and training, and prepares resources, and manages the suite. How fantastic!

What about staff who don't take responsibility for their development? We've all met people who see training as time off, who think they've nothing more to learn, who are unreflective, and who don't consider how their professional development might affect pupils. Part of the reason why some people don't take their own development seriously is that in many schools it's not thought through well enough.

### **Consistent expectations**

The professional development cycle consists of: identifying and analysing needs; designing and implementing some professional development; monitoring it; and evaluating its impact at different levels. These levels of evaluation are:

Level One: Immediate reaction

- Level Two: Learning, networks, confidence
- Level Three: Putting things into practice
- Level Four: Impact on teachers or pupils
- Level Five: Impact on other pupils or other teachers

If “personalisation” is what we’re expected to do for pupils how can CPD be personalised for staff? How does one marry up tensions between what an individual wants to develop with school improvement and national initiatives? England’s GTC says there should be an entitlement to CPD throughout a teacher’s career and one that is not linked solely to school targets.

## Collaboration within and between schools will be the name of the game.

In a large research project into professional development Hustler et al (2003) found that most teachers worked with traditional notions of CPD (such as courses, conferences, INSET days). The London’s Learning CD draws an analogy between food and CPD saying that “the shift is from the ‘supermarket’ approach of one-off INSET activities undertaken by large groups of staff unrelated to individual, team or whole school needs to a professional learning community in which there is an ‘à la carte’ vision of the purposes and principles of CPD for all staff” (DfES, 2005).

### Food and CPD analogy

Food	CPD
1. Indiscriminate selection of items of food prompted by TV advertising, two for one deals. Items rarely make a meal.	Bolt-on or one off CPD “items” unrelated to the needs of the individual. Items rarely add up to a coherent individual development plan.
2. Items selected from a shopping list: basic plan of what is wanted.	An element of selection of CPD activities, possibly what is always chosen.
3. A recipe is used to select the food with a picture of what the items of food will look like in combination.	Needs identification leads to selection of CPD activities and the purpose of CPD is appreciated.
4. A menu of balanced courses determines the selection of food.	A coherent individual plan where needs are matched with a range of CPD opportunities.
5. A vision of “healthy eating” determines the menu, recipes, shopping lists and items of food chosen.	A vision of CPD in which individuals and teams engage in opportunities and activities, which have an impact on both staff and pupils.

The range of on-the-job, off-the-job, and close-to-the-job professional development opportunities is huge, especially with the advent of Teachers' TV. Developing a culture of development and enquiry has been the key to many schools' success. However, with the swing towards in-house professional learning there's a danger that courses and conferences could be like the babies thrown out with the bathwater. When well chosen, going on a course is one of the ways to gain a good level of professional development very quickly. Some are held after school, on Saturdays or in holidays, which means that pupils' learning isn't disrupted. Not many people seem to know that, in accordance with school teachers' pay and conditions, teachers can get paid to attend courses in their own time – after all, they're saving the school the cost of cover.

### CPD coordinator role

The Training and Development Agency for schools (TDA), the reincarnation of the Teacher Training Agency (TTA), wants to build stronger infrastructures in schools. CPD coordinators have the power to make a significant difference to their colleagues and thereby raise pupil achievement. But they also risk wasting a great deal of time and money. How many teachers have had training in how to lead and manage professional development? It has to be done effectively so that CPD gives good value for money and has a positive impact.

## If 'personalisation' is what we're expected to do for pupils how can CPD be personalised for staff?

The NUT has recently piloted a new format for professional development - *Teach 'n' Chat*. This was a four-day course run by me on *Leading and Managing CPD*. It took the form of two two-day residentials, in November and April, interspersed by two 10-day online chatrooms for participants in January and March.

Between the taught sessions, participants had to:

- Identify the professional development needs of one or more people in your school. What do they want? What do they need? How do you know?
- Negotiate some professional development for the target people to do based on your analysis of their needs.
- Evaluate the impact of the target people's CPD, at different levels.

Sustaining the course over almost three terms and having tasks to do enabled participants to embed practices in their own school settings. The overnight

stay gave them time to reflect and carry on discussing and networking, while feeling pampered by the hotel atmosphere. One said, “our ‘learning conversations’ have been good”. The course had a powerful impact. Evaluations included:

*It’s given us the big picture and made us aware of all the CPD options. I now feel up to date.*

*I used to think about CPD in a simplistic way – now I see that that can do more damage than good.*

*I’ve learned so much but it’s frustrating because now there’s so much I want to change.*

There were people from across the country and from primary, secondary and special schools. This opened up opportunities for primary colleagues to hear about the Key Stage 3 CPD materials, and vice versa. Participants were also given a copy of *Leading and Managing Continuing Professional Development*, which I wrote with Professor Peter Earley. The combination of all these aspects gave the participants not only more confidence but also more status:

*Attending this four-day course has given me the kudos to bring about change – people listen to me about budget allocations.*

*I was able to lead the head away from a huge monitoring programme of observations because I could argue that observations should be developmental on both sides.*

*I now feel I can hold my own with my head because I can speak the same language as she does (she’s doing a MBA).*

The online chatroom was deemed to be a good idea in spite of technical glitches, lack of time and reticence (“how could anyone find what I have to say useful?”). Benefits included,

*Hearing how other people’s projects were going, being reminded and encouraged to keep going with my CPD task.*

*Being able to use it to bounce ideas around, to encourage creative thought and move towards new methodologies and practices.*

*Being provoked and thus encouraged to read newspaper articles and Teachers’ TV programmes that people referred to.*

Jenny Reeves (2005) says teachers need a “third space”, a temporal or physical place where they can work out how to implement the new things that they have learned. It seemed that the online chatroom provided this third space.

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# Teachers as researchers: the changing role of teachers

**Abstract:** *Ray Tarleton shares his enthusiasm for teachers becoming researchers and illustrates how research can contribute to school improvement. He emphasises the importance of continuous learning throughout teachers' careers and describes how universities and the National College for School Leadership can support this. He reports on how a group of local schools have put this into practice by forming a Learning Institute.*

**W**hat teachers and support staff learn each day is as important as learning by children because it helps secure improvement in teaching. Every adult should have regular opportunities to carry out research, extending professional knowledge, based on what happens in their own classrooms and those of colleagues.

It's autumn in the primary school and auditions are taking place for the pantomime, *Cinderella*. Wayne is desperate to play the part of the pig. "Hold on, Wayne," says harassed teacher, "there is no pig in *Cinderella*!" Wayne is persistent. "Miss, miss what about if there was a pig...?" Miss gives in. At the first rehearsal Wayne supplies a fine rendition of a pig, apart from the fact that Wayne's pig can only bark like a most ferocious dog. Teacher looks bemused and tactfully points this out. "But what about if there was a barking pig, Miss...?"

For those of you who are expecting the punch line, I am going to disappoint, having long since forgotten it. The illustration is simply a light-hearted, tongue-in-cheek example of the teacher as researcher, interested in

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## Ray Tarleton

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discovering the answer to the what if question. If there were barking pigs in traditional pantomime, what might happen next? Punch line suggestions on a postcard, please.

For the essence of research is the willingness to suspend disbelief and ask questions about what we do. Outside the classroom we do this all the time, for example enquiring about colleagues' health, holidays, social life and views. We do the same with children. We are all natural researchers. It just needs to be built into the processes of teaching.

Some teachers already do this because of the inspiration and methodology provided by study for an academic qualification. For others, it may be the result of their contribution to a research project in the school. However, it should not be left to chance. Teaching, as Stenhouse observed, is not like riding a bicycle, once mastered, never forgotten. It is a complex, multi-disciplined activity, a continuous learning process.

## First steps

As a young teacher, I was fortunate to be invited to join a classroom research project with the Centre for Applied Research at the University of East Anglia. I can still remember vividly the liberating, although at first confusing, moments as we were encouraged to pose critical questions to which the academic staff had no answers.

Using six tape recorders in my classroom and drilling the children in groups into the use of strict protocols for speaking, I was able to gain insights into children's thinking which would have been undiscovered in a formal context. It taught me how much of a barrier writing can be in assessing the contribution some (apparently less able) children have to offer. It energized my teaching, gave me insights into the minds of the children and helped me to experiment to find new ways of working. I have been an advocate of teacher research ever since.

Could all schools become research-engaged organisations with an equal commitment to learning on the part of every adult and every child? Some models are developing in training schools, schools working with the National College for School Leadership on commissioned research, in NCSL's networked learning communities, and in Leading Edge partnerships.

As the DfES seeks solutions to school improvement from within schools themselves, we are being encouraged to provide evidence-based, practitioner-developed research to support the next phase of school improvement. Everyone, it seems, recognizes the value of the process as well as the insights it provides.

## Teacher researchers

What might a re-defined teacher-researcher role look like? How could it be built into existing practice? Leadership teams can now create research opportunities for their colleagues. The National College for School Leadership

is already making a significant contribution to this work in some schools. For the first time, there are opportunities for in-depth research by school leaders and their staff for the purpose of school improvement rather than academic qualifications.

NCSL's Leadership Network, for example, consists of over 250 heads from primary and secondary phases, including special schools. They are committed to evidence-based, practitioner-supported enquiry, seeking solutions to school improvement from within. The challenge for the Leadership Network is to demonstrate practice which can be translated into tools and policies for other schools. The process begins, not with a research hypothesis to be tested, but with refining and defining the elements of practice which are already working. Often these are based on teachers' gut feelings rather than genuine assertions

### **A career-long vision**

Teaching could become a research-based profession, beginning on the day that a new trainee embarks on a programme of initial teacher training – initial teacher education would become a more appropriate description.

## **Teaching is not like riding a bicycle, once mastered, never forgotten. It is a complex, multi-disciplined activity, a continuous learning process.**

During this important stage, the research methodology would be established – a process of discovery as the trainee was taught how to observe others, listen to children's thinking, evaluate episodes, and share approaches with experienced mentors and peers. At this stage, school-based practice would provide fascinating data for discussion. Experienced teachers would have a valuable role to play in acting as mentors, consultants and trainers; given, of course, the necessary time allocation to carry out a role which would stimulate and challenge their own practice.

Universities and higher education departments, which have traditionally played a major role in teacher training, could review their contribution in the light of each school's needs for support. In this way the existing process would be turned on its head so that the vital engagement of the university tutor would be provided at the time of greatest value. The on-going process of research would require tutor interaction at regular intervals during teachers' careers as they moved from being newly qualified through to threshold and beyond. The university partner would be a regular visitor to the school to work with career professionals rather than teachers in training.

This would be a seamless process with training or teacher education

developing into teacher learning initially upon qualification and then as the professional was ready to take more control and ownership. Funding saved during the early stages of training could be used to provide a dowry for each teacher to use for his/her future learning. Professional development would, of course, be continuous, most importantly a continuation of the knowledge gained during those first years. External courses would become less essential. The professionals would be in control of their own learning and their development would be an integral part of school improvement itself.

The professional needs of each teacher would be met in more personalised ways, with each colleague focusing on individual areas of development throughout their careers. And, because schools are essentially collegiate organisations, the potential sharing of ideas could have a transformational impact on performance as well as on levels of satisfaction and enjoyment.

### **In practice**

In case you imagine this to be a futuristic fantasy, a move towards this way of working has already been embarked on by three schools in the South West of England, all members of the National College Leadership Network. Callington, Ivybridge and South Dartmoor Community Colleges have formed *The Learning Institute (TLI)*. This has TTA approval for QTS awards and validation from Exeter University. In this brave new world, some teachers, in the role of lead tutors, are now working across the three schools, observing and coaching trainees. Teams of mentors and subject tutors meet from across the TLI. The gains in professional development for teachers have been immense.

## **This process is central to enriching the intellectual life of the profession, leading to renewed excitement within the classroom.**

For the trainees, there is an immediate link between theory and practice, with lectures and tutorials integrated directly into the practical experience and monitored observation of trainees. They gain experience in schools which are committed to a culture of teacher education. All three are training schools with leading edge status, actively looking at the role of new technology in changing classroom practice and developing trainees' expertise.

An interactive DVD of teaching exemplars, for example, has been professionally created by the teachers at one of the schools. It includes readily accessible clips of starters, common organisational tasks, questioning techniques and plenaries. Each clip is accompanied by a teacher deconstruction (talking head to camera) enabling teachers or trainees see good

practice in easily viewable formats. These can be viewed as a group – an NQT induction seminar for example – or individually.

## Behaviour

Behaviour management forms an integral part of this work. Again the modelling of good practice is an essential entitlement in the development of the teacher's craft. A DVD of behavioural scenarios shows teachers and trainees how to avoid confrontation, motivate reluctant learners and use praise effectively. These have also been filmed professionally in classrooms, based on real situations experienced by teachers.

Teacher deconstructions are supplemented by the views of the students. So, a simple strategy of asking a child to offer reasons why his behaviour was unacceptable rather than shouting or lecturing is seen to be effective. We are witnesses to the event. Using the DVD, I have picked up some excellent strategies from teachers, at all levels of experience; for example on how to deal with a class in which a child had sworn, or how a teacher can use non-verbal signals to prevent pencil tapping. This new technology allows teachers to see other teachers at work with easy repeat viewing to increase understanding.

In these ways trainees develop high levels of expertise and self-esteem. Trainees set out as reflective practitioners with a commitment to career-long development, secure in their capacity to evaluate their own practice and improve it. Teachers act as professional role models. They derive enormous benefit as they plan and lead training. This process is central to enriching the intellectual life of the profession, leading to renewed excitement within the classroom.

For children there are gains from additional adults in the room deployed creatively to support learning. There are also leadership opportunities for them as they are encouraged to articulate their own learning needs and processes. Children are provided with frequent opportunities to talk about their learning and understand themselves as learners.

## New roles

In the schools within the Learning Institute teachers are already adopting new roles and being given timetabled periods to carry out their work. Alongside their roles as mentors and tutors is the research dimension. Each of the schools has a strongly focused research programme with an annual conference to share and disseminate practice and findings.

This year, at one of the schools, all 120 teachers have signed up to a post-graduate certificate. The first stage of this is a 2,000 word description of a pilot study, demonstrating actual or potential school improvement. This will result in a certificate to be "banked" against the completion of stage 2, a 4,000 word assignment which evaluates the impact of theory and research upon current practice. Six of the teaching staff who already have Masters Degrees

volunteered to be trained as University Approved Tutors.

The process of engaging in the research was calendared in advance throughout the year in meeting slots as part of the natural debate about teaching and learning. Teachers were taken step by step through the process which, to many, appeared daunting. They were invited to choose a research focus, frame a question, read some literature, collect attainment data and analyse students' work. Advice was given on the use of questionnaires, student interviews, invited observation, work analysis and video or tape recording.

The topics are rich and diverse. How can children be encouraged to develop their own extension tasks? How do plenaries help children to articulate their learning? Would frequent, formative questioning sessions during lessons improve learning? Does a male dominated classroom environment have an effect on behaviour? What impact has breakfast on response; or warm up activities on motivation; or exemplar material on raising attainment? There are almost as many research topics as teachers. Some projects are collaborative. Many have elements in common as we found when teachers were invited to listen to questions posed by others and say "snap" if there was a link with their own work.

## Early outcomes

Two terms into the project the findings are informing teachers and practice across the school. A Technology colleague has invented a brilliantly original laminated cardboard key fob which has printed vocabulary on each side, colour-coded. Children find them "cool", modern and effective, using them in lessons, at home at even at bus stops! Control groups with the fobs have significantly higher test results than the group left to their own devices or a group given only dictionaries. A History teacher has alerted school management to the need to develop the academic mentoring system which pupils say is not working supportively. They want more clarity about how they can achieve, even greater encouragement, and much more personal mentoring. Interestingly, 85 per cent of them thought that teachers were the key factor in their doing well at GCSE.

How has the school managed to persuade so many colleagues to undertake the work? Incentives were needed, of course, for the level of commitment required. Research time was built into each teacher's timetable- one hour a week of protection from cover. In addition, two new cover supervisors were provided, guaranteeing, for each teacher, a reduction in cover, on average, of 50 per cent. An INSET day was devoted to research and staff had the choice of how to use the time.

Performance management interviews will provide opportunities for teachers to outline their research to team leaders. Alternatively, they can make a presentation to colleagues. A dissemination conference will be held in the next

academic year with an emphasis on: “What is the essential message of my research for other colleagues? How can I offer clear, easily usable strategies for others?”

In ways such as these, the school intends to spread the value of the research internally. Staff have already witnessed the power of 120 teachers conferencing in the library – multiple cross-curricular conversations about teaching and learning. Moreover, the National College has provided opportunities for dissemination of this project in the interests of system leadership. The research-based school is born.

“Miss, miss, what about if every teacher was given the opportunity to be a researcher, and the research was used to improve the way we learn?” Perhaps Wayne has something for us to think about after all...

*For information about the NCSL Leadership Network, see [www.ncsl.org.uk/leadershipnetwork](http://www.ncsl.org.uk/leadershipnetwork)*

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# Book reviews

## **THE INSIDER'S GUIDE TO EARLY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Sara Bubb

*TES-RoutledgeFalmer Press £12.99 ISBN 0 415 33494 2*

This is a clearly expressed text and very accessible. It raises and deals with some important issues for those in the early years of their professional life.

One key positive is its emphasis on the role the whole profession can and should play in the induction and development of less experienced staff. It highlights for them the desirability of professional dialogue and honesty throughout their early career.

There is good advice about establishing early a sensible work-life balance; as well as the management of paperwork, classroom support staff and classroom organisation.

The text may quickly go out of currency with regard to OFSTED Inspections and career paths; as in these two major areas the future is uncertain. The new inspection framework will alter the advice given about classroom observation while the RIG and Restructuring initiatives will undoubtedly have a substantial impact on how the whole profession develops.

It would be relatively easy to update the book with subsequent reprinting however. Generally this is an excellent introduction and insight into developing a professional life for any teacher new to the job.

**MARJORY HAMMOND**

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## **ECO-LITERACY FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

Alan Peacock

*Trentham Books 2004 £14.99 ISBN 1 85856 304 6*

Taking its environmental message to heart by not using more paper than necessary one of the best features of this book is its brevity (117 pages). It manages to pack in a lot of information and ideas making it ideal for the busy practitioner who is far more likely to read it because of its slimness than some lengthier tomes.

It is very accessible to both those with knowledge and experience of environmental concepts and those who have none. It covers all the basic ideas

such as networks, cycles, diversity, energy and ethics. in a clear, concise and understandable format. It includes excellent practical suggestions for work in the classroom and details of useful websites for further investigation. It would be useful to both subject leaders and non-specialists. It could be used as a basis for a whole school environmental policy; using parts (perhaps with some adaptation for early years) for KS1 and building on the work for each year group to include more complex concepts and issues. As pupils get older these could be tackled on a widening scale - from personal to class to school to community.

This book is very apposite. It comes at a time when teachers are looking more and more at Big Ideas and Big Questions to challenge children's thinking; especially in a philosophical sense and to develop their speaking and listening in meaningful, practical ways. It also comes at a time when there is renewed impetus to examine the future of the planet and its sustainability and the part each of us has to play in safeguarding that future for ourselves and others.

It will help teachers to support children in making real and informed choices about their lives and how change can be affected at various levels. It gives them the information and the ideas they need to work on. The only small criticism I would make is that it refers to places to take the children to on visits which are nowhere near the North of England! However, I'm sure we can find suitable alternative venues.

Whether you want to work for an eco-school award; encourage staff to switch off lights and computers at the end of the day to help with the school budget; expand your own eco-literacy; or encourage the next generation to be eco-literate, this book can help.

It would certainly be a worthwhile addition to any primary staffroom bookshelf. I shall be sharing my copy with the geography and environmental subject leaders, the rest of the staff and the head teacher to see what more we can do in our own school.

**CAROL PALMER**

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### **GOOD PRACTICE IN THE EARLY YEARS: A PRACTICAL GUIDE**

Janet Kay (Second Edition)

*Continuum 2004 £14.99 ISBN 0-8264-7273-7*

The book is aimed at a range of early years workers, and provides a basic understanding of good practice within early years care and education. It is well structured, with the author avoiding the use of jargon and using clear, concise language. The glossary of terms used, would be particularly helpful for less experienced practitioners.

The book is easy to read, either as a whole, or to 'dip into' specific sections,

which may be relevant in individual settings. The 'Think' sections at the end of each chapter allow the reader to explore their own ideas and principles, and could also be used with colleagues to stimulate discussion around a specific theme. The reference and further reading information is useful for those wishing to research a particular aspect further.

There is a balance of exercises and short case studies at the end of each section, and these could be used as an aid for staff training. The inclusion of 'answers' to these exercises is useful, particularly for staff working within a small setting or on their own.

The book could also be used by practitioners wanting a starting point from which to develop policies and procedures, as each chapter contains in depth information about such areas as Equal Opportunities and Cultural Diversity.

Overall, this book contains a good balance of theory and practical activities. The concluding chapter leaves the reader more aware of what constitutes good practice, and inspired to become more reflective. It would be particularly helpful to recently qualified childcare workers, or practitioners new to working within early years.

**GILL LITTLEMORE**

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## **THE CHALLENGE OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP**

Mike Bottery

*Paul Chapman Publishing/Sage Publications, 2004 £19.99 ISBN 1-4129-0081-6*

This is the first in a series which aims to present a cutting-edge approach to current issues in teaching and school improvement. It is targeted at teachers, head teachers and those involved in leading school and classroom improvement. This volume sets out to demonstrate that you can improve schools by improving leadership and critically examining the 'socio-cultural context'. It is not an easy book to read which might be fine for academics with reading and thinking time available during the day but busy teachers need texts which reveal their content more easily after a busy day's teaching.

The book is divided into three parts, each dealing with a component of the framework which Mike Bottery considers is needed to be an 'ecological leader'. In his introduction, the author states that there is a need to think beyond just the school, its neighbourhood, even the education system and describe and understand the quite unique forces which exist in society today'. His standpoint is that leadership should be sensitive to the whole context of the institution and being aware of all the forces at work and how they interplay. The successful educational leader needs to understand the global challenge.

Part 1 sets the context by looking at the global challenge as if to view the earth from space rather than focus on a school or district. Bottery challenges

the link to a business model, which he describes as producing more and more targets whilst, at the same time trying to reduce expenditure and increase efficiency. The continuing wish of Governments to control the education system is often at odds with educationists, which causes tension. Bottery says educationists should argue that the desire for a flexible work force demands an education system which prepares students for such a way of life. He finishes the section by stating the UNESCO Delors 1999 report's four functions of learning: learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together.

Part 2 examines the impact on trust, the impact on truth and meaning and the impact on identity. Trust in teachers (or lack of it) over time on the part of government has failed to take on board the two-way nature of trust, which has led to low morale in teachers and affected recruitment. Bottery explores ways of developing trust through 'calculative', 'role practice' and 'identifactory' stages (including 'thick' and 'thin' trust and the need for both) and discusses 'fundamentalist', 'objectivist', 'provisionalist' and 'relativist' approaches. He completes this section by discussing citizenship and its effect on individual identity.

Part 3 looks at beginning a response, by considering learning communities in a world of control and fragmentation, professionals at the cross-roads and models of educational leadership. Although his approach focuses more on what leaders need to do rather than their style, the last chapter looks into models of leadership. These he argues need to include ecological and political awareness 'extending beyond the institutional and local to the national and global'; effective leaders used to understand the notion of public good; be proactive and flexible; develop extended partnerships; keep in mind the theory of knowledge and be able to reflect and ask searching questions. To do this requires a blend of leadership styles. The education system should be preparing students to become flexible citizens in a changing world.

IAN T RIX

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## THE ESSENTIALS OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Brent Davis - Editor

*Paul Chapman Publishing/Sage Publications 2005 £19.99 ISBN 1-4129-0289-4*

This 194-page book sets out to provide an accessible overview of current themes and dimensions of educational leadership. Each of its eleven chapters, deals with a different style of leadership bringing together contributions from 14 leading authors, from the UK, USA, Canada and Australia. It is an up-to-date resource for school leaders and those studying educational leadership

which is very readable, each author being allowed to develop their topic with his or her own style.

The editor's introduction explores 'The essentials of school leadership' in which he explains his choice of leadership themes.

**'Strategic leadership'** involves setting directions, getting the strategy to work; getting people to understand the strategy (changing the mindset); deciding where & when to make changes (including when conditions are ready for change and knowing what not to change); and developing strategic capabilities in people (core competencies) so they can all make a contribution.

**'Transformational leadership'** came into being in the 1980's and 1990's to create an appropriate leadership during restructuring and more recently involving changes which are externally driven. It emphasises emotions, values and personal commitment. So the style has to include 'purposes', 'people' and 'structures and social systems'.

**'Invitational leadership'** involves appreciating what is already being done in a school, valuing it and then working towards having even more of the potential realised. It relies on the commitment of the people by constructing messages that 'cordially, consistently and creatively summon all people to realise more of their social, intellectual, emotional, moral and creative potential'. Essentially it has a democratic ethos relying on self-motivation.

**'Ethical leadership'** involves five levels of enactment: as a human being, as a citizen-public servant, as an educator, as administrator/manager and as an educational leader. It is based at each level on the claim that teaching and learning are moral activities within a community.

**'Learning-centred leadership'** distinguishes the desire and responsibility to enhance students' learning. It involves three strategies: modelling, monitoring and dialogue, which overlap with each other. Everyone in the school is a learner and involved in setting their own targets.

**'Constructivist leadership'** is defined as reciprocal (learning as mutual participants); purposeful learning (sharing a vision of beliefs and goals, constructing meaning together) and action in a community (a group of people sharing common goals and aspirations who care about each other).

**'Poetical and political leadership'** has two aspects, which are linked through metaphysical concepts. The poetic part is through symbolic language and 'heart and soul' related to historical and cultural values. While the political part is the acceptance of the pseudo-political posturing and verbal cut & thrust which exists in leadership.

**'Emotional leadership'** holds an essential position because, claims the author, school leadership is inherently and inescapably emotional. It may have been frowned upon at one time but the emotions of anger and fear set against the love of their schools has to be acknowledged as being part of school leadership and includes the discovery of self.

**'Entrepreneurial leadership'** includes notions of initiative and risk. In recent times school leaders have had to use business acumen to access extra resources and publicise the high standing of the school. Words like 'creative', 'courageous', 'persistent', 'tenacious', 'resourceful', 'risk-taker' and 'opportunist' are words the author suggests help describe the style.

**'Distributed leadership'** is a more slippery concept to grasp but it seems to be linked to being able to identify who can exert influence and the domain in which something will work. It can be a way of thinking about leadership and includes taking advantage of collective skills in a school.

Finally, **'Sustainable leadership'** starts by going into essential aspects of endurance but also involves successful development without compromising other things. It brings with it abstract concepts like nourishment of learning, the need for learning, and the lasting nature of learning.

IAN T RIX

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## PHYSICAL EDUCATION: ESSENTIAL ISSUES

Ken Green and Ken Hardman

*SAGE Publications 2005 £19.99 ISBN 0 7619 4498 2*

The essential issues in physical education at the moment are addressed within this collection of articles regarding many aspects of physical education and sport.

Physical Education: Essential Issues, will be a useful addition to any physical education department and a creditable asset to any student's bookshelf. A wide range of up-to-date and hard-hitting issues are covered. The book is essentially a collaboration of writings from various, well-established members within the field of physical education, including Susan Capel, author of the physical education student's "Bible" (Learning to Teach Physical Education in the Secondary School).

The authors explore the status of physical education in modern times, by addressing issues across the physical education curriculum, from anatomy and physiology, to comparative studies. For the most part, the language is simple and easy to digest; however, there is a distinct lack of illustrations that would have aided readers' interpretations. The heavy use of words may be off-putting for some students.

The issues contained within the collection are relevant to all students studying physical education and other related degrees, such as: inclusion; race; gender; examinations; values; and many other areas of pedagogy relating to physical education.

Physical Education: Essential Issues, is a fundamental companion to any undergraduate/post-graduate student studying within the confines of physical

education and related disciplines. It provides great insight to any physical educator. What a shame it was not available three years ago!

**CRAIG MICHAEL BROOME**

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### **HOW TO RUN YOUR SCHOOL SUCCESSFULLY**

Adrian Percival and Susan Tranter

*Continuum 2004 £16.99 ISBN 0 8264 7044 0:*

It took some time to settle into the literary style of this book which varies between a transcript of a speech and a staff handbook. It's full of information, carefully expressed, but lacking warmth.

There are clear indications that the authors feel they have the definitive "answer" and that is their style of management.

Their experience of running a large secondary school relies heavily on clearly hierarchical systems of line and departmental managers.

They are unashamedly authoritarian in their approach and do appear smug. However, that may simply be their writing style and there may have been warmer rapport with their staff. One can only hope so.

Any new Deputy or Headteacher will find the factual information the book contains very helpful. It being so clearly set out is a bonus. But I hope they bring to their new posts a greater degree of intuitive, person-friendly management skill than the authors convey. If they don't they could fall at the first hurdle of taking a staff forward willingly.

Perhaps as a Head of a First School I am fortunate in being able to engage with staff individually and move our practice forward in a more consensual manner. Certainly vision and clarity are issues that are shared not imposed.

I felt the chapter entitled "Getting the herd moving roughly west" referring to staff and performance management summed up the superior and dismissive attitude to teachers apparent throughout the book.

**MARJORY HAMMOND**

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### **Reviewers**

**Marjory Hammond**, headteacher of Templars First School, West Sussex

**Gill Littlemore**, assistant headteacher of Valley Road Community Primary School, with responsibility for a foundation stage unit and neighbourhood nursery

**Craig Michael Broome**, fourth year student at Liverpool John Moores

University, studying for B.A. (Hons) Physical Education, Sport and Dance with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

**Ian T Rix**, senior advisory teacher working for Norfolk Children's Services.

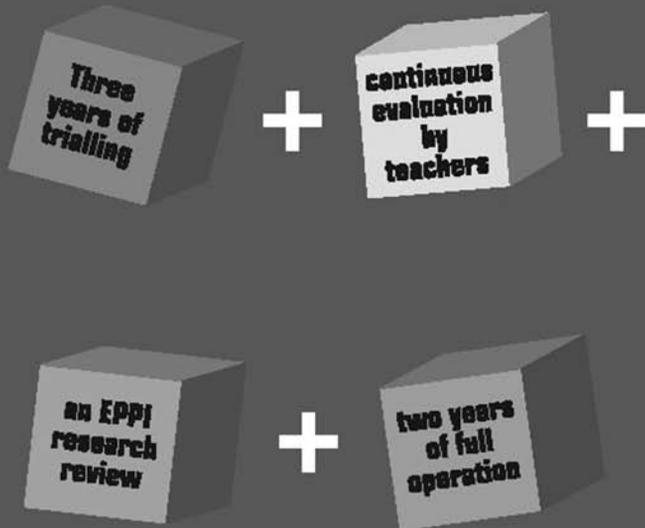
**Carol Palmer**, Infant School head teacher with interests in early years.

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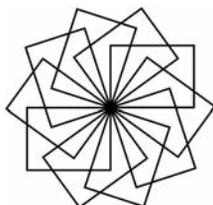
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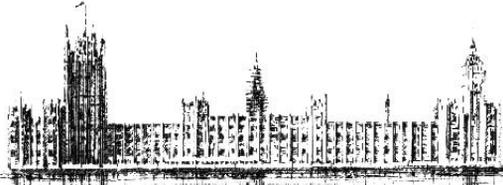
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