LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY
CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Issue 11

CollectivED Working Papers

Working Papers from
CollectivED; the Centre for
Mentoring, Coaching and
Professional Learning

A University Research and Practice Centre
where collaborative conversations create powerful
professional learning

July 2020

CONTENTS PAGE

LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY
CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Notes on contributors and how to get involved

To cite working papers from this issue please use the following format:

Author surname, author initial (2020), Paper title, CollectivED [11], pages x-xx, Carnegie School of Education, Leeds Beckett University.

Please add the hyperlink if you have accessed this online.

LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY
CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Introduction to CollectivED and Issue 11

by CollectivED Director Rachel Lofthouse

CollectivED The Centre for Mentoring, Coaching & Professional Learning is a research and practice centre based in The Carnegie School of Education. We form a community of professionals, academics and students with shared interests. Our aims are to;

- Encourage and enable collaborative conversations which create powerful professional learning
- Build capacity of educators to create contexts which support inclusive career-long and profession-wide learning
- Remove barriers to professional development
- Increase opportunities for educational change through enhanced professional agency and well-being

The research undertaken by the CollectivED community relates to formal and informal professional learning and practice in all sectors of education. Our research focuses on

- teacher education and professional learning at all career stages

- learning through mentoring, coaching, digital pedagogies, workplace and interprofessional practices
- teachers' and leaders' professionalism, identity, wellbeing, self-efficacy and agency
- educational policy and partnership

In Issue 11 we have grouped our papers under several themes:

- ***Thinking through and beyond the pandemic***
- ***Expanding understanding and practices of coaching***
- ***Supporting student and early career teachers***
- ***Why mentoring matters***
- ***Enriching learning and professionalism***

We are also pleased to publish the Thinking Out Loud interview with Angie Brown and five book reviews. We conclude Issue 11 with notes on our working paper contributors.

LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY
CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Moderate Demands become Revolutionary when Leaders Refuse to listen

A think piece working paper by Charmaine Roche

Charmaine Roche was the driving force behind a CollectivED symposium held on the 23rd June. Charmaine is a PhD student at Carnegie School of Education and a member of the CollectivED Advisory Group. In this blogpost (first published here) Charmaine reflects on the symposium which she co-hosted with Professor Rachel Lofthouse, Director of CollectivED, and which took the form of an appreciative inquiry.

Moderate demands

This paper is not so much a report as a series of new questions inspired by my reflections following the highly successful and generative 'Can we be the midwives of our own future?'.

My overriding question is: How do we find a unity of purpose, along with the courage to take on those who would prefer the status quo, or a return to it? Because right now a return to business as normal is being contested but change is not inevitable. Disruption is often required to push change forward. Systems tend to return to stasis after any attempt to create a shift or after a crisis.

The appreciative inquiry question underpinning the symposium was;

What are the imperatives and opportunities for change in the education system created by the covid19 pandemic?

How did our participants, answer?

They identified the fiercely held values that underpin the **imperatives** for change. The values of; equality, inclusion, diversity anti-racism, community, cooperation and collaboration, compassion and empathy.

Are these not moderate, reasonable demands? When leaders and policy makers ignore dissenting voices and only speak to and reward those who agree with them, moderate demands become revolutionary.

The **opportunities** for change have come out of renewed connections with families and individual children who have engaged differently with online learning; learning that has become more embedded in the culture of family life, not just farmed out to the professionals. We call for a creative,

LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY
CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

exploratory, knowledge rich and human centred curriculum.

The 'pause' or vacuum created by the pandemic has been filled with creative solutions born out of necessity giving a new sense of agency and autonomy to professionals.

We want an education that connects the child, with others, with their community and the world. We will think about how we listen and we it means to actively listen, how we enable this, through the arts and activities. We will create safe spaces for all voices, especially dis-empowered groups.

We will know we are successful when our country is led by people from all backgrounds and not just an elite minority of privilege, when children are not only "achieving" academically as a result of schooling but emotionally and socially as well – flourishing, when we feel both valued and truly heard.

CollectivED Symposium Statement of Intent

Moderate demands I believe.

Monsters

We recognised too some of the 'monsters 'of our time.

Questions about curriculum and the purpose of education in our world faced with such pressing issues as systemic racism, child poverty, increasing disparities between the rich and the poor, rising tide of mental health issues and the climate crisis.

In a society deeply divided between the ultra-rich and privileged and the poor, schools have become centres of welfare for some of our communities. Delivering school lunches to children for whom school is the only place they are guaranteed one full meal a day. Access to adults who care for them and who will keep them safe. Schools are expected to do this but not respected by policy makers for this role.

How has this happened?

Why is there such a push to put education professionals back into their boxes as we begin to emerge from lock-down. A concerted press campaign to present the profession as loafers and spongers taking an extended holiday during the pandemic was as much a feature of lock-down as the unbroken efforts school leaders and teachers have put into getting online learning up and running, keeping in touch with families, setting and marking work as well as looking after the children of key workers.

Now the giving of extra catch-up funds is being awarded without trusting schools to decide how best to use it, instead suggesting punitive and corrosives means of monitoring;

England stands alone in the UK not to extend the pause of inspections so allowing schools to focus on the health, safety and well-being of learners and staff. Online monitoring of learning and progress is to replace onsite visits.

For what purpose? Are we really training and paying salaries to professionals who require this level of surveillance and judgement to keep them in line?

I smell the fear of change from leaders who are showing up as inadequate for the challenges of our time. Trying to push us back into the box of business as usual.

As a society, will we fall for it and go back to shopping? Commuting? Eating out? Going to the pub? Numbing ourselves again.

If we call this out for what it is, bullying, oppressive and destructive how do we respond? How do we resist? How do we get a voice around the table and make our voices heard?

We will create an education where all will flourish and thrive. We will support our leaders. We want to be different. We don't want to go back. Inclusion first and inclusion for all.

Ensure that schools are machines that create empathy with a wealth of wisdom and diversity

CollectivED Symposium Statements of Intent

All moderate demands.

In my opening remarks to the event I drew inspiration from the way in which the #BlackLivesMatter movement has been reignited and drawn strength during the pandemic out of the resistance triggered by the killing of George Floyd at a moment when we were all looking.

Black, brown, and white people alike are facing up to the systemic injustices which have been laid bare by the ravages of the virus. Making connections between this and the ways in which we are all being ruled.

People are finding the space to have uncomfortable and necessary conversations. Considering what it is to undo the work of social conditioning that covertly supports assumptions of superiority based on race, these conversations will need to continue for a long time to come. Just as we have begun these conversations in relation to gender because of the #Metoo movement and sexual diversity, not through choice but through resistance to the brutality caused by such

assumptions of superiority and the impunity that goes with it.

Dreams

What would happen if we imagined a future where there is a guaranteed living income for all, our education system promoted active citizenship so that this was part of how we contribute to equity, giving back to society where it is most necessary whether or not we have paid employment?

What could schools become if every community had access to fully funded mental health services?

Where the arts were fully funded along with local libraries, youth clubs and activities that really support all our young people to feel valued beyond the school gates?

Where the curriculum encouraged engagement with the pressing issues of our time in ways that made leaders, engineers, scientists, artists, entrepreneurs, crafts people, public servants and ethical political leaders, of our young an army dedicated to serving a vision for a sustainable life on a planet with finite resources?

These are the questions I heard buzzing in the digital air of our conversations on the 23rd.

But I also heard fear. The fear born of an erosion of collective action in our profession, the erosion of trust and agency, the lack of unity and solidarity on issues related to future direction.

Russell Hobby in his blog Unstoppable Forces raises some very pertinent questions. He talks about the power that a few head, united around a moderate and reasonable cause could have. Just getting the conversation onto the table, having a voice at the table would be a start.

Remove the competitive and aggressive elements of school accountability

More humanity, less fear and competition.

Help to build value-based school leadership

CollectivED Symposium Statements of Intent

More moderate demands.

Just as the #BLM movement has forced the issue of systemic racism onto the table through collective action, could we, a brave band of brothers and sisters not initiate some non-violent civil disobedience against a return to the social policies that make inevitable a continuing rise in child poverty, that must

inevitably follow the economic crisis brought on by the pandemic? Likely also to be intensified too by a no deal Brexit. Rising unemployment and homelessness if the moratorium on evictions is lifted which will engulf already fragile communities and their schools. Could we all stand together in support of these communities and the schools that serve them, wherever our own particular school and communities stand?

We can only dream about what standing up overtly for this issue might create in terms of a momentum for change. Is it the time for for covert resistance (already well documented by research) to pass over into overt action?

Perhaps we will gain the influence, voice, and power we need to transform education through standing on broader issues of social justice. Standing up to change what we have helped to normalised by filling the gaps. Schools are now as much welfare centres as places of learning. But we are not fully resourced, respected, or recognised for this role.

Perhaps we could become rich centres of learning (rather than centres of training for tests and exams) if our leaders were able to do their jobs of serving us all rather than privileging the already privileged?

Collaboration not competition. Connection. Community. Conversation. Collective Agency.

Build a system built on trust.

CollectivED Symposium Statements of Intent

What could be more moderate demands?

Solidarity and Collective Action

Perhaps educationalist have to become political in order to lift education out of the domain of politics where we should be alongside a future depoliticised #NHS, both joining the Bank of England. Independent of the five-yearly circus of electioneering and seemingly arbitrary reforms. Another, final, moderate demand.

These are my thoughts following on from a series of very powerful conversations all of them kicked off by asking…

Can We be the midwives of our own future?

How can we/I contribute to social change?

The answer is in our hands.

CollectivED has committed keeping this conversation going I have pledged to convene those who expressed an interest, and new voices who wish to be heard in this new community of practice.

LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY
CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Daring to Dream Together: reflections on collective conversation to bring about change

A think piece working paper by Clare Dutton

Abstract: The fall-out from COVID19 has shone a light on education, prompting sector-wide reflection and discussion about how we move forward in a post-COVID19 world. Classroom teacher, Claire, shares some of her own reflections and conversations from the school closure period. She invites readers to consider their own reflections and dreams for education, and to share these through collective conversations with others so that we can enact our professional agency and live out these visions through our day-to-day activities in the classroom and beyond.

As a classroom teacher with growing leadership responsibility and interests, I am keen to explore and discuss the questions and lessons which arise for education as a result of our collective COVID-19 experience. Within the day-to-day conversations of lockdown, there has been a growing sense of existential reflection and of everyday reflexivity, whereby we have seemed to be looking more transparently within ourselves and at our actions than ever before. With such concerted effort to question and to heal there is hope, and with that hope comes opportunity for change. The best change doesn't just happen by chance however, it requires deliberate and carefully calibrated action through agents of change at all levels of the wider system; connected professionals who are committed to thinking deeply about the changes required and to using the best available evidence to help ensure this happens in the most effective and sustainable way.

At the time of this final edit, it is late June and a rainy Saturday morning at the end of the fourteenth week since schools officially closed to the majority of pupils. Much has changed since my first draft was conceived at the beginning of June and I have ended up rewriting this piece countless times, as each time I have pulled it up on the laptop something has changed to make it appear dated and irrelevant to the present. Indeed, much more has changed since the start of May when I wrote the two reference pieces that I had planned to base these musings on - my short blog piece, *From What If? to What Now?*, and my application for the CollectivEd symposium with Charmaine Roche, *Can WE be the Midwives of our own Future?* What I can suppose we presume is that even more will

have changed by the time this gets to publication and anybody reads it. The COVID19 lockdown period has seemed long and drawn out at times, and yet it is all a bit of a blur. There has been twists and turns that nobody ever expected and although there is some vague sense that we are stepping back towards normality, we are not quite out of the woods yet. The rollercoaster seems to be slowing down but there is a lurking sense that it could speed up again at any point … when we can officially get off is anybody's guess!

The Need for Visionary Conversation

Education wasn't ready for COVID19 - nobody was, I suppose. To take a loan of Dan Morrow's imagery in his *New Broom* blog for Headteacher's Roundtable (2020), COVID19 lifted the corners of many classroom carpets as well as that of the wider professional system and society, and we were all found wanting. There has been much lamentation, much condemnation of the status quo and much regret since the whole COVID-crisis began. Now, however, it feels that the tide is turning and, as we begin to navigate our way back into some sense of normality, we start to face the future and the potential for change. In his blog, Morrow implores that, "we are called now to see beyond the current reality" and he insists that we are in need of "conversation"; the kind of conversation that

creates a vision and which moves us forward – both as a profession and as a society.

Sometimes, it feels as though these conversations and visions are the privilege of those in particular positions of power but visions as important as these should be a concoction of varied thought and ideas, and thus they require discussion and dialogue between all those involved and at all levels of hierarchy. Such conversations start small and they start at an individual level, with reflection and with a commitment to reflexively turning that process back on our Self as much as on our actions and their resulting outcomes. We all have a part to play and we need spaces where these layers can come together and unite, spaces where individuals can share their temporal reflections and have their voices heard. We need conversations that allow us to explore our own and others' positions - past present and future – and that help us understand how and why we are where we are, and where we might be going. I have been fortunate to attend many spaces just like this recently, spaces such as the CollectivEd *Let's Think About …* webinars, where educators and others have been warmly welcomed to come together and explore, discuss and learn from one another.

Just a few days ago, I attended the *Can we be the Midwives?* symposium with Charmaine Roche and it was a wonderful opportunity to

work with others and explore the opportunities and imperatives for change that have been created in education as a result of the uncertainty caused by the #Covid19 pandemic. In drawing on the Gramscian assertion that, *the old world is dying, while the new world struggles to be born,* Roche challenged us to consider not only our thoughts about 'the new world' but also our actions and agency in its conception, delivery and subsequent development – it's past, present and future. For much of the symposium we worked in smaller breakout groups following an appreciative inquiry route of discussion - discovery, dream, design and delivery – which supported us in bringing our collective visions to life through metaphor and then into a more tangible entity via an agreed set of performance indicators. This process of co-creation was a powerful experience and I was left with a clear sense of purpose and mission for my future professional endeavours, as well as a strong commitment to myself to embody these in my day-to-day acts of agency.

Agency as a Shared Response-Ability

Agency, it seems, "is the very nature of professionalism" (Rycroft –Smith, L. & Dutaut, J-L., 2008) and it is how each of us can make our visions for the new world come to life – in whichever role we play. Agency is an interplay of our past, present and future; it is

both reflective and motivated but it can only be 'acted out' in the present. Without agency, without action, our reflections and dreams become fruitless and they never quite make it into the real world. As a teacher 'on the ground', my COVID19 experiences and reflections (my past) have shaped my visions (my future) for education and these will influence my actions (my present) as I move my professional practice forwards and out of lockdown.

Of course, my vision lies within and connected to that of my colleagues, senior leaders and school community, which in turn stretches out to Trust-level visions and ever further again; my agency is interwoven with and by the systems in which I practice. An ecological perspective on teacher agency considers how teachers are able to experience agency within the particular ecologies of their profession (consider: Bronfenbrenner's ecological model; also, Priestley at al. 2015.). It considers how the structures and cultures in which we practice fuse with individual and collective capacities and belief systems, and how this in turn creates the space – both physically and metaphorically - whereby we can 'be' agentic. In this approach, teachers are valued as active stakeholders within education and not just a mere 'deliverer' of the performative agenda. An ecological approach to teacher agency turns the idea of teacher agency outwards and, in layers, begins to consider how each level of the system plays its part in creating

the learning landscape of each individual classroom across the country and, in turn, each individual student's experience. From the individual and micro levels to the wider macro, all are connected in an ongoing symbiotic flow of involutionary and evolutionary cause and affect/effect. Agency at all levels is important here, not only in terms of the actors involved but also in terms of their response-ability towards the agency of others at different levels.

Curriculum Conversations and Reflection

In considering how schools and teachers can respond to the COVID19 crisis, much has been made of the need for an appropriate curriculum response and there is a push, in varying forms, for both a Catch-Up Curriculum as well as some form of a Recovery Curriculum. Whilst the fact that the impact of lost schooling will be felt by many of our disadvantaged students for some time to come cannot be discounted, I know many of us are perplexed by the hurry to get back to the same old. After all, as far as conversations with more experienced colleagues go, we've been catching the curriculum up forever. Part of a teacher's professional duty is to identify gaps in knowledge and understanding, and to – for want of a more eloquent metaphor – fill 'em! Therefore, the whole idea of catching up learning is not a new one and it both raises and warrants an entirely different

conversation dedicated to its own exploration.

Besides the academic catch-up concerns, there is also an eagerness for schools to offer a curriculum which will attend to the therapeutic needs of students on their return to school. As a keen advocate for therapeutic and developmental approaches in schools, I recently enjoyed taking part in a webinar with Barry Carpenter to learn more about his work on a 'Recovery Curriculum' and the need for schools to be better informed in their consideration of this. Also focusing on the importance of 'human need', Mary Myatt has since put forth the idea of recovery conversations instead (2020), and she raises the important caveat that recovery is not just about rewriting our lesson plans but, instead, it is much more about rethinking our values. Both Myatt and Carpenter remind us to consider the need for catharsis following the momentous nature of lockdown and they both suggest that a way of helping communities to share their personal narratives will be an important initial step as we begin to move forward. As we do this, and as we hear one another's lockdown tales, we must remember that it will be most important that we listen and that we learn from these conversations so that we can plan our response in accordance to need.

Curriculum has always been important but its profile, at least within the span of my teaching career thus far, has been raised tremendously over the last few years. As has the implications of cognitive science aspects around the role of memory in learning. It has surprised me, therefore, that I am yet – and, I appreciate that this may be rectified before this piece is published - to come across anyone asking why our existing curriculum and existing approaches to learning were not robust enough to withstand what is, in effect, a relatively short-term blip in the academic landscape. It strikes me that, had our curriculum, pedagogy and classroom practices been right in the first place then the damage of lockdown and missed schooling might have been much mitigated.

Some of the questions I am currently grappling with and which I invite you to consider with me, include:

If our curriculum had been sufficient in 'human need', would we have been as concerned about the resilience of our children in dealing with the trauma of lockdown? Could our curriculum have included more personal or character development so that the 'recovery' approach was already embedded and able to pre-limit any potential trauma to our students?

If our pedagogical approaches had been more inclusive of the important role which our children's families play in their learning, would we have been as concerned about the need for their schooling to have shifted into the home environment? Could our pedagogical approaches have encouraged us to create more authentic home-learning relationships that would have moved beyond the traditional idea of homework and which could have welcomed families as true partners in our students' learning?

If our classroom practices and strategies had been effective enough, would we have been as concerned about our children's learning strategies and their retention of both skills and knowledge? Could our teaching strategies have been more focused on the metacognitive development of our students, and on ensuring that they were both able and motivated to carry on their learning effectively without a teacher's stern gaze?

Reflecting more widely and beyond the classroom per se, I can't help but feel frustrated that, had education got it right much sooner in our history, perhaps we wouldn't have experienced the questionable ethics of our political leadership which so many have voiced concerns about. Perhaps we wouldn't have witnessed such socially irresponsible acts as the crowding of beaches and parks in the time of a pandemic, and the

resulting piles of pollution in their wake. And, perhaps we wouldn't have needed the long overdue Black Lives Matters protests and resultant disputes. Perhaps we could have had strong, ethical leadership. Perhaps we could have enjoyed socially-distanced days out without sacrificing the planet. And, perhaps we could have been living in a more inclusively peaceful society.

Moving Forward Together

There is no doubt, that had our education system and its practices been different, then our experiences of lockdown and all the other ongoing events would have also been different. There is little use in crying over spilt milk, but there is much use in bringing our reflections of the past, no matter how immediate, to the table and to including them in our conversations on the design and vision of a new future for education and, in turn, our world. A more robust and more effective future, one which will be more than ready for the next time that society is put through its existential paces. Before we get there however, we must use the fuel of our visionary discussions to take up our agency and take action in the present and to become the change that we wish to see. We must be brave and dare to share our dreams – both in discussion and in action, but always in connection with each other. We must come together, collectively.

References

Morrow, D. 3rd May, 2020. *A New Broom*.
https://headteachersroundtable.wordpress.com/2020/05/03/a-new-broom/
Myatt, M. 26th May, 2020. *A 'recovery curriculum' or 'recovery conversations'?*
https://schoolsweek.co.uk/a-recovery-curriculum-or-recovery-conversations/
Priestley, Biesta & Robinson, 2015. *Teacher Agency – an ecological approach*. Bloomsbury: London
Rycroft –Smith, L. & Dutaut, J-L. 2008, p.2. in: *Flip the System UK – a teacher's manifesto*. Routledge: Oxon

Why schools should continue to provide placements for trainee teachers?

A think piece working paper by Margaret Mulholland, Julie Greer and Caroline Daly

This discussion paper was written following concerns from members of the UCET Executive Committee, that offers of school placements for trainees in 20/21 have been significantly reduced. With increased applications for post graduate and graduate ITE, the demand for school placements is likely to be far higher than supply, without more schools being able to offer their time, skills and expertise.

New NQTS; thinking about the emerging professional

Do you remember your teaching practices? We'd be surprised if you don't. They are a vital experience that helped shape our teacher identity; our skills and characteristics. It's like learning to ride a bike, drive a car, or play an instrument. These are all things you could experience in a virtual world, but you can only learn competence, flair and an emotional engagement with these skills, if they are practised in person. It is on a teaching placement that increasing proficiency will develop motivation, resilience and determination, without which a new teacher would find it hard to keep going.

As we enter the new school year there is a fear that so many of our recently qualified teachers will be going into their first teaching post with less experience drawn from real classrooms and less familiarity with the culture of schools than in former years. This Autumn term we will need the increased involvement from a range of staff to ensure our NQTs have access to an upgraded package of mentoring, support, team teaching, coaching, observations and professional conversations with colleagues, to develop the skills that have not yet been honed by extensive development time in classrooms.

New trainees and student teachers; thinking about risk

In response to Covid-19 the DfE reminded providers to use the flexibility to reduce the 120 day requirement for school based training, in order to obtain qualified teacher status. Whilst programmes need to continue to have 120 days in their design, there may be a need to reduce this again next academic year. This flexible approach is welcomed by many, but we need to be sure that this is not a short cut to slashing the requirement for teachers to learn to teach in the classroom in

the longer term.Schools need their NQTs to arrive with a standard and competency they can rely on; so it follows that schools have a responsibility to provide the training that they need their teachers to acquire.

A trainee should be welcomed into school, as an integral part of our learning community, not as a stranger or a visitor. Whilst it would be important to assess the risk of someone entering into our schools at any time, in these times of Coronavirus we need to undergo the process of weighing the risk against the likelihood of an event and balance those risks with the gains.

The risk of a well person bringing Covid-19 into the school environment is relatively low and no greater than the risk that any school staff present each day. A trainee would be responsible for maintaining the measures that a school has put in place. To not do so would be managed in the same way as any other breach of professional standards. These procedures are already in place in schools. The DfE guidance states that, within the current pandemic, we maintain 'bubbles' of children and staff where we can. It would be reasonable if the teaching placement is within a second or third wave, to assign the trainee to a 'bubble'. If the local risk of contagion is low, then schools may be able to relax some of their regulations around staff moving between bubbles, to enable a trainee to observe others and have contact with mentor and colleagues, maintaining an appropriate distance with ease.

Significant steps are being made in all schools to address Covid-19 related risks and these can also be applied to trainee teachers. We advise schools to work closely with the ITE provider lead body to reduce the risk from working across settings in close proximity with others without a reasonable time gap between. This might mean considering one teaching placement as the 'norm' where the trainee teacher remains attached to the school in case of closures. In this case the second placement for enrichment can be provided late in the year, which is flexible and determined by circumstances (including school closures). If schools are closed for part of the year, the main focus is on consolidating development within the main placement school, not moving to another. As for other adults in the setting we would advise completing a confidential risk assessment with the trainee where the trainee may present with underlying medical vulnerabilities including anxiety. See below for example. This can help to ensure that the trainee has agency in the process and the solutions.

LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY
CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Schools need their NQTs to arrive with a standard and competency they can rely on; so it follows that schools have a responsibility to provide the training that they need their teachers to acquire.

New professional practice; thinking about the gains

The advantages of having a trainee are numerous for a school community and for the trainee. To name a few:

- Demonstrating that we are all here to learn. Recognising that a trainee is learning to teach can be very powerful for pupils and supports their own ambitions and understanding of a life-long commitment to learning.
- Maintaining important links with Higher Education and educational research, which informs developments in pedagogy and our metacognition.
- Reinforcing our own practice. Let us not forget Piaget and his understanding that we assimilate new knowledge and then accommodate it by applying our skills in different contexts. We usually choose teacher mentors because we recognise their own strengths in the classroom, but mentoring others can extensively develop the mentor's thinking about teaching and learning and further embed their own good practice, which can then be shared with more colleagues.

- Enabling flexible teaching. A trainee teacher is able to develop their interest in a subject area, such as phonics or fractions, by taking a small group over a period of time, which can make a real difference to that group and benefit the rest of the class too. Done well, teaching alongside the teacher practitioner can double the teacher input for a class and enhance the learning, providing pre learning to groups or individuals, reinforcing a teaching point in the lesson, or supporting pupils to review and apply their learning at the close of a lesson.
- A school should be able to provide a good enough experience for a trainee, so that school staff miss that trainee when they have gone. There will always be trainees who need more support and who take longer to develop their teaching abilities. An inclusive school will have a supportive infrastructure to help the mentor to support the trainee, using the experience to problem solve and resolve – these are important skills for the senior management roles to which good teacher mentors can aspire.

Sharing the practice and culture of our schools, of which we are right to be proud, is important for the future of education and the professional quality of our teachers. Why would we not want to share what we do with

our colleagues who will teach the next generation?

New solutions; would more trainees create better experiences for pupils and teachers?

Pre and post Covid-19 the argument for saturating schools with trainee teachers is compelling. A new normal for ITE could be to encourage schools to host additional placements. This might develop from a model of professional learning that will directly benefit pupils who have experienced learning loss.

Take paired or multiple placements in each department

Once you have experienced paired placements as a Head of Department or as a mentor you understand how rather than adding to mentoring responsibilities, a paired placement reduces the burden on mentors.

Even within a small school or department it is possible to place and benefit from multiple trainees.

Co-planning, co-teaching and co-assessing can improve teaching and learning for trainees and the schools they work in.

Who benefits?

Pupil	Mentor	School/Department
Adult support for groups and individuals is increased	Having a team to work with Mentor gains skills in directing focused support and delegating	A departmental focus on strengthening teaching and learning
Addressing individual needs – supporting a range of reasonable adjustments	Learning from different approaches – questioning and challenging own practice	A greater sense of team and collaboration – even more so for small departments who miss this.
Improving on task/engagement	Being able to observe own class – strengthening forensic teaching	Opportunities to innovate and plan curriculum developments as a team
Additional expertise – e.g. subject specialist in class	Having two helpers to support mentors' teaching while being able to have shared mentoring sessions	Inclusivity is promoted through a co-teaching model
More agile response to pupil questions	Trainees talk through, problematise, reflect and refine together. Not everything is focused solely on the mentor to support	High degree of on-going professional learning for the wider departmental team and school
Inclusivity is strengthened	Collaborative learning	Tutor group also gains support from trainees
Opportunities for enhanced reflection	Skills developed to encourage trainees to reflect and respond	Strong reflective practice is developed
Beneficial adult to pupil ratio	Shared workload - marking and assessment is shared out and overseen by mentor	Developing a community of practice

In addition to the potential benefits to the existing school community, being in a paired placement provides student teachers with a rich learning experience because of tensions, dialogue and reflections that arise from being placed with a peer. This typically leads to more creative thinking and problem solving around the dilemmas that are natural experiences on placement. At a time of uncertainty in schools these qualities are even more important in the development of new professionals.

Let's Talk About Solutions! A think piece working paper

A think piece working paper by Jasen Booton

'Problem talk creates problems. Solution talk creates solutions.' Steve de Shazer

The pandemic is a problem! It's an 'unprecedented' problem on a world-wide scale that has implications for us all: socially, emotionally, educationally and economically. When faced with an issue so strikingly large, how do we stop staring at it; dwelling on it; being consumed by it? I would argue that it takes effort and energy to shift the focus from problem analysis to solution finding and that a coaching model can certainly help.

The seminal work and thinking of Mark McKergow (2020) offers insight into Solution Focused (SF) practice as a coaching methodology. The premise of SF practice is that the coach supports the dialogic process of 'building descriptions of better futures'. The interest is shifted away from explanations of why the problem occurred, placing emphasis on what is working and what is needed for future success. Coaching conversations also encourage connections to past events on which success may be built. SF practice certainly appears to focus the mind and mouth on positive outcomes, with McKergow warning that if we invest effort in exploring and diagnosing problems, 'we risk merely confirming that progress will be difficult.'

Our perception of reality is shaped by words; humans have the unique ability to structure reality by telling stories. For me, SF conversations provide opportunity to encourage a believable narrative of achievement. Coaching questions have the potential to tease out a 'future perfect' story and cast light on how it might be created; coachees are encouraged to look for the 'big happy ending'. Arguably, SF practice offers a positive lens and poses questions to highlight existing resources and potential. We are often drawn into stories by the attention to detail; McKergow's current thinking on SF practice aligns with this sentiment as he gives emphasis to coaching questions that facilitate detailed descriptions. McKergow explains that questions need to prompt detail: 'not just that something would happen, but exactly what, what would be the first signs that others noticed, what difference would that make, what would happen next'. A solution-orientated conversation provides space for new and promising images to be created: the detail brings life to possibilities and potentially brings hope. It is important to highlight that

the 'future perfect' narrative is not told to create fantasy goals; the future must feel plausible, if not immediately within reach. Crucially, the small but detailed description of the steps forward provide clarity and cohesion: the elements of every strong narrative. I would also posit that the coachee should be able to envisage themself as an authentic character in their solution story, in order to embody the future opportunities.

McKergow calls upon coaches to 'stretch the world' of the coachee. In his writing he in fact refers to clients, as SF coaching practice has its origins in psychological therapy. It is worth noting that McKergow and colleagues have been instrumental in applying solution-focused psychology to change management practice in organisations around the globe. The metaphor of 'stretching' the world suggests that SF conversations require effort and therefore investment of energy, thus aligning with my opening point. For me, the stretch implies that the details discussed are not rigid – revisions may be made. McKergow explains that the stretch in thinking is by no means fixed; the coachee may possibly reject some of their ideas after the coaching conversation, perhaps influenced by those fixated on analysing problems. Conversely, the SF conversation may empower the coachee to inhabit their stretched world and grow further.

Another metaphor aligned with SF practice relates to horizons. A goal of SF questioning is to support the coachee to build a picture of the landscape ahead – to look into the distance with a sense of hope at the land of opportunity. A new horizon may offer a new beginning – a new opportunity may provide a chance of escape – a chance to leave the problem behind. An horizon is where we may view land meeting the sky; for me this visual transition speaks of moving forward and upwards. Sanneke de Hann and colleagues (2013) refer to landscapes and fields of affordances, where the term 'affordance' refers to opportunities for interactions. The 'interaction' relates to a person 'interacting' with their environment, which for me resonates with the dynamic of character and setting in narrative. De Hann and colleagues view the landscape of affordances as 'all possibilities for action' and then narrow down to a field of affordances as 'relevant possibilities for action'. This strikes me as echoing the concept of convergent and divergent creative thinking, whereby many ideas are initially proposed 'convergently', prior to choosing 'divergently' which ideas will be appropriate and worth pursuing. In my view, the SF conversation aims to prompt the coachee to believe that they can embody the landscape they are describing and believe that the actions they may take are worth the effort. The language of 'tiny signs' and 'noticing' play a crucial role in helping the

landscape and fields of affordance - possibilities for action - feel authentic. In my role as a leader that coaches, the metaphor of horizons has resonance with the concept of 'vision'. However, investing time for stakeholders to discuss the tiny signs and details of a vision is often a huge challenge for busy schools.

In summary, it appears that successful SF conversations focus attention and energy on describing and shaping a 'journey of hope'. In these turbulent and worrying Covid times, it seems that the human default is to focus on the problem at large. Uncertainty brings fear and the opportunity for blame is apparent. If detailed political discussions focus on problems, which are then amplified on social media, it is clear to see the likelihood that 'problem talk creates problems'. As a primary phase teacher, leader and adviser, my eyes are certainly being drawn to the current big problems; it is easy to dwell on the negative. Returning to my opening point, I believe 'that it takes effort and energy to shift the focus from problem analysis to solution finding'. A solution-orientated conversation has the potential to 'energise', and generate passion about a future you can believe in. I would argue that solution talk has never been more needed.

References

de Haan, S., Rietveld, E., Stokhof, M. & Denys, D. (2013) The phenomenology of deep brain stimulation-induced changes in OCD: An enactive affordance-based model. *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience* vol. 7, p.653

McKergow, M. (2020) Stretching the world: a friendly explanation of SF practice, in K. Dierolf, D. Hogan, S. Van Der Hoorn and S. Wignaraja (eds), *Solution Focused Practice Around the World*, New York: Routledge. pp.50-56

Starting with The End in Mind:
How a culture of professional learning has enabled capacity to be built during the pandemic.

A practice insight working paper by
Melanie Chambers and Emma Adams

As schools on a national and international scale have faced the cancellation of formal end of course examinations due to Covid 19 restrictions, questions have rightly been posed about the focus of learning. Timely considerations, to ask ourselves: What will our children have achieved by the time they leave our schools, if it's not an examination grade? Many of us work in environments where measurable end targets drive the learning from the outset. How many of us are in a position that this is also true when it comes to our own Professional Learning?

Good Professional Learning will always start with the 'end in mind'[1] but a key challenge for us all is to be clear about what that 'end in mind' is. If we really are to avoid 'contrived collegiality'[2] can we use this Zeitgeist, fuelled by Covid 19, to be in a position more than ever to recognise that the skills, values, curiosity and sense of community that support our learning are in fact our 'end in mind'?

In this article, Emma Adams (Leader in Professional Learning and Years 5-8 Curriculum Review) and Melanie Chambers (Whole School Leader for Professional Learning) from The British School of Brussels (BSB), reflect on how these current times enable us to question our learning at all levels, drawing comparisons with current student learning needs and our models for Professional Learning. As we all look to September for a return to school, is this now a time to consider more renovation than restoration?

Outcomes for Learning

Melanie: Within a professional learning (PL) context, during the pandemic we have witnessed a need for: understanding different perspectives, responsiveness to different expectations, a heightened awareness of differing staff needs, and an opportunity for connection for all members of our learning community. As leaders of PL, we have needed

---

[1] Covey, S. (1989) explains how we must 'begin with the end in mind' so that we can visualise our destination and plan how we can get there. In the context of Professional Learning, Stoll, L.

et al (2018) in Harris, A., et al (2018) use this notion to ensure that staff learning starts by asking about the benefit to students' learning.
[2] Hargreaves, A. & Fullan, M. (2012)

to balance motivating staff in their learning, whilst maintaining our core values and relationships.

The BSB PLC is now into its fourth year. It is a whole school model that values the enquiry and collaboration of all of our community members, sharing expertise and learning within and beyond the school. From the outset, our intention was to create an invitational model of learning, firmly rooted in trust, where professional dialogue is fundamental to building collective capacity. Our aspirations have always been to have intrinsically-motivated, high expectations and outcomes for one's own learning, that of others and the organisation as a whole.

The pandemic has reinforced the value of these ways of working and above all has emphasised the 'community' in a PLC. It has been vital that as a school we maintain excellent links with our collective members, to listen to their observations and, where it has been needed, to adapt our programmes with evidence and expertise so that our staff have the capacity to learn. As always, dialogue and communication have been key. As leaders of professional learning, we have continued to meet on a weekly basis during the pandemic to support all of our professional learning projects. Technology has supported our Professional Learning Partners (PLPs) to share reading, learn from webinars and host virtual

teachmeets with our staff. As our PL model promotes interdependency, it has been significant that these ways of working remained strong, even when the context changed. Our recent staff survey showed that 96% of our staff[3] connected with learning communities whilst working from home, they felt they connected with each other more and collaborative planning gained in importance. Our staff value the culture of openness, trust and mutual support they have collaboratively created, collective responsibility is high and they appreciate how it has facilitated their successful and swift shift into working from home.

Emma: Back in 2015, the Organisation for Economic Coordination and Development (OECD) launched the Future of Education and Skills 2030 project identifying that: *In light of global trends, schools and school systems are under mounting pressure to modernise their curricula so that students can develop a broader set of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to help them cope with new realities and new demands[4]*. This view is also supported by many current curriculum thinkers, for example, Debra Kidd (2020): *A rich curriculum moves way beyond knowledge. It moves towards the building upon knowledge to ensure that children know what to do with it*. Building on the basic foundations of knowledge, education now needs a balance of

---

[3] Teaching and operational

[4] OECD (2019)

LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY
CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

both hard and soft skills to better prepare our learners for their future. The pandemic has further underpinned this message and has strengthened the rationale for our BSB Years 5-8 Curriculum Review. If anything, the current period asks us to reflect more deeply on the question: what's worth learning?

The rationale behind our Curriculum Review, which began in September 2019, was based on the concepts of coherence, continuity, collaboration and community. We identified a need for a *coherent* curriculum that maps progression from the Primary School through the Secondary School, and draws on evidence gained from an ongoing review of Social Emotional Learning across the school. Recognising the under-developed *continuity* of the learning experience from Primary School to Secondary School, we want to improve this transition experience. We are seeking to increase *collaboration* between Primary and Secondary staff as part of our Professional Learning Community whilst recognising that our students are also agents of change. Our *community* is important to us: we are currently developing the school campus (informed by learning needs) and we are acutely aware of global aspirations for education including curriculum reform in the UK and beyond (Scotland's Curriculum for excellence, Curriculum for Wales, Singapore for example).

The global crisis surrounding the COVID 19 pandemic has heightened the rationale

further – we absolutely need *coherence, continuity, collaboration* and *community* to shape our curriculum.

Our students are already global citizens and we need to look internationally to help inspire the education we are providing for them. More than ever before, we need to consider the world-wide shift in education. The world is constantly changing and perhaps our current education system cannot, it seems, catch up. Indeed, it could be argued that our current education system is 'disconnected' from the economic, environmental and societal needs of the future (WEF, 2020, OECD, 2015).

Learner-led learning

Emma: Our Guiding Statements have prevailed throughout our Curriculum Review and are particularly relevant given the crisis we have been thrown into. Our aim is to support BSB learners to develop as confident, caring and courageous people who engage actively, ethically and purposefully with the world around us; foster curious, resilient learners who enjoy life and achieve the best that they can whilst encouraging respect for self, others and the wider world. Our first draft principles for our 5-8 Curriculum began coming through just before the pandemic hit us, and although they need much work and development, throughout the review we have kept the learner paramount, asking the

question, what curriculum do our children deserve?

In the midst of the pandemic, our Guiding Statements have retained their value. The UNESCO 4 pillars have also helped guide us through the review (to know, to do, to be and to live together) promoting a fluid approach to learning, providing discipline and offering a relevant framework to guide curriculum development.

We have identified that we want a 'humanistic' curriculum, based on positive relationships (teacher – learner, learner – learner and teacher – teacher) and interpersonal skills. We know that the foundations of knowledge and associated competencies gained through a coherent curriculum need to be built on and enhanced by: purposeful creativity and innovation (language rich, integrated with technology, immersed with outdoor learning and play, focused on sustainability and allowing for problem solving and critical thinking) and active citizenship, (enabling learners to learn to live with others both locally and globally, ensuring an understanding of human rights and democracy, and how our place in society affects others and our impact on the world around us). We know that the students themselves need a voice in our curriculum; Ron Berger (2014) advocates students as leaders of their own learning: *…it builds the independence, critical thinking skills,*

perseverance, and self-reflective understanding students need for college and careers. Dylan Wiliam (2013)[5] states that: *The curriculum should be child-centred and subject-centred (and society-centred too). It should regard emotional development and intellectual development not as alternatives but as strands in a rope, which mutually strengthen each other. The curriculum has to take into account the needs of individuals and society while at the same time being sensitive to local constraints and affordances*. Our own survey of students is very much in line with the International HundrEd's 2018 global survey[6] in which a significant number of students believed education should be tailored to their individual needs. Our students have indicated they are interested in community service, they want a say in how they learn, to work on their own projects, lead their own extra- curricular activities.

During this pandemic, students and teachers have been forced to distance themselves physically from one another. This has created a new challenge – the connection between teacher and learner, and learner and learner, has been adjusted and seems counter intuitive to our Guiding Statements and school ethos which emphasises learning together. Relational learning underpins our curriculum and we have had to reflect on these relationships and in many ways, we

---

[5] Wiliam, Dylan (2013)

[6] Spencer-Keyse, A. Jessica & Warren, Frederika (2018)

have had to reform them. Many teachers struggled with this initially, there was less interaction and it was difficult to know how students were feeling. However, teachers have been creative with use of groupings, encouraging students to work in small groups, engaging with students on an individual level, encouraging communication, creating opportunities to work together, to listen to each other. Some teachers have remarked that certain students are less self-conscious than they would perhaps have been in class and that quiet students have gained confidence. This has developed our understanding of our learners as resilient, courageous, confident, caring, curious and respectful members of the community and because of our PLC ways of working, staff have been self-sustaining and resilient too.

Melanie: At BSB we believe that our staff want to lead and learn, they are naturally curious, self-directed and have the capacity to do so. We invite this leadership and learning through creating conditions for the whole organisation to improve. BSB now has seventeen Professional Learning Partners (PLPs) from a range of roles across the school, in addition to fifteen members of staff working on research projects. These are staff who apply for their roles. There is no financial

reward, following the understanding that tangible rewards, such as pay and imposed goals, can have a negative effect on intrinsic motivation[7], which is the very motivation that would facilitate creativity[8], support experimentation and result in reflection on practice and improvement. However, time, trust and professional leadership are helping to facilitate a sustainable PLC. As noted by a member of staff in our 2019 survey: *There is a demonstrable and very evident impact on the practice of individuals from the PLC way of working (and) from the direct interventions of PLPs*. In 2017, our PLPs made a courageous move to reorganise Professional Learning as something that was delivered by and for our staff. Staff feedback from that time evidenced an important shift. Staff reported choice, collegiality and the importance of teacher voice: *it made me feel like my opinions and thoughts mattered*.[9] During the pandemic we have continued to listen and technology has supported this connectivity. Ensuring that our PLPs come from diverse roles across the school, including operational staff and primary and secondary teaching roles adds to our feeling of community. It is documented that PL needs to be for all staff, including support staff[10] and, furthermore, Hord (2010)[11] states: *…if the learning does not extend to the whole school, then a common purpose fails to be developed across the*

[7] Ryan, R.M. and Deci, E.L. (2000)
[8] Pink, D.H. (2010)
[9]BSB Staff survey following PL days October 2017
[10]Bolam, R., Stoll, L. and Greenwood in Stoll and Seashore Louis (2007)
[11] Cited in Hipp, K.K. &Huffman J.B. (2010)

campus. In 2018, 98% of staff surveyed felt the PL days had created an atmosphere of *one-schoolness* in our whole school PLC. Our PLPs have helped to guide staff to different PL pathways. They have shown that Professional Learning at BSB is for oneself, others and the organisation and comes in many different forms. However, regardless of what the learning focus may be, our broader values remain the same. In our 2018 staff survey, 93% felt there was sufficient choice in learning routes. In September 2019, BSB launched a new model of what was previously termed 'appraisal', following a transformative cross-school review. This new model was importantly researched and developed by our staff and supported by the Board of Governors. We now not only separate performance management and development, but have a model that sees staff taking an autonomous lead in their learning through a self-accountable or peer-accountable way of working that values enquiry and reflective practice. Co-coaching underpins this learning and reflection: *as a creative lever rather than an accountability tool*.[12] This new way of working allows us to look at the whole organisation as a complex system and values how individuals, working alone or in teams, can contribute to this. Risk taking is vital to improve creativity and innovation.[13] This does not mean that foolhardy risks are encouraged. For anyone who may fear what such freedom

of learning and autonomously selected focus may bring, we can testify that for our learning community it has brought more creativity and innovation under our joint learning vision than the leadership team alone could have directed. In our system, staff have had the opportunity to choose from different ways of developing, some examples being: Working on key development plan priorities, being part of a reflective practitioner group or leading research projects. Importantly, whatever our staff choose to follow, the goal is self-identified and self-directed. During our February PL days this year, our PLPs designed a programme that offered staff a range of choices for PL, including staff-led mini-sessions, collaborative enquiry, workshops with external guests and a focus on their personal professional learning. All of our staff who responded to our February survey felt they managed to focus on their personal professional learning, citing the time to focus, opportunity to collaborate on joint working with colleagues, share knowledge and make connections allowed them to make substantial progress in their learning. We have seen that having staff that are intrinsically motivated, naturally curious about their learning, daring to take risks to enquire into new ways of working and knowing where to turn to for support has enabled them to innovate and grow during this time. A recent survey of staff showed

---

[12] Lofthouse, R., Leat, D. & Towler, C. (2010)

[13] Kouzes, J.M. & Posner, B.Z. (2012)

that our search for autonomous learning has seen 83% of staff surveyed independently enquiring into their own practice, whilst working from home, through attending many of the free on-line webinars and conferences that have been in abundance during the pandemic. They have developed a diverse range of teaching skills: how best to model live examples via technology; online approaches to assessment and feedback; effective online questioning and how to allow more involvement through group work online. Examples of self-directed learning include technology workshops, subject specific webinars, virtual learning seminars, coaching webinars, PLN events, Collaborative Education Symposia, professional reading, examination syllabi courses and international teaching conferences. It is well documented that effective PL allows for collaboration and the sharing of ideas[14], nevertheless, such capital and ideas can only be circulated internally for so long. Networking beyond the walls of the school helps to build a stronger support matrix[15] and stimulates the generation of new knowledge[16]. Coaching partners and leaders in education from institutions on an international level have formed reciprocally supportive relationships with a number of our staff to aid PL developments, in addition to ongoing work with recognised education

provision and leadership associations. There is much hope that we can continue to internationally connect, frequently learn, mobilise knowledge[17] and establish a broad community with less carbon footprint in such fora after the pandemic.

September is not about 'going back' to school, but 'going forward'!

Melanie: As we now look to the future, the importance of reframing this situation to highlight the positives and what we have additionally learnt should be celebrated. Without doing so, we may run the risk of a probable future of 'going back'. To achieve a preferred future and 'go forwards' we must review our learning and learning outcomes.[18] At BSB this means recognising how the recent collaboration and innovation have reaffirmed our approaches to PL. An established culture of professional learning needs to be a secure anchorage, and thus 'the end in mind', if curiosity and learning are to naturally and methodically extend during upheaval. Our Professional Learning Partners have found opportune moments to develop their enquiry during this period. Staff and student response to surveys and joint enquiry has added depth to the professional learning projects. Via electronic platforms they have managed to:

[14] Datnow, A. & Park, V. (2019), Hargreaves, A. & Fullan, M. (2012), Hargreaves, A. & O'Connor, M.T. (2018)
[15] Earl, L. & Lee, L. (2000), Stoll, Harris & Handscomb (2012)
[16] Stoll (2018)
[17] Malin, J. & Brown, C. (2020)

[18] This is especially pertinent in the context of PL, where all actions must essentially come back to the students and their increased learning outcomes (Brown, Lofthouse & Handscomb, 2018; Hord & Sommers, 2008; Stoll, Harris & Handscomb, 2012.)

- further examine the social-emotional learning at BSB (including approaches to counselling, pastoral systems and mindfulness)
- share the findings of the Students as Change Agents Review Group
- collaborate on cross-school, cross-curricular projects with the Curriculum Review group
- train and prepare others for ITT/E mentorship
- review evidence from their school-based research and explore frameworks for a school research model
- research structures for coaching at different levels: Self, Others and Organisation
- consider how reflective classroom practice can be supported by coaching and mentoring
- deliver Technology for Learning collaborative Teachmeets for our staff

Collaboration, relationships, wellbeing and the need to review our learning for all have been of high importance. Students have needed to be self-organised and have had to gain a greater understanding of their meta-cognition. Staff have started to question the relevance of what we are teaching and learning, and this awakening will support future reviews into curriculum, teaching and learning, learning environments and

experiences. Our Access to Learning team have supported students in terms of social and emotional learning, but also in terms of equity of provision and achievement.

Now is the time to invite ourselves to imagine what September might look like if we could see all of the outcomes of our collective learning during this period falling into place.

Coaching and mentoring will take on increased importance as we support all learners to develop. Meeting onscreen has made listening more important than ever as some of the paralinguistic cues and features get lost online. Staff feedback has shown that whilst one-to-one meets have proved successful for coaching and mentoring, shorter meetings with clear agendas have worked best when meeting with larger numbers of staff. PLPs have created a peer-coaching programme for staff to connect over the summer break and beyond. Considerations could be made on how we continue to support our more in need learners, perhaps more guided support could be offered through study skills and homework clubs after school. Opportunities to further build our community now need to be considered: involving parents as partners in learning to support the blended learning we may see next term; inviting parents to learn more about the different technological tools we are using; enabling more opportunity for students to lead learning for others across age and stage of school and involvement with

LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY
CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

local community enterprises to build inter-disciplinary and future thinking partnerships for learning.

Emma: During such intense times, it would have been very easy to press pause on our curriculum review. However, early on, we decided to use this as an opportunity to create time and space to think and reflect on our rationale, where we are and where we are going. We have chosen to work within our values of collaboration and connection, we have kept communication open and active. We have continued to meet and discuss what we can achieve, dive deeper into our reading, talk about what we are reading and learning, grabbed opportunities to attend the webinars and TeachMeets that actually, before this pandemic, due to location, time availability and costs we most probably would not have attended.   We need to use what we have learned about our learners, about our community, and feed this into our review. This crisis, and more recently, the tragic circumstances surrounding the death of George Floyd too, has thrown our Professional Learning projects, notably our curriculum review into the limelight, to really ask ourselves as David Perkins[19] has been asking for many years now: what's worth learning? Stephen Tierney[20] rightfully tells us that due to this pandemic: *A rebalancing of schools' purpose will also be required; to give appropriate weighting to the personal, social and emotional well-being of children and young people; their engagement as members of their school and local communities alongside their important intellectual development*. It has not hindered our progress by any means, in fact it has further strengthened the rationale for reviewing our curriculum in the first place.

Looking ahead, the challenge for us now, which is an exciting one, is working within and beyond our Professional Learning Community to connect all the dots, channel our ideas and see it and breathe it in the curriculum itself. Oliver Jeffers[21] recently posted that: *The future's not what it used to be …. but maybe it'll be better*. What a way to look forward.

References

Bolam, R., Stoll, L. and Greenwood in Stoll and Seashore Louis (2007) *Professional Learning Communities: Divergence, Depth and Dilemmas*. OUP.
Brown, Lofthouse & Handscomb, (2018) *Professional Development Today: a manifesto for change*. Professional Development Today *Improving the system – special double* Issue: 19.3&19.4. Teaching Times.

---

[19] Perkins, D (2014) and Perkins, D (2010)

[20] Tierney, S. (2020)

[21] Jeffers, O. (2020)

Covey, S.R. (1989) *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change*. London, Simon and Shuster UK Ltd.

Datnow, A & Park, V. (2019) *Professional Collaboration With Purpose. Teachers Learning Towards Equitable And Excellent Schools*. Routledge.

Earl, L. & Lee, L. (2000) *Learning, for a Change: School Improvement as Capacity Building* https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/136548020000300106

Hargreaves, A. & Fullan, M. (2012) *Professional Capital: Transforming Teaching in Every School* Routledge.

Harris, A., Jones, M. & Huffman, J.B. (2018) *Teachers Leading Educational Reform. The Power of Professional Learning Communities*. Routledge, Oxon and New York.

Hipp, K.K. & Huffman J.B. (2010) *Demystifying Professional Learning Communities: school leadership at its best.* Rowman & Littleford Eductaion, Plymouth.

Hord, S. & Sommers, W. (2008) *Leading professional learning communities. Voices from research and practice.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. Edited by Harris, A., Jones, M. Huffman, J.B. (2018).

Jeffers, O. (2020) https://www.instagram.com/p/CAaaI1oh4r1/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Kidd, D. (2018), https://debra-kidd.com/2018/06/11/a-rich-curriculum/

Kouzes, J.M. & Posner, B.Z. (2012) *The Leadership Challenge: How to make Extraordinary things happen in organizations*. Retrieved from: http://media.wiley.com/product_data/excerpt/25/04706517/0470651725-120.pdf

Lofthouse, R., Leat, D. & Towler, C. (2010) *Coaching for teaching and Learning: A Practical Guide for Schools. Newcastle University, funded by CfBT Education Trust and the National College*. Downloaded from: https://www.ncl.ac.uk/media/wwwnclacuk/cflat/files/coaching-for-teaching.pdf

Malin, J. & Brown, C. (2020) *The Role of Knowledge Brokers in Education. Connecting the Dots Between research and Practice.* Routledge, Oxon.

OECD (2019), OECD FUTURE OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS 2030: OECD LEARNING COMPASS 2030 found at: http://www.oecd.org/education/2030-project/contact/OECD_Learning_Compass_2030_Concept_Note_Series.pdf

Perkins, D (2014), Future Wise: Educating Our Children for a Changing World, Jossey-Bass, Perkins, D (2010), Making Learning Whole: How 7 Principles of Teaching can Transform Education, Jossey-Bass

Pink, D.H. (2010) *Drive: The surprising truth about what motivates us*. Edinburgh, Canongate

Ryan, R.M. and Deci, E.L. (2000) *Self-determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development, and Well-being*. University of Rochester, American Psychologist Vol 55 No1 pp 68-78.

Stoll, L., Brown, C., Spence-Thomas, K. & Taylor, C. (2018) *Teacher leadership within and across professional learning communities*. In Harris, A., Jones, M. Huffman, J.B. (2018).

Stoll, L. (2018), *Stimulating Learning Conversations.* Professional Development Today *Improving the system – special double* Issue: 19.3&19.4. Teaching Times.

Stoll, L., Harris, A. & Handscomb, G. (2012) *Great professional development which leads to great pedagogy: nine claims from research.* Research and development network national themes: theme two. Autumn 2012. National College for School Leadership.

Hargreaves, A. & O'Connor, M. T. (2018) *Collaborative Professionalism: When teaching together means learning for all,* Thousand Oaks, Corwin, California.

Spencer-Keyse, A. Jessica & Warren, Frederika (2018), "Every Child to Flourish: Understanding Global Perspectives on Improving Education. Insights from a state of the debate review & global youth survey.' HundrED Research. https://hundred.org/en/research

Tierney, S. (2020), Now is the Time to Deal with the Immorality of an Overcrowded Curriculum' found at: https://bigeducation.org/lfl-content/now-is-the-time-to-deal-with-the-immorality-of-an-overly-crowded-curriculum/

Wiliam, Dylan (2013), Principled curriculum design, Specialist Schools and Academies Trust, found at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/258423378_Principled_curriculum_design

World Economic Forum (2020), Schools of the Future: Defining New Models of Education for the Fourth Industrial Revolution found at: https://www.weforum.org/reports/schools-of-the-future-defining-new-models-of-education-for-the-fourth-industrial-revolution

CollectivEd Thinking Out Loud
An interview with Angie Brown

Please tell us who you are and what your current role in education is.

I am Angie Browne. I started my career as an English teacher and worked through Head of English, Assistant Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher before becoming a Headteacher. My Headships spanned Alternative Provision, a state funded Steiner School and a large rural comprehensive school. My last role was Interim Deputy CEO of a MAT in the South-West. I left that role in August 2019 and I now work as a coach with senior leaders and Headteachers. In the main I coach and deliver training for women and Black, Asian and minority ethnic educators who want to progress into leadership. I also host an online space for women working in education called Nourished Collective.

Please reflect on an episode or period in your career during which your own learning helped you to develop educational practices, which remain with you today. What was the context, how were you learning, and what was the impact?

About halfway through my first Assistant Headship, I met a girl who, looking back, I now

feel altered my course. Her life story was a troubled one and she brought her irascible personality into the alternative provision I had just set up. My team grew very fond of her and, over the course of just one term, the journey of her life became one that we felt compelled to re-route. 'Not on my watch', we would repeat, 'Not on my watch'. The bureaucratic failures of the care system got in the way of some sensible choices that could have been made that winter to enable this girl to have a marginally better time of things. As the Christmas holidays approached, I found it difficult to rationalise her situation and indeed the situations of so many of the young people with whom we worked. As I flew out of Bristol Airport on my way to my Christmas break with family, I burst into tears, crying because despite all efforts I could not make the difference.

This was one of those "screw your courage to the sticking place" moments and through the tears and frustration, I began to formulate a series of my own driving questions for which I am still seeking answers. On that flight, I posed myself the question; 'Could a school exist that provided children with some of the

creative, spiritual and practical skills they were going to need to

navigate life alongside a rich taught curriculum?'

I read widely and spent several years testing out my ideas on a small scale. I had the opportunity to set up an alternative provision within the school I was working in and witnessed first-hand how the children that the school viewed as 'hard to reach' or difficult to manage were often the black boys who found their diet of lessons most difficult to access. I saw up close rigidity of a system that was trying to be a panacea to social difficulties but that couldn't full heartedly meet this role so straight jacketed was it within an attainment agenda. When I saw the advert for the role of founding Principal at a Steiner Academy it seemed to present the opportunity to answer the questions I had posed myself years before and so began a chapter in which I got to spend three years immersed in the possibility of a holistic education model.

When you work with colleagues or other professionals to support their development what are the key attributes that you bring with you, and what difference do these qualities make?

I bring unconditional positive regard to my work at all times and a belief that as human

beings we have all the resources we need to figure things out. I am someone who feels that autonomy is a contributory factor for wellbeing and enables us to access our wisdom. When I work with professionals, I use strategies that activate autonomy within a container that is very safe.

The difference this makes is profound. The level of safety that unconditional positive regard brings enables powerful conversations, breakthroughs and new wisdom to bubble to the surface. Knowing that this wisdom is self-generated is very powerful especially for educators who need to be able to rely on their own resources to transform the system.

Do you feel part of any specific educational community, and if so who are they and why do they matter to you?

I have to say Nourished Collective. Yes, because I founded it but also because it is remarkable community in which women are showing up to be seen and be heard and reframe the narratives that have constrained them in their roles as educators or as women for so long.

When someone you meet tells you they are thinking about becoming a teacher what advice do you give them?

Know yourself. Know yourself really well. Have a collection of inner work practices to help you navigate challenging times. Be able to communicate your values and find supportive networks who can help you stay connected to these values. Bloody well enjoy it – it is a great, great job!

A Continuum of Professional Learning Conversations: Coaching, Mentoring and Everything in Between.

A think piece working paper by Chris Munro

Why a Continuum?

Numerous authors have utilised various forms of continua to help people new to coaching and mentoring understand the key differences and, more recently, the nuances of these professional learning conversations.

Myles Downey (2003) first proposed a "spectrum" of directive to non-directive *skills* in coaching. This spectrum included skills such as listening to understand, reflecting and paraphrasing at the *non-directive* end and things like offering guidance, giving advice and instructing at the *directive* end (Downey, 2003). Adapting this concept, Christian van Nieuwerburgh (2012) presented a coaching-mentoring continuum (van Nieuwerburgh, 2012, p16) as a way of illustrating the difference between what he referred to as directive and non-directive interventions in an education context. van Nieuwerburgh goes on to describe the purpose and intent of these interventions and introduces a further intervention - instructional coaching – positioning this as helpfully combining "the non-directive elements of a collaborative way of working with some clearly directive elements" (van Nieuwerburgh, 2012, p17). More recently, Trista Hollweck (2018)

presented mentoring and coaching on a *mobius strip* as an alternative way of representing the multi-faceted "mentor-coach" roles of the participants in her study (Hollweck, 2018).

Further signalling the complexity of the work of coaches, or anyone charged with leading professional learning conversations in schools, Jim Knight (2018) introduces "three approaches to coaching" presented in tabular form (Knight, 2018, p10). Here, three approaches that might be required to help a teacher improve are described as facilitative, dialogical, and directive. Instructional coaching is positioned as a dialogical approach to coaching. Building on this, van Nieuwerburgh, Knight and Campbell (2019, p413) collaborated to produce a further tabular representation of forms of coaching and mentoring in education.

All of this work has been helpful in illustrating the similarities and differences between these forms of "helping conversations" (Campbell and van Nieuwerburgh, 2018, p15) as well as highlighting the need for *all* of them, for different people at different stages in their development. As I have presented the tabular

representations to others, I have found myself describing the columns as not being compartmentalised 'types' and demonstrating how it can be helpful to imagine 'hopping' between the columns as we respond to the needs of the person in front of us. In my experience, the concept of shifting back and forth along a continuum seems to resonate strongly with educators as it conveys slightly more fluidity and responsiveness than a table. This paper respectfully acknowledges the contributions of the aforementioned authors and presents the latest iteration of my thinking on this subject.

A Continuum Within a Continuum

Taking the notion of some conversations being non-directive and others being directive, it might be helpful to consider the purpose and intent of these in education settings, as shown in *Figure 1* below.

Conversations in Education Settings

Non-Directive

Empathic listening
Cathartic Venting
Socialising

Professional growth
Critical reflection
Capacity building
Skill development
Performance enhancement
Career development

Duty of Care
Risk Management
Compliance
Unprofessional behaviour

Directive

'Customers for change'
Presumes professionalism –
always striving to get better at
what we do

GROWTH COACHING INTERNATIONAL

© Growth Coaching International

Figure 1: Conversations in Educational Settings

At the *non-directive* end we have social, unstructured conversations with no clear roles on either side and often involving multiple people. Social norms, context and levels of emotional intelligence in the listener may influence the degree to which these conversations are enjoyable, empathic or cathartic for the 'talker'. Key points here are that, initially at least, there is no intentional stance, management of the conversation or role-related expectations on either side.

Moving to the *directive* end of the continuum, we have conversations that are often initiated by a leader or manager triggered by a concern relating to some sort of expectation. At the extreme right-hand end, the intention is to intervene to stop a particular behaviour or situation. Although these conversations may *eventually* lead to professional learning, they do not start with this intent.

As coaches, mentors, or anyone concerned with supporting the professional learning of their colleagues, *our* conversational space sits across the middle section of this continuum. These are **professional learning conversations** from the outset - conversations with the intention of stimulating and supporting professional growth, critical reflection, capacity building, skill development, performance enhancement, or career development. These conversations

presume professionalism. That is to say that those engaged in the conversations are striving to get better at doing what they do. They are 'customers for change' (Jackson and McKergow, 2007, p32) and both parties are willing participants in the spirit of reciprocity (Knight, 2011).

A Continuum of Professional Learning Conversations

So, let us now take a closer look at the continuum of *professional learning* conversations shown in *Figure 2*. This illustration describes a range of *stances* that could be adopted in service of the learning of an educator. The use of a continuum as opposed to presenting these as a table is intended to imply that the 'helper' can *shift* stance in the moment and from conversation to conversation in order to best meet the needs of the individual educator. Moreover, removing the coaching and mentoring titles entirely might capture the range of responses needed to best support the learning of a diverse range of colleagues in any given school. The comparative adjectives "less" and "more" used here are perhaps less pejorative and dichotomous than the original "non-directive" and "directive".
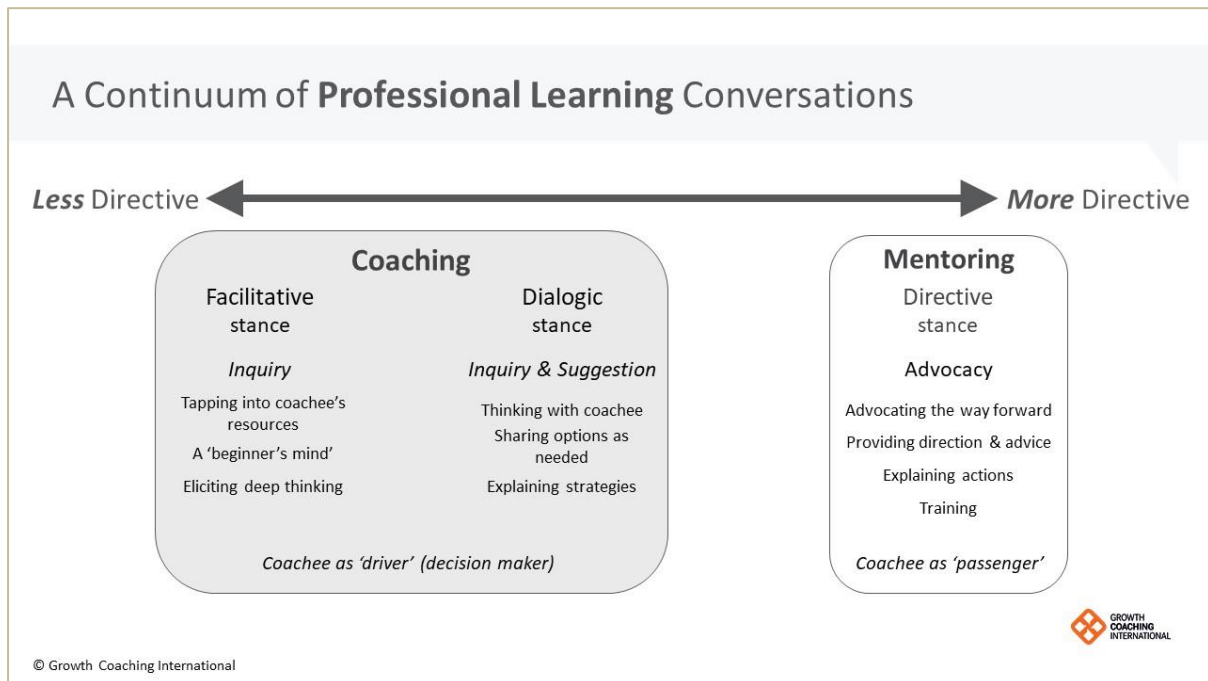
Figure 2: A Continuum of Professional Learning Conversations

A facilitative stance is one where the coach's predominant "mode of discourse" (van Nieuwerburgh, Knight and Campbell, 2019) is one of inquiry. By holding this stance, we tap into the coachee's strengths and resources and draw on these to generate options that help them move forward. In the facilitative stance the coach consciously adopts a 'beginner's mind'- one where they set aside their own expertise and thinking in order to be fully open to the possibilities coming from the coachee and their world. The primary focus of the coach is to elicit deep thinking on the part of the coachee.

Moving across to the directive stance, the mode of discourse is one of advocacy. This stance can be necessary when the coachee is stuck, is in new or novel circumstances or simply does not have the experience or resources to find a way forward. This stance aligns with typical definitions of mentoring (although many highly effective mentors may assert that they adopt a more dialogic stance). Here, the mentor is advocating specific ways of doing things, providing direction, giving advice and in some cases, providing training. At this point the coachee is no longer positioned as the key decision maker, effectively putting them in the metaphorical passenger seat (for a time at least).

Part way along the continuum, is a dialogic stance. Here there is a tension between maintaining the discourse of inquiry that empowers the coachee to find their own way, and offering suggestions. As the coach strives to keep the coachee in the 'driver's seat' they

must carefully manage their own voice and expertise so as not to create an unhelpful status difference. This stance is most commonly associated with Instructional Coaching (Knight, 2018) where the coach is *expected* to bring instructional knowledge and expertise to the relationship. In the dialogic stance, the coach does not give advice or tell the coachee what they should do. Rather, they share options and invite the coachee to adapt and contextualise these. At this point, the coach may shift back to a facilitative stance in order to help the coachee to think through their next steps.

Moving Beyond Role Titles

The continuum proposed in *Figure 2* represents a move towards a more nuanced understanding of professional learning conversations based on the need to adopt a range of stances rather than be constrained by a role title or definition. Those leading these conversations, whatever they are called, all benefit from the development of key skills, the use of a framework to manage the conversations and the development of a 'way of being' that brings out the best in their colleagues. Regardless of whether they are called a coach, mentor, instructional coach, mentor-coach, learning specialist, technology coach, or have any other role that aims to help others develop, we should expect to see many common features in their work. For

example: exploring context; goal setting; building on strengths; collecting data; listening; questioning; clarifying; and empathising. In short, the 'badge' does not define the work.

Roles, Labels and the Pursuit of Clarity

Reflecting on my own journey as a teacher, leader, mentor, teacher educator, trainer and coach, I can see six stages that have led me to a more sophisticated understanding of professional learning conversations in schools:

1. Learning about different forms of coaching and mentoring and coming to terms with the range of labels, organisers, definitions, job titles and role descriptions that exist in education contexts;

2. Applying my learning about these *in context* – the lived experience within the professional learning architecture of the schools, organisations and systems in which I have worked as well as learning from others' experiences;

3. Noticing what happened: the tensions, inhibitors and enablers; seeking feedback; and making adaptations;

4. Becoming less rules-driven or role-constrained and more comfortable

with nuance and the need for responsiveness in the moment – allowing things to evolve;

5. Taking more intentional conversational stances based on perceived need and shifting between these – operating on a continuum; and

6. Attempting to articulate this clearly to others.

This article is the product of that journey, so far.

References

Campbell, J. and van Nieuwerburgh, C. (2018). The Leader's Guide to Coaching in Schools: Creating Conditions for Effective Learning. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Downey, M. (2003). Effective Coaching: Lessons from the Coach's Coach. Florence, USA: Cengage Learning.

Hollweck, T. (2018), A pracademic's exploration of mentoring, coaching and induction in the Western Québec School Board, pp31-40, CollectivED [4], Carnegie School of Education, Leeds Beckett University.

Jackson, P. and McKergow, M. (2007). The Solution Focus: Making coaching and change SIMPLE. (2nd ed.) London: Nicholas Brealey International.

Knight, J. (2011). Unmistakable Impact: A Partnership Approach for Dramatically Improving Instruction. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Knight, J. (2018). The Impact Cycle: What Instructional Coaches Should do to Foster Powerful Improvements in Teaching. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

van Nieuwerburgh, C. (2012). Coaching in Education: Getting Better Results for Students, Educators, and Parents. London: Karnac.

van Nieuwerburgh, C., Knight, J. and Campbell, J. (2019). Coaching in Education. In P. Brownell, S. English & J. Manzi-Sabatine (Eds.), *Professional Coaching: Principles and Practice.* New York: Springer.

Exploring the Leadership Conversations Map

A think piece working paper by John Campbell and Jason Pascoe

'Conversational leadership' (Hurley and Brown, 2010) is emerging as a helpful way of conceptualising how leadership works in contemporary organisations. This discourse-focused style of leadership has been defined as, "…the leader's intentional use of conversation as a core process to cultivate the collective intelligence needed to create business and social value" (Baldwin, as cited in Hurley and Brown, 2010, p.1). While this definition is specifically related to corporate organisations it is easy to see how the conversations in which school leaders regularly engage provide opportunities to build 'collective intelligence', progressing various school improvement initiatives, as well as enhancing teaching practice and educator well-being, and ultimately, student success and student well-being. Further, 'conversational leadership', when explored in more detail, is frequently described in ways that highlight practices that look remarkably similar to the various approaches and skills that coaches and mentors typically deploy. Specifically, these practices include, among other things, a focus on: the future and preferred outcomes, listening and questioning, as well as small step progress

(Hurley and Brown, 2010; Cross & Parker, 2014; Dutton, 2003).

It seems that a 'coaching way of leading' is developing. This aligns with the 'coaching approach' to leading described by Campbell and van Nieuwerburgh (2018). In the *Leader's Guide to Coaching in Schools*, the authors describe a 'coaching approach' as, "…intentionally utilizing some of the transferable elements of formal coaching in a range of conversational situations that would not typically be considered coaching interactions" (p.18). It can sometimes be difficult to know how and when to use formal coaching and more informal 'coaching approach' practices. Consequently, the Leadership Conversations Map is offered as one way of assisting school leaders to more flexibly negotiate the range of interactions that they might have with staff, students and parents across any given day.

This Leadership Conversations Map (Figure 1) integrates a conversational continuum that reflects the level of *formality – more formal to less formal,* with a second continuum that

reflects the level of *directiveness* that the leader brings to the conversation, from *more directive to less directive.* This results in 4

broad kinds of conversations depending on the level of *formality* and *directiveness* that might be involved.

More Formal

6 session coaching projects, scheduled, documented

Annual Performance Review, Performance Management conversations

Less Directive

More Directive

On-the-Run/corridor coaching: short time frame, unscheduled, no documentation, usually initiated by colleague or team member

Informal coaching approach type conversations initiated by leader around his/her topic of choice

Less Formal

Figure 1. Leadership Conversations Map

Quadrant 1 Less Directive, More Formal (Upper Left quadrant)

Conversations in this quadrant are where we might best locate formal coaching interactions. In this quadrant conversations are more formal in that they will more likely be specifically scheduled, will involve explicit agreements and clear boundaries, and often

include some kind of documentation. The coach's role though is as a non-directive, facilitative thinking partner, who listens intently and asks questions that provoke reflection. The person being coached will set the topics for exploration, set goals and make decisions on strategies and next steps.

Quadrant 2 Less Directive, Less Formal (Lower Left quadrant)

This quadrant describes the space where many informal 'Got-a-Minute' conversations take place. A colleague or team member initiates an interaction seeking to explore a topic and clarify their thinking. If a level of trust and psychological safety has been nurtured in the school then this situation is likely to occur quite frequently. While not every one of these situations requires a coaching-like response, many of these conversations can be progressed in helpful ways if the leader adopts a coaching approach, defaulting to listening well and framing questions that lead to insight and action. These interactions are also less formal -likely to be spontaneous, often quite brief, and perhaps a 'one-off' with little or no follow up documentation. This is exactly the 'corridor coaching' that Professor Tony Grant has written about extensively. In a seminal paper on this topic, Grant (2016) proposes that this kind of coaching is in fact so significant, and so pervasive within organisations, that it is the basis of a 'third generation of workplace coaching' (p.37).

Quadrant 3 More Directive, Less Formal (Lower Right quadrant)

Conversations in this quadrant represent leader initiated informal conversations where a leader seeks to introduce a new project and is inviting a kind of partnership conversation as a way of getting things started. So, in this case the leader is providing more direction about the topic, and even about what the preferred future around the topic might look like. However, all of this is entered into in a coaching way so that the goal for the project might be jointly negotiated and various options and next steps explored and agreed jointly. If this is an introduction to a larger project, subsequent conversations might be re-positioned within Quadrant 4.

Quadrant 4 More Directive, More Formal (Upper Right quadrant)

Those conversations that combine both more directive and more formal elements are positioned in Quadrant 4 of the Leadership Conversations Map. Examples of conversations in this quadrant might include annual performance review meetings. Though for the most part these conversations will be positive and energizing for both participants, they do follow certain protocols and leaders take a more directive position in relation to the agenda, and the topics explored. It is in this quadrant that those typically more difficult performance management conversations also take place. In some of these there might necessarily be quite high levels of formality and direction. Conversations with parents will likely often be positioned within this quadrant as well.

If leaders are to lead through the various interpersonal interactions in which they

engage every day, we propose that nuancing coaching practices, and developing a level of agility and flexibility in bringing those practices into play will be helpful. These skills will add value to all kinds of leadership conversations. We hope that the Leadership Conversations Map will enable leaders to navigate these various conversational contexts more effectively.

References:

Campbell, J. & van Nieuwerburgh, C. (2018). *The leader's guide to coaching in schools: Creating conditions for effective learning*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Cross, R. & Parker, A. (2004). *The hidden power of social networks: Understanding how work really gets done in organizations* (10th ed.). Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

Dutton, J. (2003). *Energize your workplace* (1st ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Grant, A.(2016). The third 'generation' of workplace coaching: Creating a culture of quality conversations. *Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice, 10* (1), 37-53.

Hurley, T., & Brown, J. (2010). Conversational leadership: Thinking together for a change. *Oxford Leadership Journal,1*(2), 1-9.

Coaching: A reciprocal learning partnership

A practice insight working paper by Andrea Stringer

As reflective narrative, this article centres on a six-month coaching cycle within education. While the coaching process typically focuses on and acknowledges the coachee's learning and goal achievement, this paper aims to demonstrate that reciprocal learning occurs within this partnership. As the coach, I documented specific quotes, noted my wonderings, and reflected independently and routinely with my meta-coach. Recorded sessions afforded further opportunities to review, reflect and self-evaluate. As a coach and facilitator at *Growth Coaching International*, the GROWTH framework scaffolded the coaching conversation. By drawing on this recorded data and sharing my internal and coaching dialogue, insight into my coaching skills and coaching way of being is revealed. Additionally, to support a greater understanding of the coaching approaches and skills, the International Coaching Federation (ICF) code of ethics and core competencies are acknowledged.

Relationships-Building the trust

Prior to commencing our coaching session, I reviewed the Code of Ethics and Core Competencies within the International Coaching Federation (ICF, Code of Ethics & Core Competencies, 2019). Adhering to the ICF Code of Ethics (#3, 2019) regarding confidentiality, and to protect my coachee's identity, a pseudonym is substituted. In our first session, Gemma and I reconnected as it had been some time since I coached her.

Figure 1: The GROWTH Framework. (Campbell, 2016).

To build trust, our first session consisted of a conversation based on Gemma's professional and personal life. There is a greater chance of

"change for the better" with a quality relationship; therefore, relational needs to be continually addressed to make it stronger (De Haan, 2008, p. 50). Later we talked about our best hopes for our coaching sessions (ICF, Core Competencies #2, 2019). Generally, Gemma wanted more confidence when providing feedback and my goal was to 'stay curious' within each coaching session and throughout the six-month coaching cycle.

I verbally reviewed the confidentiality component to provide reassurance to Gemma and we discussed that these coaching sessions were pro-bono (ICF, Code of Ethics #1, 2019). The *Growth Coaching International* coaching agreement provided a sense of clarity, with the expectations, ethics, code of conduct, session time, commitment and cancellations procedures explicitly stated. This prompted further discussion regarding Gemma's availability and our timeframe. We established our expectations and responsibilities, choosing to meet once a month, on a specific day and time (ICF, Code of Ethics #1 & 2; Core Competencies #2, 2019). Prior to coaching, Gemma completed a survey covering personal strengths, previous coaching experiences and feedback on her role models. We briefly discussed her survey responses and van Nieuwerburgh's definition of coaching (2012, p. 17).

…one-to-one conversation that focuses on the enhancement of learning and development through increasing self-awareness and a sense of personal responsibility, where the coach facilitates the self-directed learning of the coachee through questioning, active listening, and appropriate challenge in a supportive and encouraging climate'.

Our understanding aligned and our coaching relationship was re-established (ICF, Core Competencies #3, 2019). After discussing her strengths, she said, "It will be great to be coached by you again". At various points throughout our coaching sessions, I returned to her strengths of being committed, conscientious, and hard-working, which she had identified in the survey. This strategy was powerful, as in one of our dialogues, Gemma said that she recognised how these strengths could be applied to her current situation. Through using my skills of active listening, powerful questioning, and direct communication during our conversations, her awareness developed. (ICF, Core Competencies #5, 6, & 7, 2019).

While her survey did not provide a specific detailed goal or how she will know she has achieved it, I had faith these would be revealed utilising the GROWTH framework. Being socially aware, I observed Gemma's body language and the silence that ensued

(van Nieuwerburgh, 2014), indicating that this first session was coming to an end (ICF, Core Competencies #4, 2019). Respecting Gemma's limited time, I finished the session with two powerful questions for Gemma to think about before our next monthly meeting.

"What do you truly want Gemma?"

"What would be the benefit?"

Drawing on my own thinking and processing preferences, and knowing Gemma like I did, I thought it best to provide her with the time and space to percolate her ideas.

Applying the 8 step GROWTH coaching model (Goal)

When we reconnected, I asked Gemma what was on her mind (ICF, Core Competencies # 6, 2019). Automatically, she responded, "My challenge is giving teachers feedback when they've been teaching longer than me." Time between sessions provided the opportunity to clarify what she wanted but unfortunately, she focused on the problem. Instead of diving straight into the *Goal* component of GROWTH framework, I decided to ask questions to help her explore what is happening now and listened for facts (van Nieuwerburgh, 2014). This strategy helped identify the positives that are happening now, instead of 'being stuck' in the problem (ICF, Core Competencies #8, 2019). Although one may want to define the goal early in the process, the decision to let

Gemma's ideas flow ultimately resulted in clarity of what she wanted later in the process.

Applying the 8 step GROWTH coaching model (Reality, Options)

To establish the *Reality* component of the GROWTH framework and drawing on the work of Jackson and McKergow (2007), I asked Gemma, "What's working now and how do you know it's working?" Her response was not focused on what's working but more focused on what's happening. Currently, Gemma gives brief feedback verbally or via hasty emails. Through my questioning, she revealed that she feels like she is simply giving an opinion. Although it was very general, I reminded her of what she wanted (goal). To seek *options*, I asked, "When have you recently been provided good feedback?" Using my active listening skills, I piggybacked on her responses by asking more probing questions, such as: How did this land with you? Why do you think it was effective? How is this different to how you currently provide feedback? (ICF, Core Competencies # 6 & 8, 2019).

When Gemma said, "That's a great question", I observed her eyes focus skywards. Noticing her body language and providing ample time for a response, I was fully present (ICF, Core Competencies #4, 2019). Asking 'and what

else' often (Bungay Stanier, 2006), Gemma developed more options based on her and others' experiences, which meant Gemma was driving the conversation and owning her actions, while I stayed in the facilitative zone. Without any prompting questions, Gemma said,

- "I could phrase things differently."
- "I could follow up the verbal feedback with written feedback."
- "Well now I think about it…some teachers may prefer written rather than verbal feedback."

The connection from *Reality* to *Options* was made spontaneously by Gemma, and I knew now we could return to her goal with more clarity to identify an ISMART goal.

Revisiting the Goal Setting Process

I asked Gemma to talk more about what she wanted. She spoke 80% of the time, while I was silent, noticing, and drawing out her emotions, all demonstrated my way of being. While Gemma had begun to discuss *Imposter Syndrome*, I didn't know where this conversation was heading. By understanding and noticing her emotions (van Nieuwerburgh, 2014), I was present and curious, demonstrating my way of being (ICF, Core Competencies #4, 2019). I wondered how this may influence her goal. Listening actively (ICF, Core Competencies #5, 2019), she shared how she'd heard others comment

on her inexperience and age. I asked a few clarifying questions and reminded her of her strengths of commitment and being conscientious (ICF, Core Competencies #8, 2019). I summarised my understanding and Gemma responded, "Wow I've never thought about why I felt like this and why this is important to me." I provided a safe environment for Gemma to be vulnerable, (ICF, Core Competencies #3, 2019), exemplifying our trusting relationship.

By telling Gemma I understood her feelings, I validated her emotions and demonstrated care and empathy. I asked Gemma what she can you do to create the change she wants? (ICF, Core Competencies #6 & 9, 2019). After I sought clarification and summarised how she thought she could make the change she wanted, we created her ISMART goal (ICF, Core Competencies #10, 2019), using the sentence stem. As we had previously explored why this goal was inspiring and important to Gemma, she genuinely owned her goal. By continually repeating what Gemma said she wanted, she became more succinct with her goal. It was like holding up a mirror. I was witnessing her thinking out loud as Gemma reflected. For example, when I asked when she wanted this goal achieved, I followed up by asking, "Do you think this is achievable?" "Why is that time framework important to you?"

We worked together to identify the importance of 'constructive' feedback, as Gemma has experienced feedback that was not constructive. While the goal was Gemma's, together we determined it, through questioning, clarifying and summarising Gemma's words. We both kept a record but the benefits of Gemma writing down the goal means she takes ownership. The responsibility lies with Gemma, and not with me or anyone else. Additionally, I noticed Gemma took more notes as our sessions progressed, with me taking less. This reflects her ownership of actions and my self-awareness and self-management (ICF, Core Competencies #10 & 11, 2019). Without focusing on note taking, I could listen more and observe body language more attentively. Gemma's goal was declared.

'By mid-2020, I have an increased level of competence when providing constructive feedback, so that I am building my capacity for future opportunities.

Applying the 8 step GROWTH coaching model (Will, Tactics, Habits)

With the *Goal*, *Reality* and *Options* steps completed, I asked, 'What *will* you do and what would be the first step needed?" (ICF, Core Competencies #9, 2019). To make sure I understood, I repeated some of her suggested actions word for word. With one being to draft an email, we needed more specific next steps, so I used these questions to make the *Tactics* very detailed (ICF, Core Competencies #6 & 9, 2019).

- What are you hoping to achieve by this email?
- When will you send it? (day, time)
- Who are the recipients?
- How would you feel if you received this email? (What's it like to be on the other side of you? (Kubicek & Cockram, as cited in Campbell & van Nieuwerburgh, 2018, p. 32).

Asking the last question may develop Gemma's social awareness, but also reflects my level of emotional intelligence and way of being (ICF, Core Competencies #4, 2019). Another time, when we reviewed her actions, I asked Gemma if she would do anything differently? (ICF, Core Competencies #6, 2019). She shared that now, she is constantly reflecting on her goal. To identify what she has been doing well and what got her there, I used the scaling question (Jackson & McKergow, 2007). Gemma indicated at the start that she was at the level of 3 or 4, but now is at a 7. Asking what got her there, Gemma first named my good questioning skills. To make sure the focus was on Gemma's actions and achievements, I asked Gemma to identify three things *she* had done

to achieve her goal, which she did (ICF, Core Competencies #7, 2019).

The amount of prompting questions required to identify her next steps had decreased over the six sessions and while we both wrote the actions to move forward, Gemma clearly was responsible for her actions. To sustain her success (*Habits*), I asked:

(Andrea) "What may get in the way of you achieving your goal?"

(Gemma) "Nothing really, I think I just have to make sure we keep meeting every month."

(Andrea) "What support do you need?"

(Gemma) "I'll need to contact my supervisor to learn what I can share."

Celebrating the Results

It became clear that in each session with Gemma, we reviewed her goal, studied the completed actions, and I acknowledged her accomplishments by affirming the positive steps she had made (ICF, Core Competencies #11, 2019). At one point, Gemma had limited options, so I asked if it's ok for me to offer some suggestions, which kept Gemma in the driver's seat (ICF, Core Competencies #9, 2019). When needed, I draw on my experience. I do not withhold suggestions to my coachee, which demonstrates my investment in them and their goal. This further establishes our partnership approach.

Upon reflection, I could ask more questions in the *Habits* step, such as, "Will there be any barriers getting in the way or how can you sustain your progress?" With regular scheduled Zoom meetings, Gemma expressed that these helped her stay on track (ICF, Core Competencies #11, 2019). This demonstrated my consistency and reliability, an important element of trust (Tschannen-Moran & Tschannen-Moran, 2010).

As I want to be the best coach I can be, I could seek more feedback, by asking "What has been the benefit of our conversation and what is clearer now?" I gained Gemma's permission to record our sessions, which I deleted upon completion (ICF, Code of Ethics #7, 2019). Using the *Growth Coaching International* reflection sheet to evaluate my coaching, I realised that when I compared our experiences, I took the focus off Gemma (van Nieuwerburgh, 2014). Through self-management, I will become more conscious of this by not searching for similar personal experiences (ICF, Core Competencies #4, 2019). I learnt that I should always ask, and never assume. Coming with a beginner's mindset and being socially aware is vital, as full potential can only be realised when coaches have the right intention and the right way of being (Tschannen & Tschannen, 2010).

I provided a lot of visual cues to indicate active listening (ICF, Core Competencies #5, 2019), such as nodding, eye contact and murmurs of agreement. Yet, at times, I did not give Gemma enough time to respond. Often, I would agree with Gemma's comments by adding more information or finish her sentences. I need to work on interrupting less and enhancing my listening skills (van Nieuwerburgh, 2014). When I'm listening at least 70% of the time consistently, I'll know I have improved.

In our final session, I came well-prepared and began with the scaling question. With the goal reiterated, Gemma said she started at 3 or 4, then moved to a 7, and now she is at 9.5. She said, "My level of confidence has improved when giving feedback, as others have commented that my feedback is very useful." Gemma said she realised why this goal was important to her (ICF, Core Competencies #8, 2019). By acknowledging her progress and new learning with specific examples, I was direct and honest when giving feedback (ICF, Core Competencies #7, 2019).

- You now use positive sentence stems.
- Your feedback is positioned from a place of strength
- You've completed every action except one, which the principal cancelled.

I acknowledged Gemma's learning, effort and progress and celebrated by asking about her level of satisfaction with her achievements (ICF, Core Competencies #11, 2019). To receive feedback on my coaching, I asked Gemma to share words that describe her coaching experience.

- Reflective (van Nieuwerburgh, 2014)
- Non-judgemental
- Safe to be vulnerable
- Not being told to do something
- Confide in someone I trust
- Enthusiastic and more positive about giving feedback
- Confronting- you don't realise what you're thinking until you discuss it

After providing thoughtful feedback, Gemma said, "I think I've achieved my goal!" She then asked when we could meet again to discuss her next goal. The session recordings and her feedback indicated that I had also achieved my goal of sustaining a high level of curiosity during our coaching sessions. Sensing a level of satisfaction and fulfilment, this successful coaching experience was mutually beneficial. Within and as a result of our partnership, our goals were achieved, and reciprocal learning was evident and celebrated.

References

Bungay Stanier, M. (2016). The coaching habit: say less, ask more & change the way you lead forever. Toronto: Box of Crayons Press

Campbell, J. (2016). Framework for Practitioners 2: The GROWTH model. In: C. van Nieuwerburgh (Ed.), *Coaching in Professional Contexts* (pp. 235–239). London: Sage. © Growth Coaching International

Campbell, J., & van Nieuwerburgh, C. (2018). *The leader's guide to coaching in schools* (1st ed.). Singapore: Sage Publications

Haan, E. (2008). *Relational coaching*. Chichester, West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

International Coaching Federation (ICF): Code of Ethics. (2019). Coachfederation.org. Retrieved 11 March 2020, from https://coachfederation.org/app/uploads/2020/01/ICF-Code-of-Ethics_final_Nov12.pdf

International Coaching Federation (ICF): Core Competencies. (2019). Coachfederation.org. Retrieved 16 March 2020, from https://coachfederation.org/core-competencies.

Jackson, P., & McKergow, M. (2007). *The solutions focus: the simple way to positive change*. London: Nicholas Brealey.

Tschannen-Moran, B., Tschannen-Moran M. (2010). *Evocative Coaching*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

van Nieuwerburgh, C. (Ed.) (2012). *Coaching in Education: Getting Better Results for Students, Educators, and Parents.* London: Karnac.

van Nieuwerburgh, C. (2014). *An introduction to coaching skills* (1st ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY
CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Learning Conversations with Future Leaders

A practice insight working paper by Julia Skinner and Lizana Oberholzer

Abstract:

The aim of this insights working paper is to reflect on how an experienced coach, and senior leader, deploys coaching skills without a prescriptive framework, to facilitate conversations. The piece outlines how rapport is develop, and how the coach develops a relationship of trust before moving forward, with key coaching strategies to support coachees in their practice.

Introduction:

The purpose of the practice working paper is to outline how an experienced coach collaborates with future leaders, and have leadership conversations with them to enable them to progress to future leadership roles. Van Nieuwerburgh (2017) highlights that coaching can be described as a learning conversation, and that it is a co-constructive relationship between coach and coachee. Buck (2020) points out that during learning conversations, there is often an important need for coaches and coachees to have a context and background conversation. The authors concur with those views, as it is often important to listen carefully, and to understand, to ensure that the needs of the coachee is fully met (Covey, 2004 and Van Nieuwerburgh and Love, 2019).

During Covid – 19, leaders needed a 'listening ear' more than ever, and reached out to learn more about how they can progress and move forward. It was an ideal opportunity to provide a 'kind listening ear', to help them to unpack their learning, explore where they are at, and to think about their next steps. With the tragic unfolding of the crisis, it not only caused, for some, a crisis within where they needed support to talk challenges through. For others, it provided an opportunity to engage as a reflective leader with coaching for the first time, as technology provided a chance to discuss practice with a critical friend, in the spare moments now available during online teaching and resource development. Some were busier than ever and needed a helping hand to talk through how to cope with the workload challenges. It is alarming to hear how much workload increased, and this is on-top of normal teaching challenges. The Teacher Wellbeing Index (Education Support, 2019) reported in November, that 72% of educators described themselves as stressed, and 74% of educators felt that they were unable to switch off from work. These figures are already worrying; however, during Covid-19, these might be even higher that what was reported then. Offering support through coaching, can help to support school leaders to cope with these

challenges more effectively. It is for this reason that it is believed that offering coaching, and a 'listening ear' is such an invaluable part of helping future and current school leaders to move forward.

How does a 'friendly listening ear' – approach to coaching work?

Similar to Buck's (2020) BASIC coaching model, the authors provide an environment where the background and context is explored first. The process is simple, it is a relaxed and supportive discussion, where disruptive or challenging coaching questions are asked which Thomson (2013) highlights as imperative to help the coachee open their minds to new possibilities and new beginnings. The questioning process is scaffolded and it starts with 'what' and 'how' rather than 'why' as Buch (2020) and Thomson (2013) both highlight that it might potentially challenging and threatening for the coachee to be asked why at the initial stages of the conversation. However, once the coaching relationship is stronger and there is trust, 'why' questions are often very effective to unpack key issues in depth.

The relationship of trust is vital, and offering a safe space is vital, as outlined by Thomson (2013) and Van Nieuwerburgh (2017). The need for a sense of safety is an important part of the learning conversation, and Maslow (1943) as cited in Cameron and Green (2015), outlines that learners or those we work with,

can only move to self-actualisation, once they feel a real sense of safety, belonging and their self-confidence is starting to increase. Coaching can be an emotional rollercoaster at the start, especially when a coachee discover what they really want to achieve, or how to move forward. It is often a cathartic experience for the coachee. There is often a very emotional response, whether it is anger or relief, and it is important that the coach provides a safe space for a coachee to feel that they are able to express themselves in this way if they need to. The coach's role is to anchor the conversation through questioning, careful clarification, and feedback to support and challenge. In addition, to extend and develop the coachee further, they are provided with opportunities to do further research and homework to help them to extend their learning, and an opportunity to reflect (Buck, 2016).

The process reflecting in and on practice (Schon, 1983) is key, and by allowing the coachee to have reflection time away from the meeting, they are provided with something to take away with them, and to think more deeply about next steps. This homework can be a reference to a website, someone to research or to do wider reading too. These activities, do not only give more value to the conversation, it allows the coachee to reflect and find the solutions within themselves (Hall, 2019)

LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY
CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Being a 'critical friend' enhances the coaching relationship further, when feedback is provided during the reflection opportunities at the start of the coaching meeting; however, this is only possible when there is a strong relationship of trust (Buck,2020). A direct approach works well, but it is important to build this on trust before you move things on in this way, and make sure that the coachee's needs are being met. Through requesting permission from coachees to have a more directive approach, is important to ensure that you are working with the coachee's agenda in mind (Blanchard et al, 2018, and Buck, 2020). Knowing when to be direct and when to be more supportive is key to ensure that the coach is able to help the coachee to develop.

Concluding and summarising meetings are important too, as this is when the goal is cemented, and agreed on, during the summary, the coachee is required to commit to the next steps and outline what will happen next and by when. It is often helpful if a coachee, has a notebook with them to take notes of what they agree to, but at times, a follow up email to summarise key points, and additional researches provides a helpful prompt from the coach.

To illustrate the approach, it was thought to share a short case study:

Mary, is a highly qualified and effective leader in her primary school, and a black and minority ethnic (BME) colleague. As Choudry (2019) as cited in Porritt and Featherstone (2019) outlines, that BME colleagues, lack efficacy, she exhibits traits of feeling less confident when applying for a senior leadership role. With two masters degrees, one in Law and the other in Leadership in Education, and previous experience as a Senior Leader (SL) she still feels she is not good enough to apply for a Deputy Headteacher role, or a Headteacher role. She is an esteemed and valuable member of a local school's governing body too. Mary approached us for additional coaching support. The secret, when working with Mary, is to develop a strong relationship of trust, not to overwhelm her with questions at the outset, listen to her concerns, and develop a clear understanding of her needs, before moving forward. Providing her with a supportive 'listening ear' helps her to share her concerns, challenges and openly discuss her next steps. The activities and tasks are also helpful as it enables her to find out more and to drive her own journey. She is able to open up more through the process, and gradually gains confidence in her ability. The empowering conversations helps her to take small incremental steps to ensure that she can progress to her goal to become a Senior Leader in her context.

By not using a prescribed framework allows Mary to settle quick, open up to the coaching conversation, and enables her to explore her

next steps with confidence, as she will need to as a senior leader. Pairing her up with a very experienced senior leader contributes to the success of the conversation, as Mary values the experience the coach brings to the table too.

To Conclude:

In a world where performativity, compliance and frameworks are often overworked, providing, coachees with a more informal coaching experience can make all the difference. Being an 'nuanced' coach, being able to select key coaching skills and tools to meet the need of the coachee is becoming more and more important (van Nieuwerburgh and Love, 2019). Providing a safe reflective space where meaningful learning conversations can happen is key. Nuanced coaches, make key judgements, aiming to meet the needs of their coachees, and often move away from the religious use of a set framework to guide the conversation. The key is to ensure that high quality questions are used, and that the coachee is supported and can set clear targets and goals to address issues. Unlocking other's potential through supportive conversations make all the difference.

References

Blanchard, K and Diaz-Ortiz, C. (2018) One Minute Mentoring: How to find and work with a mentor – and why you'll benefit from being one, UK: Thorsons

Buck, A. (2016) Leadership Matters: How leaders at all levels can create great schools. UK: Jon Catt Publications

Buck, A. (2020) The Basic Coaching Method: All you need to know to coach with confidence. UK: Cadogan Press

Cameron, E. and Green, M. (2015), Making Sense of Change Management: A Complete Guide to the Models, Tools and Techniques of Organisational Change, UK: Kogan Page

Covey, S.R. (2004), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, UK: Simon and Schuster

Teacher Support (2019) The Teachers Wellbeing Index.

Available: https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/resources/research-reports/teacher-wellbeing-index-2019 (Accessed: 10.06.2020)

Porritt, V and Featherstone, K (2019), 10% Braver: Inspiring Women to Lead Education, UK: Sage

Tomson, B (2013) Non-Directive Coaching: Attitudes, Approaches and Applications, UK: Critical Publishing

Van Nieuwerburgh, C. and Love, D (2019) Advanced Coaching Practice: Inspiring Change in Others, UK: Sage Publications Ltd

Coaching models in education

A think piece working paper by Ruth Whiteside

Introduction

For those of you new to coaching, it might seem bewildering when you type the word into Google – there are many models and terms out there! The purpose of this short working paper is to provide you with a little insight into some of the similarities and differences between models that you might come across.

A number of different coaching models, processes and associated acronyms have been developed by coaching practitioners to enhance and inform their practice, and provide a useful framework. These models are usually shared with the client in a transparent manner and help to facilitate the change and goal-focused process.

The models discussed in this paper are only a handful – but they are the models most associated with education. Specific models might be most suited to developing a bespoke programme for a school, say, or a leadership team. Other models are fairly broad and can be used in a range of contexts.

Any of the coaching models described in this paper might be useful within these broader contexts of coaching:

Leadership coaching: leadership coaching is an individualised process that builds a leader's capability to achieve short- and long-term organisational goals. Coaching is personalised, customised, usually conducted one-on-one for a defined period of time and with a specific purpose in mind, related to developing the leadership capacity of the person being coached.

Team coaching: working with a team, e.g. wider leadership team, to develop strengths and 'gaps' in effective practice. Facilitates team learning, develops a systems-thinking perspective, not afraid to confront ambiguity and dissonance, sets boundaries, maintains focus on long term view/goals. Requires engagement and 'buy-in' from the team as honesty even in the face of dissonance is vitally necessary to move the team forward.

1:1 coaching: tailored for the individual to define their goals, set timelines, explore options, so as to develop their efficacy, e.g. as leader, member of team, etc.

Models of coaching

PEER COACHING, e.g. Lesson Study UK.[22] Lesson Study is a powerful, professional learning approach that dramatically improves learning and teaching and the practice and subject knowledge of teachers. Originating from the Chinese Confucian tradition, Lesson Study has 140 years of history in Japanese schools and is increasingly used in East Asia, the US and Europe. Lesson Study is conducted by three teachers working in a triad to enable them to see more clearly what is happening in their classrooms. "Classrooms are busy places. Teachers make up to 30% more decisions in their lives than other professionals. Alone in their classroom, a teacher may see only five per cent of pupil interactions. Lesson study helps slow lessons down." This therefore allows the teacher to improve, innovate and transfer practice more effectively. Because is it three teachers working together, it is a more collaborative and therefore powerful tool to improve teacher skills and pupil outcomes. "It not only produces dramatic improvements in pupil achievement and professional learning, but it is also very popular with all who experience it."

COGNITIVE COACHING explores the thinking behind the teaching practice and considers what could be changed to improve outcomes, usually for pupils but with teacher's reflective practice also in mind. Models of cognitive coaching include:

SPACE - **S**ocial context, **P**hysiology, **A**ction, **C**ognition, **E**motion (Palmer, 2005). Cognitive behaviour coaching deals largely with the importance of recognising cognitions as determinates of emotional states and the resultant behaviours or actions.

GROW: This is perhaps the most recognisable and used model of cognitive coaching in all sectors. **G**oal – setting for the session, long and short term; **R**eality- checking to explore the current situation; **O**ptions – strategies and alternatives for action; **W**hat – what is to be done, **W**hen, by **W**hom and the **W**ill to do it (Whitmore, 2002)

ACHIEVE: Focusing on coaching as a sytematic process, the acronym stands for **A**ssess current situation; **C**reative brainstorming of alternative to current situation; **H**one goals; **I**nitiate options; **E**valuate options; **V**alid action programme design; **E**ncourage momentum. Model devised by *Dembkowski and Elridge (2003)*, [23] building on Whitmore's GROW model. This allows for more flexibility and a more individualised approach.

---

[22] https://lessonstudy.co.uk

[23] http://www.coachingnetwork.org.uk/information-portal/Articles/pdfs/CtC3.pdf

LASER: Learning; **A**ssessing; **S**tory-making; **E**nabling; **R**eframing. (Lee, 2003). A process of moving managers to leadership, originally in business but has useful application in education too. This is a less rigid model in that it allows for deviation off a linear path to encourage openness and risk-tolerance of new ideas.

POSITIVE: This model is very much focussed on the 'powerful coaching question' to develop clarity of thought and intention for the coachee. **P**urpose - what is it you want to achieve? **O**bservations - what have you tried so far? **S**trategy - what does success look like for you? **I**nsight - how committed are you in achieving this goal on a scale of 1 – 10? **T**eam - who will you share your goal with? **I**nitiate - when will you start to act on this? **V**alue - how will you celebrate your success? **E**ncourage - how are you going with your goals? (Libri, 2004) suggests this model builds on the GROW and ACHIEVE models.

OSKAR: Another recognisable and positive model, this one focusses on **O**utcome, **S**caling, **K**now-how, **A**ffirm & **A**ction, **R**eview. A solution-focused model suggested (Jackson, 2007). It involves a 'positioning' of where the coach is currently and looks at what is needed to ensure goals are met by the end of the process.

PRACTICE: This model also works on scaling the problem to be solved, through **P**roblem

identification; **R**ealistic, relevant goals; **A**lternative solutions generated; **C**onsideration of consequences; **T**arget most feasible solutions; **I**mplementation of **C**hosen solution; **E**valuation (Palmer S. , 2008).

All the models above involve some element of **solution-focused** coaching: e.g. Which factors are crucial in achieving coaching success as simply as possible? Which assumptions will help you to reach the goal as quickly as possible? Which activities should you avoid to maximize your efficiency as a coach? This approach might be described as a more succinct and direct alternative to traditional problem-solving methods of coaching.

INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING: (Knight, 2007) describes this coaching model as the coach being like a 'curator of knowledge', working with teachers in their classroom and developing their pedagogical effectiveness through feedback and goal-setting, the primary goal being 'to help students experience better learning and better lives'. The key principle from which all others are derived is this:

'At its core, a partnership approach is about treating others the way you would like to be treated. We see coaching as dialogical. Instead of dictating exactly what someone should do to improve, we believe a respectful and collaborative dialogue paves the way to positive change.'

LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY
CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Conclusion

Ultimately, the coaching on offer will be specific to context and to experience. As a coach working in school, my coaching was primarily focused on the instructional coaching model. However, now I am working independently, my coaching is much more focused on working with clients as a 'guide on the side', enabling them to reach their own conclusions. In terms of educational contexts, the following definitions may be useful:

'Unlocking people's potential to maximise their own performance…helping them to learn rather than teaching them.' (Whitmore, 2002)

'Coaching is a method of work-related learning that relies primarily on one-to-one conversations.' (Haan, 2008)

'Coaching is a human development process that involves structured, focused interaction and the use of appropriate strategies, tools and techniques to promote sustainable and desirable change for the benefit of the coachee and potentially for other stake-holders.' (Cox, 2008)

'The art of facilitating the performance, learning and development of another.' (Downey, 1999)

However, a word of caution, and one we need to remember if coaching is done 'in-house' and linked to performance management:

'Teachers do not resist making changes; they resist people who try to make them change.' (Tschannen-Moran, 2010)

….and if this is the case, then we have to question the integrity and impact of the coaching.

References

Cox, B. a. (2008). *The Complete Handbook of Coaching.* Sage.
Downey, M. (1999). *Coaching and Mentoring.* Kogan Page.
Haan, E. d. (2008). *Relational Coaching.* John Wiley and Sons.
Jackson, P. &. (2007). *The solutions focus: Making coaching & change SIMPLE.* London: Nicholas Brealey.
Knight, J. (2007). *Instructional Coaching - a Partnership Approach to Improving Instruction.* Corwin.
Lee, G. (2003). *Leadership coaching: From personal.*
Libri, V. (2004). Beyond GROW: In search of acronyms and coaching models. *The International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching* .
Palmer, E. a. (2005). SPACE: A psychological model for use within cognitive behavioural coaching, therapy and stress management. *The Coaching Psychologist*.
Palmer, S. (2008). The PRACTICE model of coaching: towards a solution-focused approach. *Coaching Psychology International*.
Tschannen-Moran, B. a. (2010). *Evocative Coaching.* Jossey-Bass.
Whitmore, J. (2002). *Coaching for Performance.* John Murray Press.

Coaching to Empower a Culture of Autonomy

A practice insight working paper by Cath Proffitt

Introduction

It's a tough educational landscape and one that keeps changing, but one reality that doesn't alter is that teachers' learning and development underpins school improvement and provides a vehicle for raising attainment and achievement. At the Halifax Academy, West Yorkshire, continually reflecting and testing different tactics, facilitated by feedback teaching and learning conversations with colleagues, is a concrete cycle for building a whole school learning culture. There are constraints to the level of coaching that school systems allow and schools develop their own unique approaches to coaching, but with this is mind, I think there is a relevant question which is powerful to look at not only from a big picture perspective, but a solution focused approach too; are we facilitating coaching that is likely to make a difference to teaching and learning?

Improvements in teacher skill and classroom practice 'cannot be divorced from improvements in teacher knowledge.' (Hill, Blazar & Lynch, 2010). The term 'divorced' is a powerful word both in terms of its definition of permanence and dissolving connecting parties. Could it follow then, that the connections between teacher skill and classroom practice are built on a foundation of permanence; a result of shared values, where understanding, communication and problem solving are inseparable drivers in creating a culture of autonomy - an autonomy that underpins critical thinking around teacher pedagogy and practice? In this article, I explore the philosophy and strategies that have shaped the culture of coaching where I work.

Embracing educational philosophy

Reflecting on the starting point for our coaching practice, it was important for the teaching and learning team that coaching was built on a regulated field, a field that had quality assurance criteria and a non-hierarchical approach that was built on non-judgmental conversations. It was to be an incremental change over time, a catalyst for change by creating a sense of possibility with the belief that coaching should be based on relationships rooted in mutual respect where colleagues valued collaboration and reflection. Alongside this was the vision that coaching would foster enculturation, building a strong dialogic platform on which teaching and learning could be shared and ideas cultivated and fostered. Coaching was to be a strategy that was widely understood and skilfully utilised and ultimately become part of

policy and practice where 'staff are expected to take responsibility for their own individual professional development' and 'identify areas where they might improve and extend their professional knowledge, understanding and practice in order to improve their effectiveness.' (The Halifax Academy CPD Policy). It is without doubt that tensions can be created when a new vision pulls against a culture that already exists. Taking steps to involve the whole school team in the vision, and valuing a coaching culture of critical thinking that can ultimately underpin the drive to continuously improve results, supported the healthy culture of critical thinking that has been cultivated. We shouldn't see the latter as a problem or a dilemma, but a drive in performance.

Curiosity. A powerful elixir for learning and critical thinking

Developing a culture of critical thinking required the development of curiosity. As teachers, curiosity is at the forefront of facilitative thinking in the classroom. We use curiosity as a driver to push student thinking and make their thinking visible. It is no secret that this makes learning more enjoyable and effective in that it pushes students to seek out answers to questions. It seems fitting then, that if we are encouraging curiosity in the classroom, we should be developing teaching and learning curiosity in ourselves - how can I

use prediction through reciprocal reading to connect to prior knowledge or content? How effective is dual coding in creating a platform for spiralling back and layering knowledge? Questions like the examples given are framed within the first of the 'coaching 4' at the academy; 'focus' followed by 'findings', 'feedback' and 'forward', a strategy used to shape our reflective thinking process and guide our dialogic coaching. Fine tuning and adapting practice around a focus keeps teachers progressing in the right direction. We never stop learning because life never stops teaching. Being curious collaboratively generates teaching and learning conversations with a real sense of distributed leadership and the autonomy to explore personalised pedagogy. As Daniel Willingham notes in his book 'Why Don't Students Like School?' it's the question that stimulates curiosity – being told the answer extinguishes curiosity before it can even be ignited. For both students and teachers alike, curiosity needs to be fostered and valued.

The Coaching Four. A framework for a culture of critical thinking

The 'Coaching Four' is the academy's coaching framework. It is a platform for self-reflection and for the growing of dynamic learning

conversations. It draws on coaching skills and techniques that can result in deeper levels of critical thinking and reflection, as well as enhancing the teaching voice and agency. It is supported in a collaborative whole school learning culture with the aim of fostering curiosity and getting to that moment of self-discovery – curiosity isn't the icing on the cake; it is the cake itself.

Using descriptive data to generate findings makes our classroom actions visible and supports in envisioning a new solution to a recurring challenge. Motivations and values come into the fore too. A strong vision supported by aims and values serves to underpin the coaching conversations that take place. Each question that generates the coaching conversation is part of a larger classroom culture. It is the 'manifestation of a much larger motive and agenda about learning, its purposes and its processes.' Ritchhart et al (2011). With this in mind, coaching conversations have to be both authentic and regular. Their purpose is to drive continuous quality change and foster autonomy.

Focus Example	Findings	Feedback	Forward
Gender balance of live feedback given	Movement chart: a visual representation of teacher movement	Tell me about When did you feel . . . What do you see? How would you like it to be? Which . . .	What's become clearer now? We've arrived at the idea that . . . How would this look if . . . How will this impact on . . . What will you see . . .
Frequency of students asking questions against teacher questioning	Tally: counting frequency of actions		
Time given for student collaboration/reflection compared to direct instruction	Timings: stopwatch		
Quality of teacher and student dialogue/word frequency	Script: specific words/phrases teacher and student		

Thinking needs to be valued on the same level as curiosity. Thinking is complex and within an organisation there is no shortcut for experience. But if experience can be captured in a 'learning framework' then perhaps curiosity and the learning it brings can be navigated more quickly, increasing effectiveness as the thinking is focused and hones in on the questions that matter. We model our thinking all the time in the classroom to positively affect the perceived importance of a task and increase self-regulated learning. Perhaps our task as educators should be seen as no different. Modelling our own critical thinking becomes imperative for us to keep focused on pedagogies, to keep reflecting on and self- regulating our own approaches. With new insights into neuroscience, the teaching and learning landscape looks different. A growing understanding of metacognition and self-regulation has illuminated a culture of pedagogical practice that perhaps was not as much understood in the classroom as it is now. This has created a new lens through which pedagogies can be looked at and explored, further generating reflective questions around classroom culture, fostering understanding and strengthening professional independence.

Developing coaching skills such as 'asking the right question at the right time' draws upon experience and knowledge. It also requires great listening skill too. If conversations are to encourage pedagogical reflection, then findings intrinsically linked to the focus need capturing for productive feedback. Using descriptive analysis can provide the stimulus for uncovering patterns and inform and improve decision making in the classroom, capturing 'teacher characteristics' and the educational opportunities provided. It can also help to 'tell the teaching and learning story' which the coachee is reflecting on.

Focusing on the Forward

Since embracing coaching at the academy, it certainly has had and is continuing to have many benefits. Coaching has raised self-awareness, deepened self-reflection and strengthened professional trust – key ingredients in a whole school learning culture. It has been a multiyear process with yearly goals and organisational goals. Reflective note taking and building video snapshots of best practice have been and are still a central part of the mechanism. Coaching at the academy is a powerful learning platform where thinking is valued, visible and actively promoted. It is a platform on which teachers at the grass root level are empowered to take ownership of creating a culture of thinking in their schools; the culture of thinking that is growing autonomy and learning pathways that are continuous.

The Coaching Continuum and Lockdown

The 21 Century challenge of Covid-19 is testing of any educational establishment and its systems. The 'Coaching Four' framework, despite the absence of an 'in house' environment, is continuing to live and breathe as the system of collective and collaborative learning and has generated a different reflective lens in the collective learning culture. The focus of this lens has been sharpened around the challenges of remote learning. The sense of unity and shared understanding within this framework, rooted in mutual respect and nurtured within a pedagogical framework, continues to provide great opportunity to reflect openly about teaching and learning successes, issues and goals.

References

Ritchhart, R., Church, M., & Morrison, K. (2011). Making thinking visible: How to promote engagement, understanding, and independence for all learners. San Francsico: Jossey-Bass.

Hill, H. C., Blazar, D., & Lynch, K. (2015). Resources for teaching: Examining personal and institutional predictors of high-quality instruction. AERA Open, 1(4), 1-23.

Evaluating the Barnardo's YouTurn Intervention:
A prevention and early intervention programme in Croydon, Lambeth and Southwark

A research working paper by Corinne Holden and Christian van Nieuwerburgh

As the numbers of young people participating in this work are limited Barnardos wish to indicate that such a small sample of young people, despite the feedback, may not be representative.

Introduction

The YouTurn project, ran from 2016 to 2019 to support young people at possible risk from gang involvement and potential for violent behaviour across the London boroughs of Croydon, Lambeth and Southwark in communities that are predominantly black and minority ethnic. The project was run by Barnardo's with funding from The Big Lottery Fund's Reaching Communities Programme (tnlcommunityfund.org.uk, 2018). Referral to the scheme could be by anyone including social services, police, schools and parents/carers. The project employed one manager and 3 practitioners at any one time.

The programme was holistic in design with a 3-fold approach including:

A six-week programme for family and carers including twice monthly family forums and once weekly meetings.

 A six-week programme across entire schools working with young people in an age-appropriate way including group sessions and assemblies.

Six months of intensive support on a one to one basis.

Although the YouTurn project also held sessions for parents/carers and included a dedicated support for young women it is the provision of school group sessions and individual support that are considered here. This paper is written from a report into the effectiveness of the project commissioned by Barnardo's.

Method

The original target was to recruit at least 4 workers and 6 young people to examine their experiences of the programme and it was thought this would provide a representative sample for qualitative analysis.

Unfortunately, however, only 3 workers and

2 young people were able to be interviewed. Ethical approval from Barnardo's was sought for this evaluation with both Barnardo's staff and researchers working in collaboration. Interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim by the researcher in order to be as familiar as possible with the data and the transcripts analysed through thematic analysis (Clarke and Braun, 2016)

It was agreed that a coaching approach should be used as a way to facilitate gathering as much data as possible whist avoiding additional content being contributed by the researcher. Semi structured interviews making use of Socratic questioning, active listening and giving space to participants was particularly useful in eliciting full answers and gave both cohorts the opportunity to fully engage with the interview process.

Findings and discussion

The following themes emerged from the analysis and each are discussed here along with the findings from both young people and YouTurn workers. Notably, the themes identified were very similar for both groups.

Increased Engagement

'I think people at school have noticed that I was coming to school more often and it made me feel good that they noticed … if it goes

unnoticed it's, it's kind of draining, but it made me feel happy that everyone was saying that I was trying a lot harder.'

According to YouTurn staff, a positive change in engagement has been seen in the young people throughout the time of the intervention which has been noticed by parents, school staff and social workers with positive feedback from professionals and parents alike. The nature of the change in young people was from being extreme in reaction to more measured and thoughtful, achieving a level of maturity. This change was shown to have a knock-on effect to all those engaged with that young person probably due to the promotion of good behaviour and increased communication. One YouTurn worker noted 'School, family, it really impacts the family from the outside, education wise, peers, attitudes' The young people themselves appreciated how their outlook and behaviour changed probably because of reflection encouraged by the project 'I think a few people have noticed that as I look back and evaluate and observe myself and other people, they see that I am bit more laid back because I don't tend to get in all the fuss and all the commotion'. The young people interviewed for this evaluation reported that they have become happier and

felt they had more resilience and independence.

Workers thought that although parents had initial apprehension with their child being referred they were pleased as they started to understand their perspectives and could see the benefits of involvement, evidenced by one worker stating 'the reason why the parents are now sticking with us … is because they can see the change we have probably made in their child's life.' Staff felt they had particular success in getting young people back into school with comments such as 'The school commented last week 'Oh he's been in; he's been on time …. we have actually observed a noticeable change in the behaviour' Figures from the end of year report [a] showed 60% of young people involved in the project had been influenced to improve their attendance.

Place of Safety

'It's like someone is there for me but if it wasn't, I don't know what it would be like without that'

Young people valued having someone they trust in order to talk and who they believe will understand 'If at any time … I wanted to talk about anything I was able to. I didn't feel like I had to keep it in. I was able to express how I felt if there was an issue.' Young people

pointed out that it is good to talk to someone like themselves, as those staff members will be more likely to appreciate their situation, though it is uncertain as to whether this is this is actual and perceived similarity (Sprecher, 2013). According to the Children's Commissioner Anne Longfield 'the single most important thing is for them to is have a relationship with at least one trusted adult who can help divert them away from gangs and access other services' (Longfield, 2019).

YouTurn workers appreciated that young people need someone 'safe', with whom young people can be themselves and are free to 'have an outburst'. Young people confirmed they wanted someone who will listen and explain things they do not understand and discuss matters they feel are relevant and meaningful to them. It was important for the young people that this discussion took place with someone outside the family and their particular concern was around issues of a personal nature in which they felt it would be inappropriate to ask for advice within the family 'Sometimes when it's like family, because it's close to home, you would think it was easier, but sometimes it's not, because the issue may be there or you just don't feel like talking to your auntie about some certain stuff.'

YouTurn workers are able to talk to young people in a way they will understand 'Young

people have to feel very comfortable in order to still communicate with you. I have got a young person … I meet with her once a week, but in between our sessions I can hear from her about 2 or 3 times in a week… Because something, it could be the littlest of things that has happened, and she can pick of the phone…those communication lines are always open, so we are able to understand one another.' The accessibility of a professional to the young person by phone in order to share both problems and positives was highlighted by both cohorts. This allowed young people and staff to brainstorm strategies for dealing with situations as they arose, hopefully leading young people to make better choices having thought through the consequences with an independent party. One YouTurn staff member identified that young people are often scared as borne out by other recent work by Barnardo's, with fear leading to knife crime (Barnardos.org.uk, 2019). It has been shown that 34,000 children in the UK have been the victims of a violent crime in the past 12 months and either are a gang member or know a gang member and early warning signs have shown that this trend is due to rise (Longfield, 2019). This makes having someone to turn to and accessible vital in helping young people deal with the fear and stress, collaboratively coming up with ways for dealing with situations. As YouTurn dedicated support was for 6 months staff

members believed this gives time for ways of thinking and how to behave in situations to become ingrained.

Increased confidence and self-esteem

'I feel more confident in myself.'

In the end of year report[a] 40% of young people said that they had increased self-esteem with comments such as 'It makes me feel like a leader, strong, like a more-stronger person' and that it enabled them to be 'the best version of themselves'. Staff members saw a difference in terms of their anger or shyness to a more mature and self-assured outlook. Young people and staff reported having genuine conversations allowing young people to see the value of what they have to say.

In one to one sessions young people were given ownership and allowed to set the agenda, whilst group sessions on topics such as identity and relationships were reported to be effective. The reflective nature of conversations and the exploration of ideas was reported to have led to greater self-awareness. Young people feel their voices are often not heard within family, school, community and society and having someone to talk to and sometimes act as an advocate, led to them being able to give voice to their

thoughts 'I just felt like, maybe. I wasn't being heard and as I have started the project it has given me like a voice' Working on how young people present their opinions and views in a calm, orderly manner was thought to have helped them be listened to and feel valued 'I think I have become a happier person and I think I have matured in a sense that, I am no longer like afraid about talking about stuff or trying new things'.

Better Relationships

 'I tend to not stay with the crowd, maybe I could have got into something bad, but yeah, I have been able to sort it out now.'

Participants reported increased confidence, finding non-aggressive ways of putting a point across and benefits in reflecting on their own feelings and those of others. You Turn staff worked on helping young people realise what good and bad relationships are like both in group and one to one sessions which have led young people to consider their choices and changed their attitudes, as one young person asserted 'I can say that I don't like it or, I shouldn't have to constantly feel like I have to be someone else.'

The relationship between the young people and YouTurn worker developed over the time of the intervention with one participant describing workers as 'older, wiser friends' who can help them through difficult situations 'especially with the leaders that we have, they have helped me look at my life and look at the people that I'm with and that I am hanging around with.' While workers acknowledged that 'We are able to build that relationship with them, help them not just to access to the support but also to grow with them' but that it often took time for young people to engage as they may be unused to having new people in their lives. Because YouTurn staff work with families as well as young people, they are able to observe the family dynamic, have supportive conversations with parents and broker solutions 'Just helping build those relationships. Because a lot of the time, they are damaged, and they are broken or there is mis-communication.' . This was in common with a report by the Children's' Commissioner in February 2018 in which an holistic and sustained approach has been reported it be more likely to have an impact. In an article from Medical Humanities (Connor, 2017) findings were that early intervention, involving all stakeholders in the life of a young person and effective intra-agency working is necessary to ensure that mental health issues do not suffer long term deterioration.

Conclusion

A common thread throughout interviews of both young people and staff was that they wanted the intervention to continue because they believed in the success of the project. Unfortunately, due to funding the YouTurn project was unable to continue past October 2019 though workers referred young people to other programmes. That themes were common to both groups suggest that both cohorts recognised the value of the intervention and young people thought that anyone given the chance to take part was 'lucky.' Despite evidence showing that there is a mixed response to these intervention programmes, and it is acknowledged that more research needs to be done into their effectiveness (Cox et al., 2016). YouTurn seems to have been very successful in reaching out to the young people in the boroughs concerned, which is due to the empathetic professionalism of YouTurn workers, the discretion to tailor interventions to the individual concerned, accessibility by telephone, allowing enough time for behaviour to become ingrained and relationships to develop, as well as the holistic approach of supporting all parties involved in a young person's life, seem to crucial to this success. This approach was shown to be effective from a search of the literature in the Early Intervention Programme Rapid Review (O'Connor and Waddell, 2015). Yet despite this is there is room for improvement, though interestingly, young people did not want any changes. Workers wished for a more joined up service by the various agencies within the young person's life which could lead to better outcomes. That intervention should start at an earlier time could also contribute to change possibly starting at primary school (Waddell and Jones, 2018).

The use of coaching techniques to facilitate evidence gathering contributed to the amount and quality of the data extracted from this study. Although the participants sampled were too small to make any recommendations for future projects of this kind, it is hoped that the experiences of the young people and workers can have a bearing on the design of future interventions.

[a] 2019-10-10 End of Year 3 Barnardos report

For more information on YouTurn see

https://localoffer.southwark.gov.uk/youth-offer/staying-safe/youturn-service/ and https://brixtonblog.com/2017/04/barnardos-launch-project-to-combat-youth-violence/43934/?cn-reloaded=1

LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY
CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

References

Barnardos.org.uk. (2020). [online] Available at:
https://www.barnardos.org.uk/sites/default/files/uploads/APPG%20on%20Knife%20Crime%20-%20Young%20people%27s%20perspectives%20May%202019.pdf [Accessed 13 Feb. 2020].

Clarke, V. and Braun, V. (2016). Thematic analysis. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 12(3), pp.297-298.

Connor, C. (2017). Listen and learn: engaging young people, their families and schools in early intervention research. *Medical Humanities*, 43(2), pp.124-129.

Cox, E., Leung, R., Baksheev, G., Day, A., Toumbourou, J., Miller, P., Kremer, P. and Walker, A. (2016). Violence Prevention and Intervention Programmes for Adolescents in Australia: A Systematic Review. *Australian Psychologist*, 51(3), pp.206-222.

Longfield, A. (2020). *Improving safeguarding responses to gang violence and criminal exploitation*. [online] Dera.ioe.ac.uk. Available at: https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/32954/1/CCO-Gangs.pdf [Accessed 13 Feb. 2020].

O'Connor, R. and Waddell, S. (2015). What works to prevent gang involvement, youth violence. [online] Eif.org.uk. Available at: https://www.eif.org.uk/files/pdf/preventing-gang-and-youth-violence-rapid-review.pdf [Accessed 13 Feb. 2020].

Sprecher, S. (2013). Effects of Actual (Manipulated) and Perceived Similarity on Liking in Get-acquainted Interactions: The Role of Communication. *Communication Monographs*, 81(1), pp.4-27.

Tnlcommunityfund.org.uk. (2018). *Big lottery fund – Preventing serious violence what works insights and examples from community and voluntary sector*. [online] Available at: https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/media/insights/documents/BLF_KL18-12-Serious-Violence.pdf?mtime=20190523162211 [Accessed 13 Feb. 2020].

Waddell, S. and Jones, N. (2018). *Intervening early to prevent gang and youth violence the role of primary schools* [online] Eif.org.uk. Available at: https://www.eif.org.uk/files/pdf/intervening-early-gang-youth-violence-primary-schools.pdf [Accessed 13 Feb. 2020].

The duty of the provider to acknowledge the novice status of the trainee teacher. 'Make the informal a little more formal'

A think piece working paper by Henry Sauntson

The prime role of the teacher educator is to enable the entry of qualified, prepared individuals into the teaching profession in order to enhance the outcomes of students. However, this is but the surface result of a complex and increasingly more difficult process that requires considerable thought, design and equity of approach, as well as suitable acknowledgment of the role of learning and cognitive science in the development of trainees; 'At the heart of teacher preparation programs is the need for teacher candidates to learn about learning' (NCTQ 2016)

Trainees are, in essence, novice learners within their particular domain. They have the subject or phase knowledge (or at least willingness to acquire this), coupled with some semblance of the application of taught skills in the wider world. However, the craft of the teacher requires more nuanced understanding of how students take on information, organize ideas, retrieve concepts and apply skills; not just knowing the answers already. Trainees therefore are faced with a tricky dichotomy – not only learning how to teach but also learning about how teaching requires a knowledge of how others learn –

two corresponding and coinciding schema to be developed. They are not only learning more about their subject in a domain and context specific way but also learning how to teach that developing knowledge base to someone who has less knowledge than they do.

Westerman (1991) stated that an understanding of the differences between Novice and Expert "can enable teacher educators to intervene in effective ways […] to help novice teachers develop expertise in teaching"; training providers therefore must develop an appropriate curriculum aligned to natural professional development in a new sphere; correct input at the correct time with interleaved support for basics; the schema of the trainee must have two simultaneous sections – their own subject knowledge and their understanding of how to impart that knowledge. There is no-one better equipped to provide a good concrete example or a relevant link to 'cultural capital' (in its broadest and most generic definition) for students than someone who is as yet unsullied by the institutionalised blinkers of teaching and has seen 'life in the real world' most recently(!) – we need to help ensure

that these examples and links are delivered appropriately to students in the manner most suited to their understanding, retention and ultimate retrieval. Essentially, how will trainees both learn to teach something they have been taught to an expert level and also learn to understand how their teaching is received, retrieved and applied by the novices in front of them?

There is always within the trainee the curse of knowledge, or at least perceived knowledge. We must be sensitive to the needs of all trainees and the varying subjective experiences they bring to their perception of the profession. Our approach must be equitable, acknowledging that 'one size fits few' (Ohanian, 1999) and tailored approaches are needed that pay heed to the spread of existing knowledge – both of subject / phase and the wider world – trainees have. As teacher educators we must prepare to deal with the dreaded 'curse of knowledge' but from an andragogic as opposed to pedagogic perspective.

Using Learning Science as a guide for novices

In their recent 'Learning by Scientific Design' insight paper, Deans for Impact consider the important of learning science within the realm of educator training, in particular when looking at the design of programmes and also

ascertaining the starting point for trainees in their development (which, according to Fullan (1992) means 'enabling teachers to develop, to voice and to act on their sense of purpose', so there are moral aspects at play too). Deans found that future teachers expressed views that 'do not align with the science of learning'; in essence, to develop better teachers we need to pay greater attention to programme design with the science of learning in mind so that 'future teachers both understand the basics of learning science, and are able to apply that knowledge in their teaching', hopefully to maximise efficiency and improve outcomes – 'if novice teachers possess a firm grasp of basic principles of learning science' then they will be better in the classroom.

Novice teachers 'represent dimensions of teaching (such as curriculum development, instruction, and assessment) differently' (Hogan et al 2003), and a large proportion of the difference between novice and expert is found in their perceptions of the classroom as an environment for instruction. Many trainees spend a lot of time observing others prior to embarking on leading lessons themselves but this is fraught with potential dangers and the establishing of misconceptions – novices do not possess the pedagogical knowledge or experience to identify the subtle application of teacher strategy, the nuance of decision

making, the responsive and formative actions of the teacher. Lyall and Aitken (1992) found that many trainees 'have rigid notions that prevent clear observation and reflection about the classrooms they visit in their new capacity as teachers' and that 'accurate reading [of the classroom] may be blocked by prior experience and the personal interpretation of that experience'; perception again.

To return to Westerman (1991) – 'expert teachers [think] about learning from the perspective of the student' and perform 'cognitive analysis of each learning task during planning, which they [adapt] to the needs of students during teaching'; teacher educators need to do the same. Acknowledge the novice status of the trainee, show empathy and design and plan accordingly when delivering course content and experience. We cannot simply throw a trainee into a classroom to observe for learning when they don't know what learning looks like, have no experience of the environment or minimal understanding of the teacher's craft. Observation is for honing and evaluating developing skills, not forming new ones. Trainees have to understand the science and the art behind the delivery before then attempting to recreate it in their own context – 'teacher candidates possess a shallow understanding of basic principles of learning science – and, perhaps

as a result, they struggle to make instructional decisions that are consistent with our best scientific understanding of how students learn' (Deans 2020). This takes us back to the need to provide empathetic opportunities for trainees to develop – training that can be subjective and contextualised as opposed to generic and all-encompassing; 'novices should be given guidance and practice in seeing the learning task and, indeed, the entire school situation, from the students' perspective.' (Westerman 1991). When the trainee understands the basic cognitive principles behind the acquisition of knowledge they can then begin to place them at the forefront of the observations of other practitioners, making this a far more context-rich and formative experience where 'seeing' is prioritized over 'looking'. Klein and Hoffman (1993) stated that 'novices see only what is there while experts can see what is not there'; essentially, novices simply observing lessons gives no greater support or structure to them beyond that of a superficial understanding of the energy and intensity required in delivering content to a range of learning abilities. To look again at the NCTQ report, 'Teachers must know how to promote learning and make it stick. If students absorb something for the moment, but can't retain or recall information later, they haven't really learned'. How many trainee teachers truly realise this?

We have to be the 'gate-keeper'; the provider of the appropriate content to ensure that we develop informed and reflective practitioners who are capable of thinking for themselves but only after they have been given the tools with which to do so; we cannot let novices simply absorb everything they may read or be exposed to without first teaching them how to be critical and contextual consumer of it – the NCTQ report showed that in reality many teacher-educator textbooks propagate myths around cognitive science associated with learning or deal with it on a surface level: 'the lack of emphasis on cognitive strategies that are most likely to be effective in the classroom is hard to overstate'. In their excellent 'Understanding How We Learn' (2018), Yann and Weinstein tell us that 'teachers face the gargantuan task of integrating information from a myriad of sources in order to best help their students learn'; our role as teacher educators is to bridge that gap, act as the funnel and promote the most effective strategies at an early stage in the development of the teacher, lest misconceptions be allowed to both propagate and embed. In 2013 Laski et al looked at Teacher Educators' perceptions and use of cognitive research and, although limited to the field of mathematics, found that 'instructors' perception of the importance of the research predicts their incorporation of it in their courses' – essentially, if the teacher educators themselves are not appropriately knowledgeable or informed then the access to the most relevant strategies and theory is limited for the trainees themselves, who may then turn to the textbooks that the NCTQ found so flawed or lacking in cognitive understanding and its practical application. Quis custodiet ipsos custodes, perhaps, in the world of ITT programmes?

Who educates the educators?

Well, that is an issue that at best is institutional and at worst endemic; the best professional learning is iterative (TDT, 2015), sustained and delivered by experts, but as Timperley stated in 2008, 'professional learning requires different approaches depending on whether or not new ideas are consistent with the assumptions that currently underpin practice'. Teacher educators must be prepared to have their practice challenged too if they are to help acknowledge and cater for the novice status of the aspiring teacher. To continue with Timperley we could extrapolate to the in-school mentors of the trainees as well – 'Teachers are diverse in their understandings and assumptions about students and how they learn, what counts as valued knowledge, and how best to teach it'; if this diversity is then encompassed, without challenge or

consideration, into the fabric of the training course then more gaps may appear and more may be left untouched or visited. Context is essential of course, but teacher educators need to calibrate their approaches with that of their mentors to ensure that the novice, formative, 'sponge-like' state of the trainee is appropriately catered for; we want to sculpt teachers who are open to new ideas but able to contextualise them, not products of a singular institution or area that may or may not be a microcosm of the wider world of education. The role of the provider can be further underpinned: 'Expertise external to the group of participating teachers is necessary to challenge existing assumptions and develop the kinds of new knowledge and skills associated with positive outcomes' (Timperley 2008) and that 'sustained improvement in […] outcomes requires that teachers have sound theoretical knowledge, evidence-informed inquiry skills, and supportive organizational conditions'. Teacher educators must train the trainees and also support the mentors to ensure that the training is iterative and consistent; clarity of message, calibration of approach – none of Harp & Mayer's 'seductive details'!

Implications for Mentoring?

The mentor, we hope, is an 'outstanding practitioner' (Carter Review 2015) so they have the expertise to differentiate certain things within a classroom. Hogan et al (2003) found 'clear differences in the way expert and novice teachers organize their thinking' and went further into the different representations of teaching provided by Experts and Novices; they found that the cognitive components influencing the ways teachers represent different aspects of teaching included 'a more elaborate schema, deep knowledge of content, and the propensity for goal-oriented thinking' Hogan et al 2003). This then raises the issue of a poorly chosen or under-experienced mentor offering a different set of perspectives to an expert for their trainee when observing teaching or providing feedback. Again, the onus here should fall on the provider.

The key to the success is collaboration, calibration and shared beliefs but above all the essential aspect - context. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) explore the work of Susan Rosenholtz in the 1980s and identify how 'standardized instructional practice', lacking in equity, leads to 'learning impoverished' settings where 'uncertainty, isolation and individualism' become a 'toxic cocktail'. They draw conclusions around the access that teachers have to new ideas, but also the fear of implementing them in a performance-managed environment where mistakes can be costly to a career, and therefore breed institutionalized conservatism' and create a

'stuck' school culture. Teacher education needs to break this cycle from the first stages of development – create the 'moving' culture where teachers believe that 'teaching is difficult', they 'seek help' and they never stop 'learning to teach' (Hargreaves and Fullan 2012); imagine a school culture of collaboration where every stake-holder in the development of an ITT student also held the humility to acknowledge that they too could learn, making mentoring and support mutual CPD of the highest order! The best 'collaborative cultures' acknowledge that 'teachers have purposes and commitments of their own' but are founded on trust and relationships; they build 'social capital', 'accumulate and circulate knowledge and ideas' – and who is more up-to-date than the trainee? They have the knowledge but not the experience! – and they 'value individuals and individuality because they value people in their own right' (Hargreaves and Fullan 2012). In a sense the ITT provider and teacher educator programme has the power to instil an ethos of collaboration and collegiality for positive purposes, creating learning communities that strive to raise standards from the very start of a career and to continue that throughout a teaching life. As far back as 1992 Fullan had stated that 'teacher development and implementation go hand in hand'; our approach needs to value over equity over equality. We must consider, as Fullan reminds us, the trainee as a person, the trainee's purpose, the context in which they work (including experience level) and the culture within the institution, including that present within the mentor or coach ascribed to them. We must not forget the importance of culture, agency and personalisation. A culture of collegiality, as Hargreaves (1994) reminds us, is imperative; 'Teacher collaboration can provide a positive platform for improvement', but this collaboration has to be managed. Established common goals 'strengthen teachers' sense of efficacy, their beliefs that they can improve the achievement of all their students, irrespective of background'. Hargreaves goes on; 'Culture carries the community's historically generated and collectively shared solutions' and that 'it forms a framework for occupational learning'. Here we begin to consider educational landscape and context also. Essentially, if teacher educator programmes want to fully embrace what a teacher does and why they do it, they must 'therefore also understand the teaching community, the work culture of which that teacher is a part. Cultures of teaching help give meaning, support and identity to teachers and their work' (Hargreaves 1994).

Conclusions

Deans for Impact: 'Learning science may thus be embraced by teacher educators as

providing a shared vocabulary for pedagogical practice'; the word 'shared' is so vital here. We know that novice teachers 'lack the experiential knowledge to help them modify tasks and lessons in ways that may foster productive student learning' (Deans 2020) and that teaching is not easy – 'novice teachers face significant challenges early in their teaching and are unlikely to learn the skills necessary to overcome these challenges if their learning is left to chance' (Deans 2016). To turn to the Ambition Institute's Learning Curriculum of 2019 – '"One important task for teacher educators is helping teachers to understand how students learn and to use this knowledge in their teaching'.

If we do not acknowledge, embrace and cater for the novice status of trainees and the relative novice status (within the discipline) of their mentors then we do ourselves and the profession a disservice. We must be equitable in our approach, collegiate in our methods and humble and trusting in the way we design our teacher educator programmes. In 2010 Professor Robin Alexander stated that 'teachers should be able to give a coherent justification for their practices citing i) evidence, ii) pedagogical principle and iii) educational aim rather than offering the unsafe defence of compliance' and argued that anything else is 'educationally unsound'. As teacher educators we must strive to realise those ideals.

References:

Cordingley, P. et al. (2015). Developing Great Teaching: Lessons from the international reviews into effective professional development. London: Teacher Development Trust.

Hargreaves, A; Changing Teachers, Changing Times - Teachers' Work and Culture in the Postmodern Age; 1994; Cassell

Laski, Reeves, Ganley, Mitchell; Mathematics Teacher Educators' Perceptions and Use of Cognitive Research; Volume 7;1; 2013 International Mind, Brain, and Education Society and Blackwell Publishing, Inc

Timperley, H; 2008; Teacher professional learning and development; IAE

Hogan, Rabinowitz, Craven; Representation in Teaching: Inferences From Research of Expert and Novice Teachers; 2003; Educational Psychologist, 38(4), 235–247

Deans for Impact (2016). Practice with Purpose: The Emerging Science of Teacher Expertise. Austin, TX: Deans for Impact.

Deans for Impact (2020); Learning by Scientific Design; Austin, TX; Deans for Impact

Expert and Novice Teacher Decision Making Journal of Teacher Education 1991 42: 292 Delores A. Westerman

The Learning Curriculum 2.0; Explaining the science of learning to teachers: A handbook for teacher educators; H. Fletcher-Wood et al; 2019; Ambition Institute

Johan Lyall Aitken and Denis A. Mildon; Teacher Education and the Developing Teacher: The Role of Personal Knowledge; 1992; in Teacher Development and Educational Change; Ed. Fullan & Hargreaves; Routledge; 1992

https://www.nctq.org/publications/Learning-About-Learning:-What-Every-New-Teacher-Needs-to-Know

Hargreaves and Fullan; Professional Capital – Transforming Teaching in Every School; 2012; Teachers College Press; Columbia, USA

Yann, Weinstein; Understanding How We Learn; 2019; Routledge (Taylor Francis)

The potential of an Instructional Coaching approach in Initial Teacher Education and the Early Career Framework

A practice insight paper by Rachel Lofthouse

Coaching in education is often selected as a mechanism for change. Given the amount and rate of change demanded in education it is perhaps unsurprising that many models of coaching in education co-exist; each one offering a supportive practice based on a relationship between coach and coachee facilitated through dialogue. There are differences in the intended purposes of the coaching, the ways that dialogue is framed and the extent to which coaching forms an integrated part of a wider professional experience. Such variations and can be explained in part by the roles and responsibilities of both parties, both within and beyond the coaching situation.

'Coaching in education is a one-to-one conversation that focuses on the enhancement of learning and development through increasing self-awareness and a sense of personal responsibility, where the coach facilitates the self-directed learning of the coachee through questioning, active listening, and appropriate challenge in a supportive and encouraging climate.' (van Nieuwerburgh, 2012, p.17)

Instructional coaching; myth busting

There is a real buzz around instructional coaching (IC) in English schools and Initial Teacher Training and Education (ITTE) provision at present. It is also being posited as a mentoring model to support the Early Career Framework (ECF). IC has origins in the USA with probably the most significant proponent of it being Jim Knight (2007), who leads the Instructional Coaching Group. He has been working in this area for two decades.

Like other US imports into UK education some people who act as missionaries, seeding the new ideas into their own and other programmes. There is a risk that IC becomes a buzzword which is only superficially understood. It also might become a fad – good for the current time, but likely be abandoned when not done well or another new craze comes along. Myths are created, people gain weakly-founded guru status, and whole CPD programmes are rebranded to meet the new fashion.

So, let's dispel some myths by checking in with the language. Firstly, there is a long

tradition of 'instruction' being used to mean 'teaching and learning' in the USA. In the UK we tend to think of instruction as a command, or a direct communication. 'Direct instruction' and 'explicit instruction' is part of the pedagogic repertoire and not necessarily the principle teaching method.

In terms of language it is also worth noting that the IC model typically sits somewhere between what we tend to characterise as coaching and mentoring in the UK. Instructional coaches in the US are experienced teachers whose practice and training has allowed them to develop specific expertise. This does not mean that they 'instruct' but that they bring their expertise to bear within the coaching conversations. This vignette might help.

When our CPD coordinator announced we were going to start instructional coaching to improve teaching reading in Key Stage 1 I was quite worried. Would it add to my workload? Would it mean teaching to a formula? Our instructional coach, Sonia, is employed as Literacy Lead in the Multi Academy Trust. Instructional coaching is focused on specific teaching techniques, and Sonia seems confident in these and wants me to follow particular guidelines. Following coaching I have dropped some of my old practices. On the flipside, I am more confident in how I can use these teaching strategies and I understand

a bit more about the evidence for them. All KS1 teachers have been making more use of the same approaches, but Sonia's advice is always centred on me and my class and our discussions are based on that. It feels like the best bits of the mentoring I remember from my PGCE five years ago. We use the 'impact cycle' as a framework and sometimes video evidence of my lessons. The lesson observations and coaching sessions are time-consuming, but I think it is making me more effective in this bit of my planning and teaching.

It is also worth noting that IC done well has a strong social justice philosophy. It is about understanding how learning outcomes can be levered in ways that are not limited to improving test scores or grading teaching. It is significant that the greatest use of IC in the US has been in the teaching of reading, and this goes way beyond phonics or other single pedagogies to creating environments which invite reading and use reading as a key component of inclusion.

Each type of coaching in education is characterised by its own curriculum and pedagogy. The curriculum is the scope and detail of the content of the conversations and its links with the teaching and learning context. In some examples this curriculum is framed as part of pre-determined focus, while in others it emerges from discussions

between the coach and teacher. The specific coaching pedagogy includes the roles taken by the participants, the nature of the questions being asked, and the way that tools (such as video and pedagogic guidelines) are deployed to support reflection and planning. The coach's and coachee's level of engagement and their personal epistemologies, their understanding of and approach to the professional and conceptual knowledge to be explored, will also influence the potential for coaching as workplace learning. IC is no different.

Novice learning and seeking parity

An important part of any coaching practice is the partnership which is created and hopefully sustained. In the case of ITTE and the ECF this is between a teacher with some experience (mentor) and a novice (student or early career teacher) and is situated in the mentors' school context. There are two key aspects of this relationship that are significant. We need to reflect on the power dynamics that can be at play in the scenario (deliberate, implied and hidden) and we need to know something about how adults learn as novices in complex practice environments. In ITTE there is an inherent hierarchy built into mentoring, but this does not mean that is not possible for both partners to gain a sense of parity (Lofthouse and Thomas, 2017). IC can

be a positive place to build this based on the following characteristics (ibid, 2017);;

- shared labour for a common purpose which is characterised as follows

- Combined effort for a common purpose with a focus on students / pupils and their learning

- Parity and link to productive dialogue

- Working productively as well as building relationships

- A safe forum for professional challenge

- Making choices about practice beyond quality assurance and performance management type processes

Mark Dowley (a CollectivED Fellow based in Australia) recently wrote a blog (2020) in which he drew on research to explain that professional learning for teachers was typically grouped as focusing on one of three categories; teaching behaviours, content knowledge or strategic thinking, with evidence suggesting that the third category has the greatest positive impact on teacher effectiveness. As Mark writes '*It's not just what the teacher does, it's understanding what the teacher perceives that allows them to make the decision about what to do next.'* It is thus essential that IC includes this aspect.

LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY
CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Support and substance

One of the routines of mentoring in ITTE is that of passing judgement, with the mentor being the gatekeeper of the student teachers' transition towards qualified status. While this is part of the contract with the provider it is essential that it does not become the dominant stance. Few people (especially novices) thrive if they perceive that they will be judged in their every move. Having researched coaching over a decade it is clear that issues which support and disrupt it affect its perceived and actual success, and the cautionary tales are useful in diagnosing the potential pitfalls. Mentoring can be distorted away from the personal learning needs of the student teacher (Lofthouse and Thomas, 2014). The outcome can be that mentoring conversations are sometimes didactic or instructional, driven by target setting and checking, and do not always engage the mentee in proactive participation in professional dialogue. So, if IC is to be successful a supportive stance is crucial. At least some of this is achieved through the relationships that mentors and student teachers develop over time. As already stated, we need to be aware of power dynamics. We can work to ensure that each conversation and related activity in IC supports the development of a trusting relationship, with both the student teacher and mentor trusting each other to show up, to put the work in, and to pay attention to each other's contributions.

Being supportive does not mean reducing challenge. One way to create challenge in IC is by ensuring that the conversations are grounded in the lived experiences of the student teacher or early career teacher as they learn to teach, so that they are authentic and relate specifically to their own emerging practice. Scrutiny of practice, feedback, and target setting is thus shared, personalised and has recognisable validity. It is also essential to base the discussion on a sound knowledge base, both of effective mentoring and coaching techniques and of the pedagogic repertoire being developed. This is one of the reasons that in the original IC models the coaches have specific expertise (such as in teaching early reading) and enhancing and developing that expertise is part of their ongoing CPD. This solidity allows the conversation to have depth and to create opportunities for breadth.

Getting the practice right

In order to achieve the supported shared scrutiny needed to sustain the IC model it is necessary to use the process to shed light on practice and focus on detail. Without this the student teacher cannot gain the clarity from

which they co-create meaningful and realistic goals and targets.

The ability to do this is significantly enhanced if the right tools are used. The tools used by the coaches help to facilitate coaching as a developmental process. These include the use of video, the development of coaching guides for specific pedagogies, well-designed observation structures, a language to describe dimensions of coaching, an opportunity to recognise these and a framework and means by which coaching quality can be developed over time. While IC adopts successful professional learning routines is it important that it does not just become another busy set of procedures which you are asked to engage your student teacher in. This is where using the tools and principles with integrity and intelligence are vital.

Making it count

To have impact IC needs to create a space which supports reflection, both during the conversation and following it. This description (taken from a recent blogpost, Lofthouse, 2020) may seem beyond the remit of IC, but it is what IC can support in terms of developing attributes and behaviours needed by new teachers. *Reflection is a metacognitive process in which we review our actions and our decisions (either immediately or later), prompting ourselves to think through*

what happened and why. Reflection can be done individually or with others, it might have a written outcome, or simply lead to some deeper thinking or conversations about practice. Reflection takes us beyond the immediate and specific, for example prompting us to consider background factors or implications at a range of scales and time-frames. Reflection also gives us a chance to connect with our values and beliefs, the 'why' is not purely a procedural question, it is often an ethical one. This takes us to the level of critical reflection which involves us thinking more deeply about ethical and moral criteria and the wider historical or socio-political perspectives and contexts which frame our work as educators.

In our current anxiety about teacher workload it can be tempting to see time as a negative component of coaching or mentoring; the time taken to get trained and fit it in which cannot be spent on anything else. IC corrals resources and time and making the most of this is dependent on the integrity of the agreed 'rules' and how these are exercised by the mentor and student teacher, creating an appropriate division of labour. It is also possible to see the time taken for IC as a gift, giving time to prioritise the issues that need resolving as the student teacher learns and develops. IC sessions should be timely, in tune with what the realities of student teacher's

practice as indicated by the IC model. While both ITTE and ECF is time-limited in coaching terms time can also be considered as something which stretches out into the future, and sometimes the greatest benefit from coaching will be how it helps to shape and sustain professional formation which is the foundation for ongoing development.

Finally, there is evidence that many teachers at all career stages appreciate the opportunity to be coached; it allows them to feel listened to, part of a significant professional relationship and to have their own needs and interests addressed. While IC may seem like a new strategy to meet the demands of learning to teach it can also be one which offers a space to nourish ideas and be part of a well-balanced diet of professional learning experiences and expectations. There is a wellbeing aspect to all forms of coaching done well. Teaching will remain a complex practice and it is rare for teachers to feel that they have gained complete mastery, and even with experience their expertise is always contingent. The constant is that teachers' learning matters and IC can be a significant activity in support of this.

'When teachers' learning is based on their genuine assessment and understanding of pupils' learning they can start to make adaptations to their practice which can lead to real differences in outcomes. Coaching can provide a means by which these and other key principles can be achieved and thus teacher learning can be enhanced' (Lofthouse, R., et al., 2010, pp. 9).

References

Dowley, M. 2020. Coaching is more than strategies, it's also about perception https://leedsbeckett.ac.uk/blogs/carnegie-education/2020/06/coaching-is-more-than-strategies-it-is-also-about-perception/

Knight, J. 2007. *Instructional coaching: a partnership approach to improving instruction.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Lofthouse, R. 2020. Time to reflect? https://leedsbeckett.ac.uk/blogs/carnegie-education/2020/03/time-to-reflect/

Lofthouse, R., Leat, D & Towler, C. 2010. *Improving Teacher Coaching in Schools; A Practical Guide,* CfBT Education Trust (available at https://www.ncl.ac.uk/media/wwwnclacuk/cflat/files/coaching-for-teaching.pdf)

Lofthouse, R. and Thomas, U. (2014), "Mentoring student teachers; a vulnerable workplace learning practice", International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education, Vol. 3 No. 3, pp. 201-218. (available at https://eprint.ncl.ac.uk/pub_details2.aspx?pub_id=%20207274)

Lofthouse, R. and Thomas, U. (2017) Concerning collaboration: teachers' perspectives on working in partnerships to develop teaching practices, Professional Development in Education, 43:1, 36-56, DOI: 10.1080/19415257.2015.1053570 (available at https://eprint.ncl.ac.uk/211126)

van Nieuwerburgh, C. (Ed) 2012. *Coaching in education: getting better results for students, educators and parents.* London, UK: Karmac

Initial Teacher Training for Special Schools: an argument for specialist training

A think piece working paper by Karli Wilkinson and Ruth Jones

Aspiring special-school teachers are hard pressed to find a PGCE that is specific to their needs. This paper aims to look at the unique challenges that stepping into teaching in a special school presents and the gaps that may be present between a generic PGCE and the needs of a special-school teacher. It will provide a brief overview of PGCE experiences and challenges experienced during the early years of a career in special education. It draws on experiences of a PGCE course run in partnership with a group of special schools with two thirds of placements being in special school settings. As authors we are early career teachers based in a secondary special school teaching classes for students aged between 11-19 who are pre-verbal and have complex learning and medical needs. The school aims to help students develop the confidence and independence our students need to be safe and successful in later life.

The PGCE year is notoriously tricky to manage as you balance the academic demands with those from the placement. This balance is further tested when the academic content is at odds with what you are experiencing; the course focusing on early years and primary 3-

7, with many of the students taught on placements at a much lower developmental age. The marking criteria and standards you are expected to show an awareness of, and ability to meet, may be worlds apart from the opportunities presented during placements. Standards should be high but they should also be relevant to specific nuances of the role. The reality is that it requires two completely different approaches to teach SEND/inclusion in mainstream than within a special school and yet this is not reflected in the training given to potential teachers.

As a Primary teacher your subject knowledge refers to phonics, CVC words, numbers and number bonds. Your teaching strategies are presented to you in a vast toolkit of techniques and approaches that have been well tested. As a special-school teacher, your subject knowledge refers to stages of development, PECS, signing, "condition specific" knowledge, speech and language development, sensory regulation, emotional regulation and behaviour management to name just a few. The understanding of these hold the key to gaining the students' engagement and therefore the foundation of any "academic"

progress. For some students, the development of social and emotional regulation and understanding of who they are and where they fit in to society are the foci for the curriculum. These highly specialised areas of knowledge and the ability to apply the knowledge into the classroom are crucial elements in the special-school teacher's toolkit, but often are not introduced or learned until the NQT year, through the guidance of the mentors and coaches amongst the staff team. A maths teacher would not be expected to enter the profession with limited or no knowledge of the fundamentals of maths, but, as a highly specialised area of the teaching profession, that is the equivalent of what is expected of newly qualified special-school teachers.

The value of placements within special schools cannot be over-estimated. Each school has a different focus and approach to education, as well as a diverse cohort of students, and experiencing both the primary and secondary settings is very valuable training for a prospective special-school teacher. Reducing the time in special schools in favour of training in mainstream settings risks reducing the base knowledge level of new teachers.

As a mainstream teacher, you would be unlikely to manage a large team until well into your career, however this is exactly what is expected from the first day in a special school.

Teams can include HLTA's, SNTA's and lunchtime staff, many of whom have far more experience both within the specialist setting and with the students you are charged with leading. As a team leader, being expected to convey a vision confidently, using a combination of approaches, whilst developing the core knowledge and your own teaching style can be a challenge that distracts from the core business of teaching. The skills of leadership are often taught on middle and senior leader courses because that is when most of the profession require them, however there is a group of newly qualified teachers that need this knowledge sooner.

The wider role of a special-needs teacher must also be considered. Whilst mainstream teachers are increasingly expected to work with a range of professionals this happens on a frequent basis in a special school. Teachers must learn to work with and alongside nurses, care workers, physiotherapists, speech and language therapists as well as social workers. The team around the child is essential when facilitating the holistic development of the student, the special-school teacher is pivotal in these relationships. The teacher must be prepared to confidently work with families, many of whom are facing unimaginable challenges both in terms of behaviour, well-being, medical issues, palliative care and in some cases the death of their child. This is

challenging for teachers with years of experience, for those new to the profession the pressure on them, and those who mentor them, is immense.

As authors our success through the early years of our career has depended upon the skilful coaching and mentoring received from peers and senior staff. The role of our mentor included applying the criteria required of NQTs to the demands of the specific classroom and bridging the gaps between what was learned in the PGCE and the reality of the classroom. She ensured that standards remained high and criteria were met whilst also considering the stages of the students and overall demands that were being placed on teachers so early in their career.

As well as the formal mentor relationship, the ethos of the school is that staff are willing to listen and support new colleagues, sharing their experience or just being a sounding board. The mentoring conversations that were most successful were those with people who knew the pupils, the specific role of special-school teachers and had a particular enthusiasm for developing creative ways for the young people to learn and progress. Working in an environment where collaboration with, and supporting colleagues is encouraged and promoted has facilitated our development as teachers both within the classroom and beyond.

Without addressing these deficits, we are continuing to undermine the specialist nature of teaching in special schools. As a wider profession, with known recruitment and retention concerns, it is the responsibility of those within ITT to ensure that the teachers entering the profession are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to facilitate their growth into the role. The specific experiences and requirements of specialised settings should be included in conversation surrounding ITT and early career support if we are going to attract and retain the highest calibre of teacher.

A case study investigating the suitability of ONSIDE mentoring with Newly Qualified Teachers in a secondary school setting

A research working paper by Charis Hart

Abstract

This study sought to examine the impact of changing the enactment of mentoring in one setting on school based mentoring practice and Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) professional development, professional practice and wellbeing. This setting initially enacted mentoring through a directive mentoring approach but developed a more developmental style of mentoring through the use of ONSIDE mentoring (Hobson, 2016). This arose as a response to Hobson's (2016) identification of 'judgementoring' (a directive approach) as the dominant style of mentoring of NQTs by school based mentors in secondary schools in England. 'Judgementoring' was deemed to be harmful to the development and wellbeing of some NQTs (Hobson and Malderez, 2013). Two approaches were used to carry out the research, a case study using action research with two NQTs, and a self-study by the researcher with a reflexive approach through a process of heuristic inquiry. The NQTs participated in two semi-structured interviews, one at the beginning of the research process and a follow-up interview at the end. There were also a set of two observations of the NQTs practice which were conducted by a non-participant observer within the setting. The self-study used the medium of a research journal to explore impacts and perceptions of mentoring and research practice. The findings revealed that ONSIDE mentoring had a positive impact on NQTs professional development, professional practice and wellbeing in this setting, but also highlighted that a 'blended' mentoring approach (Allison and Harbour, 2009) combining both developmental and directive styles of mentoring was preferred by the NQTs.

Introduction

My specific case study focussed on two serving NQTs from the same study school. It began as a result of research conducted during investigations into the differing roles and perceptions of school based mentors (Hart, 2016; Hart, 2018). During this research, I read what I perceived to be a call to arms from Hobson (2016, p.16):

'...if they value and have a sense of responsibility towards these vulnerable learners [mentees], then...mentors must seek to avoid enacting or encouraging the enactment of judgementoring, and instead seek to maximise the significant potential benefits of mentorship.'

I discovered that judgementoring was defined as a mentor:

'...revealing too readily and/or too often her/his own judgements on or evaluations of the mentee's planning and teaching…[which] compromises the mentoring relationship and its potential benefits.' (Hobson and Malderez, 2013, p.90)

I realised this was how mentoring was enacted in my setting and resolved to undertake to explore differing mentoring approaches. One such approach (ONSIDE mentoring) was offered by Hobson (2016) to counteract what he saw as the effects of judgementoring in schools.

ONSIDE mentoring is '...an original, research - informed framework for mentoring beginner teachers.' (Hobson, 2016, p. 1). It consists of what Hobson (2016, p.19) refers to as '...seven imperatives of mentoring relationships' namely that mentoring should be: off-line (not hierarchical), non-evaluative and non-judgemental, supportive, individualised, developmental and empowering. This forms the Mnemonic ONSIDE which highlights the seventh imperative that mentors should be '...on the side of...their mentees' (Hobson, 2016, p.19)

This led to the focus of my present study. My aim was to adopt ONSIDE mentoring as a more progressively developmental approach within my setting and investigate its impact on NQTs professional practice, professional development and wellbeing. However, I also wanted to examine the impact of ONSIDE mentoring on my own mentoring practice.

Directive and developmental mentoring

Hobson (2016) in his creation of the ONSIDE mentoring framework has emphasised two different approaches to mentoring: directive and developmental. Manning and Hobson (2017) describe directive mentoring as one where the mentor takes responsibility for the direction of the mentoring relationship, directing, guiding and advising the mentee. This has its benefits in that NQTs may sometimes lack professional confidence and perceive directive mentoring to be a more supportive approach. However, the overuse of this approach can lead to the failure to nurture new teachers as critical and reflective practitioners (Hobson and Malderez, 2013) and stifle new teachers' abilities to develop their own identity (Lofthouse and Thomas, 2014).

By comparison, developmental mentoring seeks to empower the mentee by putting responsibility for the direction and development of the relationship within the

mentee's hands. The role of the mentor here is to reflect the mentee's own views and through coaching questions encourage the mentee to critically analyse their own development. Developmental mentoring therefore encourages both mentors and mentees to adopt a critical enquiry, evidence-based approach to their professional practice (Sankar et al, 2011).

In practice, mentoring is not such a clear-cut process as choosing one type of mentoring over another. Research has found that mentors will often choose the best mentoring approach based on the needs of their mentees (Collet, 2012) or develop a 'blended approach' (Allison and Harbour, p.3 2009), selecting the most appropriate elements of each style.

Methodology and Methods

The approaches I have chosen to carry out the work are namely a case study using action research in my work with participants and a self-study as a form of action research, with a reflexive approach through a process of heuristic inquiry in the development of my mentoring approach to the case study participants.

Methodology

The view of research as espoused by Thomas (2013, p. 145) and Maxwell (2012, p. 45) has encouraged me to prioritise the exploration of relationships and perspectives in my work. I have come to realise as a mentor and a practitioner researcher my impact on the NQTs I work with cannot be separated from my research and instead I should look to use this position to benefit the participants in the research, my own development as a coach mentor and the quality of the research that I can produce.

Action research

Finding a type of research that reflects my own positioning and the insider perspective I brought to the study was an important aspect of selecting action research. The knowledge that I was a researcher, a mentor and a learner meant that action research as a design frame could be used to develop the variety of action research cycles and approaches which would be relevant for these three differing but interconnected roles.

In my role as a researcher the focus of my action research would be on my research actions. This necessitated a more distanced, objective approach. As a learner, I decided to adopt a self-study approach to action research. My aim here being to explore how my positioning affected my ability to adopt a

new approach and how I positioned myself as a co-learner with the NQTs, this necessitated a more subjective immersion into the social context. I began to understand there was a need to create appropriate action research cycles for each role to help to give some structure and focus to the research. I was aware these cycles might not be clear cut and their overlapping nature would form part of the self-study action research process. These cycles were not clear at the beginning of the study; instead they developed organically as the study evolved.

Originally, I thought I only had two action research cycles: one relating to the structure and organisation of the research itself and one relating to the development of the NQTs through the mentoring process. These two cycles emerged because I wanted the focus of the study to be on the NQTs rather than myself as a mentor.

However, as I began to immerse myself in these two action research cycles I realised reflecting on my own positioning meant I must include myself as an active participant within the research to reflexively explore my own impact upon the ONSIDE mentoring process. This new cycle evolved into a self-study with a focus on my own struggles with developmental mentoring and how this cycle

interacted with and impacted upon the original two cycles.

Methods

The methods I chose to use were semi-structured interviews with the NQTs to explore their perspectives, a research journal to explore my own perspective and observations of the NQTs (by a member of the Senior Leadership team) to examine their teaching practice.

Key findings and conclusion

The findings of this study indicated that in this setting ONSIDE mentoring has enabled me to better understand how developmental mentoring can be used to support NQTs as co-learners, through empowering NQTs to develop more critical and reflective practice. This has involved recognising the need for a blended, rather than a linear approach to mentoring which supports personalised learning and a greater understanding of the impact of positioning on mentoring practice and NQT development. Developmental mentoring had a profound influence on my enactment of mentoring, encouraging me to take a more reflexive and collaborative approach. This necessitated I do more than simply adopt specific developmental techniques but rather conduct a whole scale

re-examining of my positioning and perspective. This enabled me to begin to understand the differences that had arisen between my perceptions of my positioning and the reality of my positioning as experienced by the NQTs. I also came to an understanding that wellbeing should be a fundamental part of the developmental relationship rather than an aspect of an NQTs progression which arises from improvements in professional development and practice. My own learning journey led me to an appreciation of the fact that true collaborative relationships involve learning from as well as learning with your co-learners (Hudson, 2013).

Both NQTs felt that ONSIDE mentoring empowered them to actively drive their own improvements in professional development and practice. However, a blended mentoring approach was their preference. The specific mentoring work on wellbeing gave the NQTs an opportunity to suggest potential changes which could have a positive impact on the future direction of mentoring in this setting. While engaging with the lesson reflection process enabled the NQTs to experience a less stressful and more positive mentoring approach.

Before discussing the implications of this study, I wish to draw attention to its

limitations. This was a contextualised study exploring the perspectives of one mentor and two NQTs. There is no value in generalising these findings to populations in a national or international context. However, the process of working through my research struggles and shaping my identity as a developmental mentor could provide a relatable component for other practitioner researchers (Cain, 2014).

I feel this research has opened up further possibilities for study in my setting which include: developing the blended approach to mentoring and encouraging more effective co-learning relationships. In terms of further study for other practitioners, my hope is that they may be able to re-interpret my findings to suit their own contexts and perhaps investigate how the blended approach to mentoring and co-learning relationships could be adapted for these contexts. Other areas of research could include: the effectiveness of self-study action research on improving mentoring practices and the impact of communities of practice on developing alternative mentoring approaches.

Ultimately, I hope by engaging with this research I have (to paraphrase Hobson, 2016, p. 16) demonstrated to fellow practitioners the value of developing a relationship with your mentees as co-learners and nurturing a

sense of responsibility towards mentees effective support and progress. I believe, I have endeavoured to identify, explore and maximise some of the significant potential benefits of mentoring in order to further benefit the development of mentees in these earliest stages of their careers.

References

Allison, S and Harbour, M. 2009. The coaching toolkit. London:Sage Publications ltd.

Cain, T., 2014. Self study, action research and other approaches to teachers' practitioner research in music education.

Collet, V.S., 2012. The gradual increase of responsibility model: Coaching for teacher change. *Literacy Research and Instruction*, *51*(1), pp.27-47.

Hart, C., 2016. 'An introduction to coaching and mentoring: A critical reflective commentary'. *MT730: An introduction to coaching and mentoring.* Newman University. Unpublished assignment.

Hart, C. 2018. 'An investigation into the perspectives of school-based teacher mentors on the dynamics of their role'. *MT720: Research Methods.* Newman University. Unpublished assignment.

Hobson, A.J. and Malderez, A., 2013. Judgementoring and other threats to realizing the potential of school-based mentoring in teacher education. *International journal of mentoring and coaching in education*, *2*(2), pp.89-108.

Hobson, A.J., 2016. Judgementoring and how to avert it: introducing ONSIDE Mentoring for beginning teachers. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*, *5*(2), pp.87-110.

Hudson, P., 2013. Mentoring as professional development:'growth for both mentor and mentee. *Professional development in education*, *39*(5), pp.771-783.

Lofthouse, R. and Thomas, U., 2014. Mentoring student teachers; a vulnerable workplace learning practice. *International journal of mentoring and coaching in education*, *3*(3), pp.201-218.

Manning, C. and Hobson, A.J., 2017. Judgemental and developmental mentoring in further education initial teacher education in England: mentor and mentee perspectives. *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, *22*(4), pp.574-595.

Maxwell, J.A., 2012. *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach* (Vol. 41). Sage publications.

Sankar, M., Brown, N., Teague, M. and Harding, B., 2011. Induction and mentoring pilot programme: Accessed December, 2018. Available at:
https://www.educationcouncil.org.nz/sites/default/files/Induction_and_Mentoring_Pilot_Evaluation_0.pdf

Thomas, G., 2013. *How to do your research project: A guide for students*. 2nd ed. Sage.

Should mentoring be used as a professional development strategy for teachers at all stages of their career?

A research working paper by Jodie Lomax

Abstract

"There are no great schools without great teachers" (Hinds, 2018), yet many teachers are leaving in their droves (Kell, 2018). Ofsted (2019) reported that occupational wellbeing is the lowest amongst teachers compared with other professions, citing increasing teacher workload and lack of support as the biggest contributing factors. However, teachers are provided with a mentor in the ITT and NQT year to support them in developing the knowledge and skills needed to flourish. Despite this, the quality of mentoring for new teachers in schools is inconsistent (Carter, 2015; Holden, 2016). The Early Careers Framework (2019) promises to strengthen the support offered to new teachers through better mentoring.

This research adopted a mixed methodology combining surveys and interviews to considers whether there is a need to provide mentoring as a professional development strategy for teachers beyond their early career. Furthermore, it provides insight into some of the inconsistences in mentoring practice within schools. In addition, the impact of effective mentoring on teacher's occupational wellbeing and professional development has been explored. Findings suggest that the quality of mentoring provided for new teachers remains inconsistent, synonymous with the Carter Review of ITT (2015). Furthermore, it was found that mentors do have enough of a positive impact on the well-being of teachers that they ought to have. However, it was also found that greater value should placed on mentoring beyond the early careers to support teacher's professional development.

Introduction

A third of teachers are leaving the profession within the first five years of their career. "Thousands of teachers are deciding that enough is enough and leaving the profession in their droves…" (Kell, 2018 p10), with the reasons for these poor retention rates being attributed to teacher workload and school-funding cuts, leading to lower rates of pay (Foster, 2019). However, Kell's (2018) research indicated that salary was not a driving force for leaving the profession. So, if not for the pay, why are so many teachers leaving in droves? Teachers increasing workload, perceived lack of work-life balance and unsubstantial support continues to have a direct and somewhat debilitating impact on

the occupational wellbeing of teachers up and down the country (Ofsted, 2019).

This feeds into the general issues raised by the DfE. Nick Gibb (DfE, 2019c), made it his top priority to ensure that there are "sufficient high-quality teachers in our schools for the long term, by delivering on our teacher recruitment and retention strategy". The 'Early Careers Framework' (ECF), a fundamental part of the strategy also published in January 2019, aims to build upon Initial Teacher Training (ITT) and "provide a platform for [the] future development" (DfE, 2019 p5) of teachers.

Early Careers Framework

The ECF is both insightful and optimistic, providing an "evidence-informed list of things that early career teachers should be supported to know and do in their first few years after Initial Teacher Training" (TDT, 2019). The framework is underpinned by a need to transform the support and development offered to teachers in their early careers in order to keep high-quality teachers in schools for the long-term. However, the level and quality of support that teachers receive in order to improve their teaching practice is inconsistent. Research suggests that not all teachers have benefited from the support they need to thrive (DfE, 2019). For this reason, the ECF emphasises the need for

high quality mentoring as a driving force for the high-quality support given to early career teachers.

Mentoring in Education

The mentor is at the heart of training new and inexperienced teachers (Wright, 2010). It is a nurturing process where a more skilled individual "serves as a role model, teaches, sponsors, encourages and befriends a less skilled or less experienced individuals" in order to promote their professional or personal development (Anderson and Shannon, 1988, cited in Cain, 2009 p2). High quality mentoring is undoubtedly critically important in improving teachers' practice. However, evidence suggests that mentoring across England is not as effective as it should be (Hobson and Malderez, 2013 cited in Carter, 2015). Hobson et al (2009) reported that sometimes, the mentoring partnership can have such a profoundly negative impact on the overall experience of training teachers that this can cause trainees to abandon their training altogether.

However, it remains particularly unclear what impact, if any, these early experiences of working with a mentor have on early careers teachers longer term occupational wellbeing. Perhaps this is because much of what we know about mentoring in education is centred on the importance of the mentor-mentee

relationship during their ITT and the way in which this impacts their development and readiness as a teacher. The retrospective impact that early mentoring experiences has on teachers' as they move through the early stages of their career, is seldom considered. Whilst it is a welcome development for early career teachers, the ECF threatens to continue this trend with the focus being extended only to teachers up to the end of the second year of teaching.

Methodology

Following ethical approval, a survey was designed taking into account the benefits and limitations of both quantitative and qualitative methodology. The intention of the survey was to acquire quantitative data using a Likert Scale, combined with opportunities to apply meaning to those responses (qualitative). Survey responses were followed up with four semi-structured interviews to acquire further data to add greater context to the responses from the survey.

The survey questions were derived from the 'National Framework for Mentoring and Coaching' (CUREE, 2005) which sets out ten principles of effective mentoring programmes in schools. Furthermore, the core principles of effective mentoring depicted through each of these questions reflect the recommendations proposed by Holden (2016) in the National

Standards for school-based mentors. Although these standards primarily relate to ITT, they promote positive working relationships between the mentor and the mentee, therefore they could easily be applied to a mentoring partnership at any stage of a teacher's career.

Results and analysis

The survey yielded a respectable response rate (*n=89)* for a small-scale research project such as this. The data showed that 86% of the total respondents were female. Male respondents represented 11.6% of the overall sample, whilst 2.3% of respondents preferred not to disclose their gender. This is unsurprising since it is reported that 69.5% of teachers are indeed female, with only 30.5% of males opting to teach (BESA, 2019). The majority of the sample represented the secondary sector, totalling 72.1% of the responses. Only 22.2% of participants represented the primary sector, whilst a much smaller response rate was yielded from the further education sector, with only 5.8% of the total responses.

A summary of the results will be presented in direct response to the research questions:

1. To what extent have teachers received the statutory support of a mentor in their ITT and NQT year?

2. What impact do mentors in schools have on the occupational wellbeing of their mentees?

3. Should school leaders provide teachers at all stages of their career with a mentor as a fundamental part of their continued professional development (CPD)?

(Q1) To what extent have teachers received the statutory support of a mentor in their ITT and NQT year?

A range of teaching experiences were represented in the sample, demonstrated in figure 1 below.
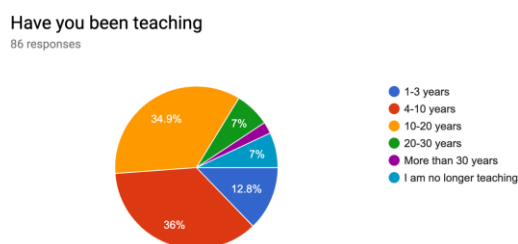

Have you been teaching
86 responses

- 1-3 years
- 4-10 years
- 10-20 years
- 20-30 years
- More than 30 years
- I am no longer teaching

34.9%
7%
7%
12.8%
36%

Figure 1 – number of years teaching

Of those participants who completed their NQT year[24], only 77.9% of participants received the support of a mentor in their NQT year, whilst only 7% of participants stated they had received a mentor in both their NQT and RQT year. This suggests that almost one quarter of new teachers did not receive their statutory entitlement to mentoring as

outlined in the statutory guidance for induction. Furthermore, only 14% of participants stated that they had received the support of a mentor beyond their NQT year as part of their ongoing CPD, suggesting that it is not common practice in schools for mentoring to take place beyond the early years of teaching.

However, a key finding in response to this question is that those teachers who have been teaching for more than 10 years are less likely to have received the support of a mentor in their NQT year, despite statutory induction being introduced in 1999. Therefore, it is wholly possible that there is a whole generation of teachers who may never have benefitted from mentoring at any time in their career. Teachers who have been teaching for more than 20 years did not benefit from the statutory induction process, therefore, it is unlikely they received any mentoring at all in the early years of their career and beyond Alongside this, although it is expected, and can safely be assumed that those teachers who have entered the profession in recent years have been provided with access to a mentor to support their professional development, it cannot be taken for granted.

---

[24] Those who had trained since the introduction of statutory induction in 1999.

(Q2) What impact do mentors in schools have on the occupational wellbeing of their mentees?

Participants responded to a series of questions using a five-part Likert Scale of 'strongly agree to strongly disagree'. Participants were asked to what extent they felt:

- *supported by their mentor*
- *their mentor meetings were tailored to their individual needs*
- *their mentor had time to develop and improve them as a teacher*
- *they had a good relationship with their mentor*
- *their mentor was an inspiration to them*
- *their mentor helped to develop their confidence as a teacher*
- *their mentor had a positive impact of their well-being*
- *their mentor encouraged them to have a positive work-life balance*

The data indicated that 80.2% of participants agreed /strongly agreed that they felt supported by their mentor; a very positive finding indeed. Particularly since feeling supported can contribute positively towards a teacher's occupational wellbeing (Ofsted, 2019). However, only 59.3% agreed that their mentor had a positive impact on their wellbeing.

My mentor had / has a positive impact on my well-being
86 responses

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree
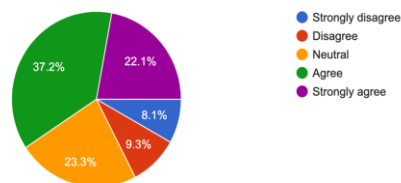
Figure 1 – Mentor impact on teacher's wellbeing

The data demonstrated stark inconsistences in perceptions about what it means to teachers to feel supported. Furthermore, it highlights a number of factors that can contribute to these perceptions, such as time, experience and the mentors own views of teaching as a lifelong career. One participant explained that *"my mentor was abrupt and made me cry. It was a very difficult experience",* whilst a second participant felt that their *'NQT mentor sometimes felt supportive and other times judgemental'*. This statement is somewhat oxymoronic; it is interesting that the mentor can be perceived as being both *supportive* and *judgemental* at the same time and this ambiguity over what it means to feel supported was prevalent in a number of responses.

A second participant who had left teaching before the end of the NQT year reported a mentoring partnership that was particularly challenging. During the follow up interview, the participant explained that:

"I had face to face meetings with my mentor, I knew she was responsible for signing off my NQT year - that was one element of support. She was the Deputy Head of the school. I did not feel supported by my mentor; we were teaching very different age groups and I think we had different ways of teaching. To me, it seemed like her way was right and I was wrong. I didn't have the confidence to know that teachers teach in different ways and that this can be a good thing. I was not given the opportunity to observe good practice. I believed that classrooms should be learner led and she did not agree with this. I wasn't supported in how to learn how to be a successful teacher. I compared myself to other teachers".

For this new teacher, it is clear that the mentor was perceived as being an authority, someone who had the power to judge whether this teacher was good enough to teach. This experience, albeit a relatively short mentoring partnership, left a long-lasting impression on the participant. During the interview, the participant confessed that *"I left teaching feeling like a failure...I still feel angry about this [twenty years later]. I often wonder…if I had been in a different school, with a different mentor...whether it would have turned out differently".* This demonstrates the harm that can come from ineffective mentoring partnerships. Not only does mentoring have the power to impact a

teacher's occupational wellbeing, it can also have a profound impact on the mentee's personal wellbeing.

The sense of feeling supported also fed into participants perceptions around the amount of time the mentor had to support them in their development as a teacher. Despite 80.2% agreeing that they felt supported, only 55.5% agreed that their mentor had time to help them develop and improve as a teacher.
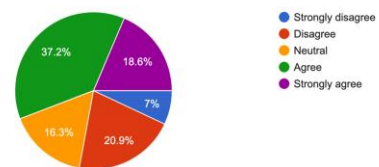
Figure 2 – time constraints of effective mentoring

Mentoring during the ITT and NQT year are both statutory; all teachers are entitled to purposeful and meaningful support of a mentor during this time in their career, yet too many mentees are not being afforded this statutory entitlement effectively enough. The National Framework for Mentoring and Coaching (DFES 2005, cited in CUREE, 2008) clearly states that effective mentoring involves "making and using time and other resources creatively to protect and sustain learning, action and reflection on a day to day basis". However, increasing workload pressures for teachers at all levels (the mentee and the mentor) does indeed leave

little time to truly cultivate an effective mentoring partnership.

Findings suggest that mentoring is not as valued as it should be, otherwise time to cultivate the mentoring partnership would be protected and encouraged. This finding is synonymous with that found in the Carter Review of ITT (2015) who found that mentoring practices are inconsistent. Carter (2015) urged schools to place 'much greater status and recognition' of the role of the mentor, arguing that the 'qualities of effective mentors should be better understood'.

When considering the impact that the mentor had on mentees views of teaching as a life-long career, the research again presented some alarming findings, with only 52.3% agreeing with the statement.

My mentor made me feel like teaching was a life-long career
86 responses

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
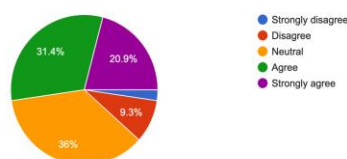- Agree
- Strongly agree

31.4% 20.9% 9.3% 36%

Figure 3 – What impact does the mentor have on mentees views of life-long teaching?

One participant stated that *"Due to workload expectations it was almost a given that not many people stay in teaching for long",* with a second participant explaining *"There was no career development aspect"* and *"[my mentor] dismissed promotion".* Furthermore, one of the interviewees explained *"My mentor*

allowed me to feel like teaching was a lifelong career because he enjoys his job but really, he is just in it for himself. We have never discussed leadership pathways or aspirations".

However, it was clear that when mentors take the time to discuss with, and support mentees in planning their career pathway, they feel that teaching could be a lifelong career. One participant explained that their mentor *"Talked about future opportunities as appropriate"*, whilst another exemplified this belief by describing their mentor as being someone who *"was always telling me ways to better myself and how to succeed"* and this made them feel like teaching was a lifelong career. A third participant stated that *"my mentor encouraged me to think into the future and think about how I wanted to progress further in my career and in what capacity".*

Whilst it is important that mentors can empathise with the challenges of teaching, it is imperative that mentors maintain a high degree of professionalism in their role. The Mentor Standards for school-based mentors (2016) expects mentors to "act as ambassadors for the profession". If mentors are perceived as being unhappy in their role, this will undoubtedly impact the perceptions held by the mentee.

(Q3) Should school leaders provide teachers at all stages of their career with a mentor as a fundamental part of their continued professional development (CPD)?

Mentoring continues to be advocated within the profession (DfE, 2001;2005;2008;2012, 2019; CUREE, 2008, Carter, 2015; Holden, 2016). Yet, in education, this support continues to be most concentrated in the ITT and NQT year. Why this is, remains a mystery, since mentoring is commonplace across many other sectors and businesses. The final research question aimed to explore whether teachers and ex-teachers believed that mentoring beyond the NQT year would be beneficial to their professional development as a teacher. A significant majority of participants believed that having a mentor beyond their NQT year *could* have been beneficial.

Do you think having a mentor beyond your NQT would be / would have been beneficial?
86 responses
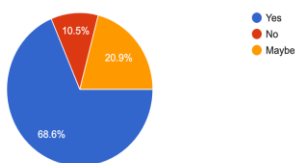
Figure 4: Mentoring as a CPD strategy beyond the NQT year

The survey showed that 68.8% of participants believed that it would have been beneficial to receive the support of a mentor beyond their NQT year. Furthermore, 66.3% of participants felt that having a mentor beyond the NQT year would have a positive impact on their professional development. This is a really positive finding, particularly given the inconsistency in the range of experiences participants have had with mentors. One participant explained that having a mentor would *"...support ongoing improvements to teaching and career aspirations beyond the classroom",* whilst another stated that *"I would have found having a mentor at different stages as being very helpful and help me stay guided and committed".* A third participant believes *"Having an allocated time to meet with an experienced mentor would be so valuable because it would make me feel valued and like I was worth investing time in. It would also have given me a chance to ask questions I did not want to ask in a group".*

The Ofsted report into teacher wellbeing (2019) found that more experienced teachers (those teaching for 5 years plus) demonstrated significantly lower levels of occupational wellbeing than those who had been teaching for less than two years, despite those in their early careers being at the greatest risk of leaving the profession altogether. However, it challenges the belief that the more experience a teacher has, the easier it is for them to fulfil the duties of the role and cope with the demands of the job.

A final finding drawn from this research is that 50% of those participants who were no longer

in teaching believed that receiving the support of an **effective** mentor could have prevented them from leaving the profession. A further 28.6% felt that an effective mentor *may* have changed their decision to leave the profession. Although the participants in this sample only represented 16.2% of the total participants, this is still an important finding that demonstrates the positive impact that effective mentors can have on the professional development and wellbeing of teachers. One participant stated that if their mentor had been more effective, they would 'definitely have stayed in the profession', explaining that *"Now it's 20 years later I'm convinced this was an early bump and I had a lot to offer"*. Further research is needed to explore this finding in more depth.

Conclusion

This research indicates that the DfE has failed to ensure that all teachers inducted into the profession have benefitted from effective mentoring that has had a positive impact on their practice and occupational wellbeing. It remains unclear what role the 'appropriate bodies' play in quality assuring this process and to what extent schools are held accountable when they fail to meet the required standard and indeed, how consistent

or effective this quality assurance process is. However, Sam Twistleton OBE, suggested that the DfE "are looking to strengthen the Appropriate Body function when the ECF is rolled out" (Twitter, 2019). This should place greater value and importance on the induction process for early careers teachers.

Furthermore, the findings of this research suggest that due consideration must be given to formalising mentoring partnerships for teachers at all stages of their career. Not only would this benefit the mentee in improving their practice, it would also contribute to improving teacher's occupational wellbeing because it could provide a medium for the emotional support too. In turn, this could support teachers in staying in the profession rather than walking away. Despite this, it is clear that when mentoring is not valued, it has the potential to inhibit wellbeing and does not have the possible impact on improving occupational wellbeing that it should have. It is clear that much greater value needs to be placed on mentoring in schools. This could be achieved by extending the promise of the ECF beyond the early careers to fund time and resources for all teachers to engage in mentoring and peer-coaching in order to improve their practice.

References

Carter, D. (2015) *Carter review of initial teacher training (ITT).* [Online] Available
from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_dat
a/file/399957/Carter_Review.pdf [Accessed 24 Jul 2019].

Clutterbuck, D. (2014) *Everyone Needs A Mentor*. 5. London: CIPD

CUREE. (2008) *National Framework for Mentoring and Coaching*. [Online] Available from:
http://www.curee.co.uk/resources/publications/national-framework-mentoring-and-coaching.
[Accessed 08 Dec 2019].

DfE. (2019) *Early Career Framework.* [Online] Available from:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/773705/
Early-Career_Framework.pdf. [Accessed on 01 Jul 2019].

DfE. (2019c) *Department for Education Single Department Plan*. [Online] Available from:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-for-education-single-departmental-
plan/may-2018-department-for-education-single-departmental-plan. [Accessed on 15 Aug 2019].

Foster, D. (2019) *House of Commons: Teacher Recruitment and Retention in England*. (7222) House of Commons
Library.

GOV. (1999) *The Education (Induction Arrangements for School Teachers) (England) Regulations 1999*. [Online]
Available from: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1999/1065/regulation/13/made. [Accessed on 20
Nov 2019].

Hinds, D. (2018) *There are no great schools without great teachers*. GOV.UK. [Blog] 10 Mar 2018. Available
from: https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/damian-hinds-there-are-no-great-schools-without-
great-teachers. [Accessed on 26 Aug 2019]

Hobson, A., Giannakaki, M.S. and Chambers, G. (2009) Who withdraws from initial teacher preparation
programmes and why? *Educational Research,* 51(3), pp. 321-340.

Hobson, A. and Malderez, A. (2013) "Judgementoring and other threats to realizing the potential of school-based
mentoring in teacher education", *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*,
[Online] (2)2, pp. 89-108. Available from: https://doi.org/10.1108/IJMCE-03-2013-0019. [Accessed on
26 Aug 2019].

Holden, G. (2016). *National Standards for school-based initial teacher training (ITT) mentors*. [Online] Available
from:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/
536891/Mentor_standards_report_Final.pdf. [Accessed on 26 Aug 2019].

OFSTED (2019) *Teacher Wellbeing Report*. [Online] Available from:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/
819314/Teacher_well-being_report_110719F.pdf. [Accessed on 15 Aug 2019].

Teacher Development Trust (2019) *Early Career Framework, Recruitment and Retention*. [Online] Available from:
https://tdtrust.org/new-dfe-policy-recruitment-retention-and-early-career-framework-what-does-it-
mean-for-your-school [Accessed on 30th Jul 2019]. Bloomsbury

Wright, T. (2010) *How to be a Brilliant Mentor: Developing Outstanding Teachers*. Oxon: Routledge.

The Growth of Edumentoring

A think piece working paper by Aaron Berry and Abul Kalam

Over the past two months, a concept conceived originally as a 'names out of the hat job' has grown to over 800 participants both in the UK and Internationally, and gained the support of CollectivEd as it looks to build beyond lockdown and support teachers through an organic, grass roots movement which embodies the strength of giving within the teaching profession. Here we reflect on the first few months of EduMentoring and what it holds in store moving forward.

From its beginnings as a tweet by Abul Kalam (@HeretoLearnEd) which garnered a lot of attention, EduMentoring has grown with a focus on facilitating appropriate and relevant pairings between mentor and mentee. Having attended the CollectivEd event in February 2020 on 'How to best Support Early Career Teachers', it was clear to Abul that there was a need for effective mentoring, both in the early years of teaching practice, as well as for those looking to take on new challenges in their career, but did not have the support available in their work setting. Driven by a desire to help give something back, having benefitted from incredibly supportive mentors in his studies, he enlisted the help of Aaron Berry (@aaronaberry), a secondary biology teacher and NQT mentor as the network grew.

From the outset, the EduMentoring team wanted to take a considered approach to matching participants. From the volume of interest that the tweet generated, it was clear that there were teachers from many different backgrounds, requiring or offering their skills in different ways. Initial questions were carefully selected to allow an insight into participants motivations, and from feedback we have had, that the time spent carefully matching the needs of the individual has generated a real connection between participants; it is hoped that this can lead to long lasting partnerships and support. With this careful matching, looking to support specific areas, we hope that EduMentoring has an impact on all levels; both in teacher-teacher interactions and teacher-student interactions, as the mentoring and coaching mindset becomes more developed. This is something we hope to delve deeper into as the project develops.

Although the introduction of the Early Career Framework addresses the support of those entering the profession, providing a cornerstone for training, the foundations that have been set within those first two years need building upon if we are to support teachers. But what is there for teachers beyond these two years? As a profession, we

need to develop the skills in and out of the classroom that individuals need to continue to develop as teachers and leaders. From our experiences of EduMentoring, it is clear that there is a demand for further support for teachers at all levels who wish to develop further. Over 20% of secondary respondents to the EduMentoring project were established teachers, including pastoral and middle leaders, looking for support in moving to the next phase of their career. Not all teachers are lucky to have colleagues within their school who may be able to support and mentor them, for a variety of reasons, but can access the encouragement and coaching they need through EduMentoring. The wide range of participants in EduMentoring, highlights a need for ongoing professional development and support, at all levels, for these individuals in their career.

At EduMentoring, we are most grateful to the time that is given up by the teaching community in order to help nurture and develop our colleagues across the country. In our meetings, we received feedback on sessions from our participants and our aim began to focus on the ability to give something back to those taking the time to engage with mentoring. As chance would have it, Rachel Lofthouse was to get in touch and offer not only to mentor us, but to

partner with us through CollectivEd, developing a series of Certificated courses for mentors and mentees. These reflective courses have been well received by the EduMentoring community and we aim to build on these as the EduMentoring network grows.

As we move towards the summer, there is still much work to be done in developing the EduMentoring network. We are grateful to those, such as MenTeachPrimary who have collaborated with us, and especially Prof. Rachel Lofthouse and Rachel Bostwick from CollectivEd, who have provided us with opportunities and guidance. With the impact of Covid-19 on the landscape of teaching and teacher training, we hope to be able to support many more teachers through this. We are proud of the teaching community's generosity and the fact that we have more mentors than mentees, but are always looking for more to make the best match. If you would like to be involved in EduMentoring in any way, the form for signing up is on our twitter page @Edumentoringuk. For a concept that grew from a single tweet, it has been fantastic to see the promising shoots of growth in the EduMentoring network, and as it grows, we look to develop EduMentoring as a driver for support, guidance and mentoring within the profession.

An Anchor in the Storm – Personal thoughts on why Mentorship Matters

A think piece working paper by Sarah Hutchins

Dear Rachel

I hope this wee letter finds you on good form… I wanted to write you a letter with a few sound bites and tell you my thoughts on why I think 'Mentorship Matters'. I almost didn't have the courage to write this - for fear I would get it 'wrong'. I have had a little chat to myself and decided I had nothing to lose. It is not full of highbrow analysis but more of a personal account. So please do read on…

Ready steady grow!

Teaching is sort of like a roller coaster ride. You have your bog standard ups and downs, along with the expected and advertised thrills. But then there are the gnarly corners and unexpected humps that catch you out. You can't always see them but they can make you sick to the pit of your stomach or can positively fuel you with excitement. Look out for both the corners and bumps and be sure to learn from them…Having a critical friend, a Mentor by your side will most definitely help.

Good but not good enough?

During my final 3rd Year Teaching Practise as a student in an inner city Reception class I became acutely aware that the Mentor relationship with my Class Teacher was almost doomed from the start. For whatever reason, that Mentor – Student relationship broke down. I was young - 23 years old (although older than most others from my teaching degree cohort) and extremely keen to make a good impression and get on with my learning and training. The first few days were a blur with planning, reading up on school policies and meeting all and sundry, trying to remember names and smiling nervously. In class I sat, listened intently, watched interactions and took notes assiduously. I interacted with the children and was off to what I thought was a promising start.

I still remember the exact moment I knew the Mentorship relationship had gone out the window. I had referred to 'going to the toilet' as 'going to the loo'. It was very bluntly pointed out to me that the children would not understand what I meant if I used this word 'loo' and that were they came from it was 'toilet'. From this point forward my tentative confidence was eroded. I knew I would be dammed if I did and dammed if I didn't. Although I tried my hardest at all I did, and had glowing tutor observations, the Class

Teacher never offered praise where it was due and I felt I was never good enough. Small jibes stuck and in the end I finished the teaching practise and actually decided I couldn't 'do' teaching and so I switched from a BEd to a BSc thus ending my initial teacher training degree. I have however, still end up teaching (Yay!) and some 6 years later I undertook a PGCE course and found my way across the rainbow!

I have highlighted this as an extreme example of how as a Mentor you have the ultimate power. You can make or break an individual's spirit. If you deliver small untimely remarks they will erode a person's confidence. I often wonder if I had my time again, could I have handled the situation differently? Would it have ultimately changed how I entered the teaching profession in the first place? I don't know – but what I do know is that in my 'now' role of Mentor to others I always ensure that I go that extra mile to ensure that any feedback I give is always constructive and that I praise and nurture rather than be dismissive.

An Anchor in the Storm?

As a newly qualified teacher you will have the basics (generally speaking) to perform your job. You will have learned the whys and wherefores through study and then have begun to understand pedagogy through observation and practise. Mentors are the cement in this process. They ensure the transfer of professional knowledge, tricks of the trade and that 'the tools to teach' are passed from one generation of teachers to the next. They also give grounding and a sounding board for when you venture off and begin to try new things for yourself. In my experience as a British lady who once taught in New Zealand I found it very difficult to learn the Maori language and protocols and also make sure that I was bi-cultural and inclusive in my teaching rather than being tokenistic.

Our centre was very fortunate to have links with a local Te Kōhanga Reo (total immersion Maori language Preschool). Their teachers would regularly visit us for professional development. Our schools formed a fantastic partnership. As a foreigner to Maori culture I felt honored that someone was showing me how to make use of relevant and meaningful Maori language in my daily interactions with the children. It could have been a totally different story. The kindness and trust shown to me, made me believe in myself and be confident in trying to speak the language. I still have a set of weather card resources that a lady kindly wrote the Maori phrases on the back of – which enabled me to talk about the weather in Maori. I felt like a million dollars and that nothing was impossible!

Should you talk 'with' rather than 'to' a person?

I once had the privilege of working alongside a true gem of a lady. She is possibly one of the most colourful and memorable characters I have ever met. Her warmth and enthusiasm was quietly contagious and she brought sunshine and smiles wherever she went. This lady had the knack of making you feel special and like you were the only person that mattered to her when she spoke to you. Her eye contact and ability to remember details from past conversations and also to recall names was astounding. I was in awe of her and over the course of the year that I worked with her I learned so much. This lady was indeed my Mentor and also an outstanding role model. I aspired to be the best that I could be and I adopted her maxim in life that "One must always accessorize…" I would like to think that my organisational skills, confidence to look my best at all times, plus an ability to talk with (rather than to) anyone I meet - come from her.

Jump…But how high?

We all have moments where we doubt ourselves on both a professional and personal level. Having a Mentor within the workplace that believes in you and your aspirations and your abilities is a little bit like having your own personal coach in the boxing ring of life. I have been grateful to have built some fantastic friendships with colleagues that started out as mentors that have gone on to be lifelong friends. Why? Because they believed in me. My talents and passions were nurtured with small gestures and little conversations here and there that fostered a positive 'can do' + 'you can do this' attitude. Their encouragement, advice and guidance helped me to extend myself and grow into my role as a teacher. It helped me (as a person and learner) to value and be reflective of my interactions and relationships with others. My perspective changed from 'half empty' to being a 'half full' kind of person.

Do I look the part?

While most of us will have come across mentors that fulfil our academic and emotional needs there is also an unconscious question of style! Learning how to dress can also be a subtle subject of Mentorship especially in the workplace! While teaching in New Zealand I worked with a fabulous colleague who always wore bright colours…In Early Years this was like working with a singing rainbow! I have, since then always made sure that I wear my brightest and best colours to school because not only do you feel good, you have confidence and the children love it!

Did I really just sing that?

Mentors can coax your inner tiger out when you least expect it! I look back to a job I had

working alongside a wonderful team of ladies in Early Years between 2005 – 2008. Now if I'd have not worked with them I'd be half the practitioner I am today…Why? I hear you ask? Because they sang. Moments of the day and learning with little ones were punctuated with little moments of random song and ditties about anything and everything. This had a profound effect on me because it made me realise I needed to unleash my inner child! I sing now, in fact nearly all the time, and pretty much about anything and everything. This has had a most glorious effect in our setting…Fellow teachers have a little sing-song now and again and so do the children! Oh my gosh how much brighter our days are and all because of the wonderful Mentorship of colleagues nearly 15 years ago!!

Tread carefully?

In life there are rules and boundaries that frame your place in society and the communities within which you live and work. Most of these 'ways' are unspoken and we simply learn and adapt to fit in as we go along. Mentors help build trust in these systems that support us. That is also to say 'trust' in ourselves and our ability to navigate and decipher complex social rituals and customs that enable us to interact freely with one another.

Your turn, My turn?

You may know the theory and have an idea of what you think it 'takes' to be a practitioner in the classroom but it's not until you actually set sail on that journey for yourself that you really learn how to teach. Mentors exist in all workplaces. That colleague in the year above whose class appear spellbound when you observe them teach and the one you always hear singing on the way to lunch with their class (– you're smiling now aren't you?) So you know the ones… These very colleagues give off vibes that allow us to 'take a chance' and then try new things ourselves. Mentors can offer their skills and knowledge unreservedly and also without knowing it. By seeing others in action and observing their mannerisms, their practice and also something as simple as voice control… we can, if we choose to - supplement our growing toolbox of tricks that will enhance our own in-classroom and teaching experience.

My turn, Your turn?

I love my current role in school. No two days or weeks are the same. I am with preschool one day, teaching in Reception the next and then also doing Science and Geography in Year 1 the following day…I am actively involved in the mentorship of a fellow colleague who has recently qualified in Early Years. We work together the first half of the week with me leading. Then, when I am

working elsewhere in the school she will lead. It's a little bit like a job share. Thursday and Friday are her days to 'fly solo' and teach in the way that she chooses. This arrangement has been amazing for her confidence and also in developing her own 'style' and 'presence' in the learning environment. I am constantly asking questions and finding out what she thinks and feels about 'X' and 'Y'. If we are planning, her ideas are as equally valuable as mine. At the end of the day I'll ask questions out loud so the process of reflection becomes a team chat about our day. We are constantly sharing knowledge together. By always asking questions and showing an interest, I would hope I am 'sharing my head space' rather than saying nothing at all. "Go for it!" That's my standard reply. Nothing is off limits. Humour and flexibility are both key and did I mention singing…? I love a good made up little song!

Yesterday, today, tomorrow?

Mentors can help guide you and steer you to be the best you can be. It is a little bit like having a Fairy Godmother who is always watching out for you. One who occasionally grants you your wishes, but mostly, when you look over your shoulder she is there in the background smiling and willing you on. Mentorship can have such a positive influence on the workplace, on teams and on individuals. In some way or another I believe we are all Mentors.

The emotional and social transaction that occurs during Mentorship can play a crucial role in helping mould and form your character not only as a teacher but all also as a person. Sometimes developing that relationship takes time and encouragement on both sides. But rest assured, both parties can gain a quiet sense of focus, purpose and satisfaction in their mutual relationship. There is much that can be learned through Mentorship and it is wonderful to think that it is happening all over the country right now!

Thank you for reading and Best Wishes to you,

Sarah Hutchins

Virtual Reality Mentoring

A think piece working paper by Hannah Wilson and David Gumbrell

The brain doesn't draw a distinction between the real and the imagined.

Jared Horvath

If the definition of 'virtual' is near, and the definition of 'reality' is what you experience as a human being, then the experience of 'virtual reality' is close to the feelings, senses and emotions of being in that situation. What you see and hear combines to provide an experience that is channelled through your emotional brain. As you appreciate this world and assimilate your sensory inputs, you are tagging experiences to feelings.

If mentoring is empathising, supporting, encouraging and improving performance, then how is that experience in terms of feelings, senses and emotions? The mentor cannot maximise skills and realise potential if the experience, channelled through the emotional brain, is not positive. If the mentee is assimilating negative sensory inputs, they will be tagging those to the event. This can have lasting effects if done inadvertently - or deliberately.

If we are to create a Virtual Reality mentoring experience, what are the feelings that we seek to engender and nurture, and which should we do our best to avoid? To be effective, there needs to be an emotional connection. Mentoring is a feelings and values-driven process. Mentors need to consider how to start building this relationship, in a virtual way, with their mentees from September.

Actively Listening

As mentors, as we listen deeply, we need to listen to *what* is being said and *how* it is being said. We gain clarity by listening to *understand*, instead of listening to *interject*. We can tease out answers and help make sense of confusion and uncertainty by listening, mirroring back what is said and building confidence in the speaker. The speaker will be better able to communicate their feelings and articulate their concerns as they become comfortable in this virtual space; the dynamic will be strengthened as their confidence grows in both the listening and the speaking. As mentors, we also listen for what is not being said. We can help make connections and join up the dots. Active

listening is supportive, reassuring and emotionally intelligent. By listening carefully and deeply, we seek to alleviate worries, concerns, anxieties and doubt. A virtual mentor is a listening ear attached to a friendly face.

Active listening is tiring because we are not used to doing it. All too often, we listen superficially rather than intently, distracted by other things on our mind or the worry that time is pressing. Listening to someone and sensitively responding to them allows them to feel confident and builds trust that you are there for them. Mentors have to listen hard to pick up nuances, key words, and the *way* things are being said as well as *what* is being said. Being skilled at this takes time and dedication; mentors have to overcome the urge to judge, speak, advise and talk at length. There is time for them to do this, but the proportion of the mentee speaking should be greater than that of the mentor. It is a fine balance to strike, but effective mentors can do this. The emotional brain can enjoy the reality of being in this safe space, as they feel that someone is listening carefully. There is no concern that they are there reluctantly, or because they just have a job to do.

Building Trust

As mentors, we are trusted to nurture the trainee teachers by the senior leaders. The

mentees equally place trust in us. In any mentoring or coaching relationship, it is important to contract how this relationship is established, maintained and nourished. The more trust you instil, the more secure your mentee will feel. The more confident they are in the mentoring relationship, the more relaxed they will be in sharing what they are thinking and how they are feeling. Moreover, they will become open in disclosing what they are struggling with, both personally and professionally. Trust is the lynchpin of all relationships, but is built over time, and normally through face-to-face experiences. Consider relationships that you have formed virtually and how trust has been established. Meeting as human beings first, establishing rapport as individuals and getting to know each other is an emotional investment in the mentoring process which will enable this relationship to flourish.

Trustful relationships take time to build. Trust in relationships takes no time to break. The skill of a mentor is one who is able to construct that relationship and allow the mentee to relax in their presence. Through reassurance and actions holding true in the future, the integrity of the relationship begins to strengthen. Underpinned by values, the relationship itself is valued. Once attained, it can be developed and nurtured, and can have a significant effect on the effectiveness on that partnership to engage in professional

dialogue that is both impactful and empowering. Positively conveyed, a trustful relationship can gain traction more easily and make the changes that are needed to the pedagogy and practice. In this virtual reality, there is little resistance to change, as the mentee feels secure under the guidance of their mentor as their trusted guide. Without trust there is insecurity, doubt and nervousness to proceed. Mistrusting the advice leads to a lack of engagement and thus opportunities to develop can be missed.

Identifying Goals

Goal-setting guides the mentee on their journey, and mentors support in co-creating space and co-constructing goals, thus enabling the mentee to have more ownership over their development. Individuals are empowered and have more agency when they have been involved in the processing of articulating goals and choosing which goals to prioritise. Simon Sinek talks about 'the Why, the How and the What' of communication. As a mentor, when goal-setting with your mentee, consider defining the 'why', agreeing the 'what', but enabling the mentee to choose the 'how'. The more open the discussion, the more freedom there is to explore and discover the authentic way for the individual to rise to the challenge. Confidence heightened, they will be able to learn and to grow at their own rate and in their own way. Goals can be big, or they can be small,

dependent on their starting point and their context. Some goals will need challenging to be more audacious, and others will need reining in to be more realistic.

In identifying goals, we are giving a direction of travel to reach a new place - an agreed, desirable destination. All too often, goals can be imposed, delivered or given. Sometimes labelled as aspirational, they can sometimes feel impossible, especially when there are no signposts to help to support the journey to that place. As an effective mentor, you need to be looking to get agreement on the signposting, rather than the destination. Getting to checkpoint one, two and three, rather than getting to the end. In presenting it in this way, you will be striking a balance between realism and guidance – whilst not telling or not imposing. At each checkpoint, you will feel differently about the destination. You can take stock, reflect on how far your mentee has come, and prepare for the next step. In setting the reality, you as the mentor can fix these parameters and yet allow space for the mentee to experiment, experience and discover the route for themselves too. Good mentors pave the path rather than erecting the signposts that guide others on their way.

Being Realistic

As mentors, we bring our experience and our wisdom to the relationship. We help to

anchor ideas, centre feelings and locate the abstract in the concrete. Being realistic, the voice of reason and pragmatic will create a sense of calm for your mentee. A sense of realism will enable them to keep perspective and reduce their feeling of overwhelm. They need you to be a calming physical presence whether in school or virtually. Creating a safe space, a calm environment and a regular opportunity to share agitations will enable conversations to explore the subjective and move to the objective. It is a human need to want to belong, and to be seen and heard. The virtual mentoring space does this. Moreover, in lockdown and in bubbles, we know that there is a sense of social isolation where the negative can quickly become amplified; the virtual mentoring space is an outlet for your mentee to diffuse their negative thoughts and feelings, which you can help them reframe.

A sense of realism can evoke a feeling of not being threatened. The most productive emotional state to be working in is when both mentor and mentee feel calm and focused on a positive outcome. Contextualisation can bring this realism and map targets against the backdrop of the school setting for the pupils. It is easier to 'buy-in' to the plan if the mentee feels they are being supported to succeed, rather than doomed to fail. Encouragement to be the best they can be is different to trying to achieve perfection; we are all imperfect,

vulnerable human beings after all. In this atmosphere, your mentee's sensory inputs are now reassuring them that they can do this, that is it possible and that it is realistic. No longer agitated, they feel empowered and positive, wanting to get started on this realistic journey to a new place in their teaching.

Empowering Others

Empowering others is one of the primary roles of being a mentor or a coach. Creating the conditions for early career teachers to grow, learn and flourish is a careful balancing act. Mentors need to carefully walk the tightrope between being supportive and providing structure, whilst giving enough freedom and space to experiment. Part of the 'reflective practice cycle' is to experiment and explore, to be able to make mistakes in a high challenge, low threat culture. Risk-taking can be inhibited by the fear of failure; opportunities for personal and professional growth can be restricted when we strive for perfectionism. Mentors need to guide their mentees and help them navigate their journey; but the mentee needs to be the one who is firmly in the driving seat. Sitting next to them, like the supportive driving instructor, you empower them to be in control and enable them to learn the ropes. Positive and constructive feedback will keep them stay future-focused and solution-oriented. Your

presence is the crucial source of encouragement.

To increase the level of autonomy for your mentee is a desirable aim for all mentors, and yet sometimes this could be given more of a priority. Rather than 'doing it for them' we would be much better placed to move to 'being there for them'. Motivation is key to reaching any goal and autonomy is the greatest motivator of all. The feelings evoked when one is offered control can be empowering, exhilarating and enjoyable. With your mentee intrinsically motivated, you can then guide, support, and regulate that enthusiasm to help them reach their goals. By tapping into this desire, you are both going to maintain a much faster pace of growth, productivity and effectiveness in meeting high standards in the end.

Investing Time

Mentoring is often an expectation that is not recompensed with additional time nor money. It is a 'going above and beyond' accolade that brings rewards through the satisfaction of nurturing other people - but it can feel like another pressure to shoe-horn into your busy schedule. To be an effective mentor, you need to project manage both yourself and your mentee. Consider the good habits you want to instil in your mentee and ensure that you model these to them. Valuing the process will

require an investment of time and energy. Being highly organised and an effective communicator will ensure that the year goes smoothly. Make Outlook (or your preferred diary system) your friend and schedule everything: every mentor meeting, lesson observation, peer observation, report deadline, training session. Allocate time each week to meet, to reflect, to review and to evaluate. Little and often will ensure that you both stay on top of the process. Alongside the formal meetings, consider how else to show your mentee that you value this relationship and that you are invested in them.

Time is precious and thus a valuable gift to offer someone else. As a mentor, you have to be prepared to give the time. When you feel like wriggling out of the formal mentor meeting, you need to reframe and be enthusiastically in that space. If they need you, you have to be willing to set your own agenda on hold and to be there for them. For them, this will evoke a feeling of being valued. Not in a monetary sense but valued as a human being and valued as a teacher learning the trade. A mentor/mentee relationship needs investment for it to pay out. Lack of investment pays with lack of dividends at the end. Well-placed investment can reap rewards for both parties. Both can learn, benefit and feel better for having this shared time together. Rather than feeling onerous and the mentee feeling unwanted, mentors

need to work hard to evoke feelings in their mentor that their time is being spent with them unequivocally. Switching the mindset from '*having to be there*', to '*wanting to be there*' is helpful. Time spent effectively is time well spent.

Showing Empathy

Before you engage with your mentee, take some time to reflect on your motivations for joining the profession. Jot down some of your thoughts and feelings about your own experiences as a student teacher, as a newly qualified teacher and as a recently qualified teacher. Identify the highs and the lows as you started your journey; consider who supported you, recognise what had the biggest impact on your progress, your confidence and your fulfilment. Mentoring is a values-driven, feelings-driven and relationship-driven process. To be an effective mentor, there needs to be a strong emotional connection with your mentee. This connection will be established and nurtured through your emotional intelligence and your empathy. By putting yourself in their shoes, you will be able to meet them where they are on their journey. Be mindful that it is likely that the profession has changed, the school system has changed, society has changed since you trained - so be contextually-literate to the current pressures and demands placed on them.

Showing empathy is not doing it for them and it is not aiming to make them emulate you. Rather, it is to guide their thinking and encourage them to be the best teacher they can be. When we have to judge, we need to feed back with sensitivity. When we meet, we acknowledge the time commitment to that meeting and use that time effectively. When we offer advice, it is done with a warmth that is not going to wrangle, but rather produce a positive reaction from the early career teacher. An empathetic mentor will be able to significantly impact on classroom practice because the mentee will feel empowered to action the changes that evolve within your meetings.

In Summary

The experience of 'virtual reality' is to be close to the feelings, senses and emotions of being in any situation. This piece aims to identify the key elements that would be needed for any mentor/mentee relationship that seeks to engender these positive proactive emotions with a view to them manifesting in classroom practice. For the relationship to be productive, the suggested actions in this article need to be the priority for you as the mentor. Aim to put them front and foremost at every meeting - and a successful partnership is highly likely, even if created in a virtual reality.

Theory-framed classroom research and the path of teacher learning

A research working paper by Vincent Andrew, Nor Rozalina Sallehkin, Ayaz Ahma, Hjh Rashidah Hj Md Jair and Kamariah Jaya

Abstract

It is not sufficient for teachers to be aware of educational objectives. According to Marton et al (2019), educational objectives communicate what the students are expected to become able to do, but not what they need to learn in order to get there. In this classroom action research, a group of Business teachers with the support of a facilitator set out to identify what is to be learned to help Year 11 students grasp profitability ratios. Teachers used the critical aspects to teach lessons that used a systematic pattern of variation. From the post-test results students were judged to be more competent in handling financial information. This paper, therefore, firstly seeks to contribute to the knowledge product of a learning study by giving a theoretical description of what must be learned (Runneson, 2019) to develop a more powerful understanding of profitability ratio, and secondly to discuss the path of teacher learning for the teachers involved.

WHAT WE DID

The Case

We wanted to conduct a learning study to help Year 11 Business Studies students understand a difficult topic better. The topic, profitability ratio, was selected by teacher Roza who said that her students do not know how to use the data given to them and appear to be confused when shown different ways of presenting financial information. The data given was financial information from the income statement and breakeven methods.

Four teachers from the same school were involved in the study (June to August 2019) supported by a facilitator from the Teacher Academy. Three of them teach Cambridge International A-level Business and one teaches O-level Business Studies. The facilitator is running a pilot project to support learning study in schools. Three schools responded to the facilitator's invitation to be part of the project. This is the first school to participate in this project.

The object of learning

In Business courses students are expected to be familiar with the ideas of profit, gross profit margin and net profit margin. Profit is the difference between revenue and cost. Revenue is calculated from the formula price multiplied by quantity. Cost is made up of fixed and variable cost. In this study, the teachers assumed that fixed cost is expenses while variable cost can be called cost of sales.

Understanding what profit means can impact an understanding of profitability ratios. Gross profit is the difference between revenue and cost of sales. Net profit is the difference between gross profit and expenses. Both gross and net profit can be used to assess how well companies are doing financially. Their performances can be compared and suggestions for improvement can be offered by looking at revenue and cost figures.

The pre-test

Four questions were designed. Due to space constraints, we will focus on Q3 and Q4. In question 3, students had to judge which company was performing better. This required an understanding of gross profit margin (GPM) and net profit margin (NPM).

3. Based on the data provided, which company has a better performance in te profitability? Justify your answer.

Company	X	Y
Profits	$100	$75
Total cost	$100	$125
Variable cost	$40	$65
Fixed cost	$60	$60

In question 4 students are expected to use the data to suggest how the companies could improve. They could refer to revenue and cost factors to improve the companies.

4. The managers of company X and company Y have access to these data. Based on the data, how would the management of company X and company Y improve their performances?

Identifying the critical aspects from the pre-test results

For Q3, the teachers found that students do not know how to calculate gross and net profit margin because their understanding of profit is limited and they do not yet appreciate how variable and fixed cost can impact gross and net profit margin respectively. For Q4, students need to discern that a company's performance can be improved by suggesting factors that affect the revenue and costs of the company. This is an example of teachers identifying the critical aspects of the object of learning – what students needed to learn.

Intended object of learning

We will now focus on how the teachers planned to handle the teaching of profit margins. The teachers introduced four bakery businesses for students to compare their business performance (see worksheet). The key here is to vary revenue, variable cost and fixed cost systematically for each business. They are expected to compare each business

against BB. The plan is to introduce this pattern of variation into the lesson.

	Invariant	Varied	Discernment
Business CC compared to BB	Revenue Fixed cost	Variable cost	Variable cost affects GPM.
Business DD compared to BB	Revenue Variable cost	Fixed cost	Fixed cost affects NPM.
Business EE compared to BB	Variable cost Fixed cost	Revenue	Revenue affects GPM and NPM.

Belait Bakery (BB)

BB is a cake business owned by two brothers, Ali and Ahmad. They make different types of pastry and cakes. They employed two full time workers and they also have to pay other expenses.

There are also other bakery business that is operating in Belait along with BB known as Custard Cream (CC), Dipping Dough (DD) and Extra Eggette (EE). The table below shows the extracted financial information of all four bakeries.

Bakeries	BB	CC	DD	EE
Revenue	$30,000	$30,000	$30,000	$35,000
Total Variable cost	$10,000	$20,000	$10,000	$10,000
Fixed cost	$4,000	$4,000	$3,000	$4,000
Gross profit margin	66.7%	33.3%	66.7%	71.4%
Net profit margin	53.3%	20%	53.3% 56.7%	60%

1. Fill in BB's profitability above to complete the table.
2. Based on the data above, which business is performing the best in the industry. Justify your answer.
3. How could each business improve their financial performance?

Enacted object of learning

All the groups were able to identify EE as the best performing business based on its gross and net profit margin. The response suggests that the students are making a distinction between gross and net profit margin and discerning the difference. To answer how to improve financial performance, one group could identify the revenue factor and one cost factor i.e. the variable cost. It even included another option such as promotion to increase demand. This suggests discernment of two aspects – revenue and variable cost. The other two groups were able to discern all three aspects – revenue, variable cost and

fixed cost. They can see that these impact the profit and margins.

Lived object of learning

In the post-test, there was a striking improvement in the understanding of profitability as illustrated in the answers to questions 3 and 4. Five out of 8 (62.5%) improved their levels of understanding for question 3, while seven out of 8 (87.5%) improved for question 4.

WHAT AND HOW THE TEACHERS LEARNT

This case used the learning study framework where the search for critical aspects empirically (Lo, 2012) is the key to designing the lesson. Variation is then used as the pedagogical design where teachers learn to decide what aspect to keep invariant and what to vary. Vikstrom et al (2013), in their learning study on Grade 8 solution chemistry, said that 'If variation is a prerequisite for students' learning, we can assume that this is the case also for teachers' learning and professional development' (p39). We can relate to this finding. This learning study opened up opportunities for teacher learning through the cycle of planning, teaching and reviewing while focused on an object of learning. Roza said defining the object of learning is not as straightforward as it seemed.

in that one topic there are a lot of areas that you can tackle .. so we have to let that teacher think about which area that they exactly want to focus on, only then they can help the students because I was surprised that profitability you can break them down into so many areas, calculations or … recommendations, or what changes it, so many things. Focusing on one area is difficult.

However, she said the use of pre-tests helped to determine what areas to focus and what students needed to learn.

I think we did two pre-tests, that's when the focus shift because at first we were talking about profitability only, but apparently they didn't know the different kinds of profits so that's why we shift our focus on profit first and then to lesson 2 which is profitability

Roza found that one cannot teach effectively if one does not know what is critical for learning the object of learning.

.. you need to do the pre-test to see what they know and what they don't know so from there you can actually design your lesson because usually what we do we just jump into the lesson and teach what we think they don't know but then it doesn't always work ..

In her reflection, Roza describes her previous teaching practice. It is unquestioning – 'we just jump into the lesson' – but realizes 'it doesn't always work'. She saw the need to teach profitability into two one-hour lessons – profit in the first lesson and profitability in the second lesson – which provided a narrower

focus but also avoided teaching 'too much for the students'. She explained that the lesson's activities had to offer the opportunity to experience the variation and she found from the post-test that her students could see the pattern of variation in the lesson.

The costs and revenue … that's why we change it one by one: fixed cost, variable cost, revenue. (I)nstead of telling the students these three factors changes the calculation let them see for themselves because when we tell them they keep on forgetting but when they notice it by themselves, when you involve the students the thinking process that would last long

Ayaz learnt from the planning, in particular using the variation theory of learning to design the lessons. By studying the design and connecting it with the learning outcomes, he could see the power of variation at work.

.. when we are looking at the bakeries for one you just changed the sales, for another you just change the variable cost, so they can see what affects the profit. So we actually saw in their comments they were actually talking about variable cost, some of them were talking about fixed cost so you can see that they were actually looking at these things which actually affect the profit. That's what we wanted them to see isn't it? It's not just the cost that affects the profit but it's also the sales. You can see the students are gaining.

Ayaz saw a different lesson design that was implemented from normal practice. He could see the contrast. He saw the systematic patterns of variation being used. He could envisage using this lesson with his own

students. He could see using variation on other topics to teach more effectively.

> *previously what we normally tend do we start by asking them to give the definition the formula, give them worked examples to do and after that give questions to do. Some students might have background in Accounting, there were certain students who might have difficulties in it so not all of them can actually see it. But now we have another way of teaching this particular topic so definitely when I get to (profitability) ratios I would try to use the same figures and see if it can actually help the students, but not just profitability I can also try to use it for other topics that I am teaching …*

Kamariah added that teachers were accustomed to 'spoonfeeding', to 'give, give, give', - what some may consider as a teacher-centric approach - but not knowing whether the students have understood the material or not. She commented on the impact of the lesson design on learning outcomes.

> *The (students) were able to see the revenue even for EE and they were able to see cost of sales for the other, … they were able to tell, they were not confused , you can see they are clear on things ..*

Rashidah valued the teamwork and mentioned the 'chance to contribute to help our friend Roza to improve the lesson'. The experience taught her to see things from the student's side. For example, she got to see students' different understandings of profit,

something she had not predicted. On the learning outcomes, she said:

> *I'm impressed with the performance. When we checked the post-test one of the students (was) able to answer perfectly, level 5, I think that's very good, (it's) AS level standard.*

The teachers in the study were both the objects and the subjects of the research. The path of learning, both planned and enacted, for these teachers appears to have been:

object of learning*	teaching	
V	I	contrast
I	V	generalisation
V	V	fusion

*what the teachers see as **critical aspects** of the object of learning for the learners. I=invariant; V=varied.

The teachers can be described as having gone through a path of teacher learning in the following pattern of variation in a temporal sequence contrast-generalisation-fusion (Wood and Rovio-Johansson, 2019). Contrast – the teachers discovered the critical aspects of the object of learning for their students. Generalisation - they changed the lesson design so that they could see the effect of the new design on their students' experience of the object of learning. Fusion - the teachers focused on the evidence of the critical aspects of the object of learning for their students and developed their pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). Wood and Rovio-Johansson (2019) concluded that to be worthwhile, Learning Study must provide insights that

contribute to their PCK and teachers share their insights into students' and teachers' ways of handling objects of learning to good effect. This report hopes to have achieved this.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

This case adds to the knowledge product of a learning study (Runesson, 2019). It is made possible by the support of the Ministry of Education, school leaders, and the teachers who stayed committed to the professional development. The case shows that teachers should learn to limit the object of learning, design an appropriate pre-test to determine what is critical for learning. All this takes time and commitment. With the support of a facilitator, lessons can be planned with a deliberate pattern of variation. Teachers should observe the lesson as far as possible and record it. The enactment and the lived experiences of the students should be compared to analyse what is discerned. Two or three cycles may be needed. This study shows that by situating teachers as learners, action research offers a systematic and intentional approach to improving PCK and changing teaching (Manfra, 2019) through the path of teacher learning contrast-generalisation-fusion (Wood & Rovio-Johansson, 2019).

References

Lo, M. L. (2012). Variation theory and improvement of teaching and learning. *Gothenburg Studies in Educational Sciences*, *323*. Göteborg, Sweden: University of Gothenburg.

Manfra, M.G. (2019), Action Research and Systematic, Intentional Change in Teaching Practice, *Review of Research in Education 43*(1):163-196 DOI: 10.3102/0091732X18821132, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333306836_Action_Research_and_Systematic_Intentional_Change_in_Teaching_Practice.

Marton, F., Wai, M.C. and Chan, S.W.Y. (2019), The object of learning in action research and learning study, *Educational Action Research*, 27(4): 481-495. https://doi.org/10.1080/09650792.2018.1489873

Runneson, K.U. (2019), Teachers and researchers in collaboration. A possibility to overcome the research-practice gap? *European Journal of Education,* 54: 250-260.

Vikström, A., Billström, A., Fazeli, P., Holm, M., Jonsson, K., Karlsson, G., and Rydström, P. (2013), Teachers' solutions: a learning study about solution chemistry in Grade 8, *International Journal for Lesson and Learning Studies*, 2(1): 26-40.

Wood, K. and Rovio-Johansson, A. (2019) What and how do teachers learn by taking part in Lesson Study? Presentation to the World Association of Lesson Studies (WALS) International Conference, *Crafting Sustainable Pedagogies for Teaching and Learning*, Vrije Universiteit (VU), Amsterdam, the Netherlands, 2 - 6 September.

A Consideration of the Benefits of Using Co-creation Projects, as an Alternative Placement, to Mentor Students and integrate them into the University

A research working paper by Anne Temple Clothier and David Matheson

Abstract

This paper reveals how co-creation projects may add-value to students' assimilation into social structures that support learning. The case study draws on students' reflections, collected during focus groups and one-to-one interviews. Using qualitative data, it identifies two key facets of the 'student experience' that have been enhanced using a co-creation pedagogy. These significant areas of development are; developing collaborative learning and enhancing on-line communications. We conclude that cocreation projects are a viable alternative to traditional student placements. We also advocate that their usefulness is particularly pertinent when student engagement is impacted by the need to maintain social distancing.

Key Words: Co-creation, Collaboration, On-line Engagement, Communication, Student Experience

1.   Introduction

In the current coronavirus climate, it is necessary to refine and reframe the teaching practices that support learner development, and this is the second output from a longitudinal study evaluating the potential benefits of using co-creation projects with adult learners. The first output concludes that revising the relationships between facilitators and learners' increases student capacity for agentic self-authorship, and results in new professional and scholarly development being transferred across the academic course.

Although some have evaluated co-creation as an effective pedagogy for teaching and curricula design, and others what the process adds to the overall educational experience of those involved, this research presents student perceptions of a co-creation project, undertaken as a 'Placement' in 2019-2020, at Leeds Beckett University. The research explores co-creation in relation to two key themes; collaborative learning, and on-line engagement. First, we present the theoretical grounding for the research, then describe the Carnegie Co-creation Project 2019-2020. After

outlining our methodology, we provide a discussion of the findings before subsequent recommendations are made.

1.2 Co-creation

Robertson (2009, 39) suggests that education should be "facilitative, dynamic and built on the core concepts of relationships, knowledge generation and critical reflection". One way of doing this is to use co-creation as a pedagogic practice.

Ramaswamy & Ozcan (2014, 15) note that co-creation does not involve "knowable rules and finite options" instead it is necessary to "effectively navigate through the fog of value creation opportunities, connecting them with appropriate value creating resources". They suggest that effectively harnessing the capacity and agency of others enables groups (and individuals) to be flexible, adaptive, and productive whilst responding rapidly to change.

Whilst all students are capable of development, the structures within which they learn are not always conducive to reflection or engagement, indeed Archer & Archer (1996, 1) views this relationship between 'structure' and 'agency' as "the basic issue in modern social theory". However, Robertson (2009, 39) suggests that it is

possible for higher education to "meaningfully engage with learners" and avoid "the culture of dependency … created through hierarchical, 'one-way' power relationships", and advocates cocreation as an alternative method of engagement.

Taylor & Bovill also (2018, 124) suggest that co-creation provides an effective way to intersect the power relationships in education:

In traditional curricula, power operates vertically and hierarchically; power over what is taught and how it is taught lies with the teacher. In contrast, practices of co-creation usually have an explicit goal to unsettle and destabilise these traditional power relations.

By adopting this approach, it is possible to create a democratic intellectual community, with authentic co-inquiry.

The following sections present theoretical grounding, exploring elements of the student experience that may be enhanced by participating in co-creation projects. Specifically, cocreation and collaborative learning, and cocreation and on-line engagement.

1.3 Supporting Learners

1.3.1 Co-creation and collaborative learning.

Terenzini et al. (2001, 128) report that "a growing body of research indicates that active and collaborative approaches to instruction may well be more effective than conventional lecture/discussion methods", and student learning is increased during activities that necessitate active engagement, discussion and collaboration around clearly defined challenges.

The knowledge acquisition in co-creation is fostered through ongoing dialogue, whereby students and practitioners "evaluate jointly their choices as they go along in the value co-creation process of a product or a service" (Romero & Molina, 2011, 458). A consequence of this is that the co-creation process itself results in the participants experiencing a "greater level of knowledge and expertise about the product or the service that he/she helps to co-construct" (ibid). Therefore, students who participate in co-creation projects, relevant to their course of study, should be able to apply their existing understanding of theory and practice into real-life applications and use critical thinking and self-directed learning to deepen their understanding of the context.

An additional value to adopting this type of development tool is that, as well as

developing conceptual and technical skills, it also challenges the social/human skills of the participants, specifically tolerance, negotiation and empathy. As such, living and learning in an inclusive culture, that embraces diversity and democracy, should lead to valuing the qualities of other cultures.

Therefore, in addition to facilitating a deepened understanding of theory and practice, it is evident that a collaborative cocreation approach will allow agentic application of expertise and enhance empathy in an inclusive community.

1.3.2 Cocreation and On-line Engagement.

We would suggest that the current generation of users in higher education have a strong dependence on the internet as an integral part of their daily lives, and as such it is advisable to maximise the use of on-line communications to reduce the constraints of time and space, and create access on a more 'anytime and anywhere' basis. Consequently, the role, and use of social media in the delivery mechanisms of Higher Education is becoming increasingly important.

The effectiveness of using social media to establish relationships and build communities is widely recognised and lends itself well to the process of co-creation. Füller et al. (2009,

72) note that "Due to cost-efficient and multimedia-rich interaction opportunities offered by the Internet and the existence of online communities, virtual co-creation has become a suitable means of creating value" and that effectively using technology enables and enhances that collaboration.

It is apparent that the internet has much to offer in terms of creating democratic, inclusive, and resource rich communities. These types of communities are appropriate for cocreation pedagogies, allowing creativity and learning to flourish. Although this particular use of technology may be new to the learner, the crossing, and removal of communications boundaries will create new knowledge and increased emotional engagement with the learning process. This may initially lead to feelings of vulnerability, in terms of engaging with technology or the issues contained within the specific cocreation project, however it is necessary to expose these needs for development so that they may be addressed.

2.   Carnegie Co-creation Project 2019-2020

This was the fourth consecutive year that a co-creation project had been offered to Teaching and Education Studies students as a 'placement' elective. The course is open to those who wish to work in education, but do not necessarily want to teach, as such it is not necessary to have a teaching role as part of the placement. The Placement Elective is an academic requirement at each level of the course and is assessed within the formal academic framework of the university. Students are encouraged to self-select a suitable environment to fulfil the requirements of the module and arrange their own placement. The co-creation project is one of the options available to them, and the work within it is in no way part of curricular activities.

Whilst the Placement requires students to design a conference poster, and produce a written reflection on their professional development, these are assessed by a tutor who has not been part of the placement itself. Therefore, within the co-creation project no academic member of staff, or specialist facilitator had the power "to pass, fail, any student, or indeed assess any engagement, outcomes of behaviours. Hence, there are no rules or guideline regarding 'compliance' or benchmarks for 'achievement' within the project" (Temple Clothier & Matheson, 2017, 4). In addition, as with previous years, learners are allowed, and encouraged, to tell the academic and specialist facilitators "what to do, or to identify what they themselves would like to do, based on their interests or desired learning outcomes" (ibid). The power relationship between all participants is

democratic, and discussion characterise the communication. Therefore, the focus and outcomes of the co-creation process develop organically and are a result of the negotiations occurring throughout. On completion, the final products and outcomes are jointly attributed to the students and the range of facilitators who had worked with them. In addition, the 'quality' of the product is determined by the independent stakeholders after distribution to local schools.

In November 2019, the founder of *The Power Project*, a Community Investment Company (CIC), was invited to speak to students about her work redistributing surplus books, games, sports and musical equipment into primary schools. These resources had been 'gifted' to the CIC and, in addition to supplying the resources, the CIC hoped to build additional teaching and learning material that would facilitate the effective use of this equipment within schools. The students were challenged to develop creative strategies to enable both teachers and parents to use the resources, to better support children's learning through semi-structured interactive activities appealing to a wide range of abilities. Students were given the opportunity to reflect on whether this opportunity would fit with their preferred professional development, and those who chose to volunteer met again later that month.

At the first formal collaborative session, the model of co-creation was explained; namely that the project would be run on democratic principles, with an equal power relationship across all participants. The project team comprised of twelve Level-4 (L4), two Level-5 (L5), and two Level-6 students (L6), an academic facilitator (AF), an educational psychologist (EP), and the CIC specialist facilitator (SF). The aim was to 'add-value' to the resources provided by the CIC.

The group met for two hours, face-to-face, on a weekly basis. Between these sessions, on-line communication took place via email, Facebook, WhatsApp, and telephone; and resources were shared and disseminated using MyBeckett. Over eight weeks, the co-creation team designed 'workshops' that focused on effectively supporting a child's reading, learning numeracy through games, developing learner resilience, and story-writing. The outputs were documented as lesson plans, appropriate resources were identified, and links were made with the national curriculum. The AF, EP and SF used their knowledge of legislative and theoretical frameworks to signpost the students to relevant documentation, and by doing so illuminated areas where policy intersected with practice. Engagement was high; and students reported that the values contained in the project, namely recycling and repurposing resources, resonated highly with

them. The social innovation, and grassroots frugality challenged them to be creative and resourceful, and designing learning activities was intellectually challenging, requiring them to apply their professional leaning in new and real-life contexts.

The following section outlines the methodological considerations for exploring students' perceptions of experiencing a co-creation approach in their university experience.

3. The Research

Using an interpretivist epistemology and a constructivist ontology, the researchers present the participants perceptions, whilst also applying their own beliefs, understanding and meaning to the research.

The academic facilitator (AF) collected the data, and the neutral academic researcher (AR) contributed to the subsequent analysis and presentation of the findings. As such, the evaluative research is distinct from the process of the project itself and limited to these two academics. The research adhered to the Research and Ethical framework of the university. Any involvement in the research was voluntary and distinct from the co-creation project itself; however, all participants in the co-creation process were willing to contribute to the data collection for the research. We believe the fully inclusive nature of the sample strengthens the reliability of the findings.

The convenient sample of sixteen students comprised of twelve L4, two L5, and two L6 students. Qualitative data was collected using semi-structured interviews, informal focus-groups and field-notes. The AF recorded the field-notes during the project's collaborative meetings and held informal focus groups at the end of the sessions to allow reflection and evaluation of the preceding events. In addition, 30-minute semi-structured one-to-one interviews were conducted with participants throughout the duration of the project. On each occasion, the level of disclosure was controlled by the respondent, and all that was asked of them were open and honest reflections.

The participants have been anonymised using an alphabetical system, with the course level indicated using L4, L5, L6 post-nominals.

4. Discussion of Results

Initial observations confirmed that the project had broadened the participants understanding of the context within which education takes place, and their introduction to working with third sector organisations.

However, it was the impact on collaborative learning, and engagement with on-line communications that presented as significant themes, and they are presented here.

4.1 Cocreation and collaborative learning.

Working on 'real-life' issues appeared to challenge some preconceived ideas as to what working in the education sector may involve – "It's been invaluable at the beginning of the course, as it helps make realistic decisions about where our careers may take us" (FL4). This suggests that some of their preconceptions had been refined because of being exposed to the broader context, and challenges, of education. KL4 said, "Whilst we'd some idea what to expect of university life, and work in schools, some of our expectations were limited or inaccurate". Although this adds value to the students' ability to realistically plan their careers, we also suggest that associated academic practitioners will also benefit if they are not having to combat the naïve conceptual schema that freshers sometimes bring with them.

EL4 said, "Being able to suggest ideas makes the project interesting. We're continuously provided with options as to how we want to be involved, so we're never in a situation where we don't know what we are doing". In addition, GL4 reports "It pushes us to link

theory and practice, then actually go out there and do something". The alternative approach to standard classroom delivery appealed to the participants, as ML5 suggests "Lectures are good for presenting the theory and policy; however, it's not until you're 'out-there' getting hands-on experience that you get a sense of what the reality will be".

PL6 said "Without telling us what to do and what to think, co-creation allowed us to experience various facets of our 'profession' in a safe supportive environment" which indicates that the on-going evaluation of choices identified by Romero & Molina (2011) had occurred. The impact of this was described by ML5, "We've got a better grasp of the subject, and the demands of the roles" which suggests that collaborative co-creation results in a greater level of knowledge and expertise, encourages learner agency, and develops critical thinking.

Our findings support Archer & Archer (1996) in that the collaborative structure and agency of the co-creation group had successfully facilitated creative knowledge making and empowered its members. Final-year student OL6 said "I chose this for the basis of my dissertation, I'm really interested in how austerity impacts on the education system, and it's a fantastic opportunity to find out more about it". This supports research which

maintains that the collaborative nature of co-creation creates an effective pedagogy with adult learners, and that social innovation is a highly attractive concept.

4.2 Co-creation and On-line Learning.

A combination of self-direction and working partnerships required the effective engagement with technology. Not only were resources developed using the various 'packages' available including University intranet, MS-Word, PowerPoint, and YouTube, search engines provided by Google, Google Scholar and OpenAthens were utilised. This is significant as developing learners Digital Literacy is a key priority on the course that binds these participants together. However, it was the engagement with digital communication channels that was the most noteworthy finding, as the collaborative nature of the project had facilitated the creation of new communication networks and social structures. AL4 said, "Although we share our ideas and create things in the classroom, most of the development takes place off-site and is done on an individual basis". FL4 explained, "We communicate and share on-line using email, WhatsApp and SnapChat, so we can respond rapidly and develop our ideas". The immediacy of the on-line feedback, and the subsequent pace of development, appeared to be major influences in terms of securing engagement and maintaining high motivation. Given that

participants reported that group members were "highly motivated," it appears this type of interaction adds value to the student experience by utilizing technological communication.

Also, access to the facilitators, for practical and academic assistance, was also valued "Because we can email at any time, to anyone in the group, we always know where to go, who to get in contact with, regarding any issues or questions we may have" (DL4). "The democratic processes give us the freedom to determine what we are working on, and how" (LL4) indicates that the unsettled traditional power relationships also add-value to the student experience.

Participants used technology to reduce the constraints of time and space and were happy to use social media to establish and maintain relationships. In addition, the co-creation process facilitated and strengthened engagement with on-line research options, data presentation methods, and communication options. Because of this, new knowledge, and possibilities for learning had been cost-effectively (Füller et al., 2009) identified and implemented.

The overarching outcome of participating in an uncertain, active learning process, was that self-authorship had created a democratic

collaborative group, who trusted and supported each other. The experience was valued highly, with participants characterising the outcomes as an increase in their capability and employability; "With the help of specialists we've developed skills which are all key to our future professional aspirations" (CL4). However, we would suggest that the value-added to the student experience goes beyond knowledge transfer, and extends to quality relationships, increased attachment, and student agency. We also maintain that this has been achieved though the removal of traditional boundaries. The following section considers the implications of these findings and presents our recommendations.

5. Conclusion

This research has revealed some of the key areas where students perceived co-creation has added value to their educational experience. A learning community was established that transcended the traditional structures of course provision and created inter-level peer relationships. These peer connections were highly valued in terms of emotional and academic development and facilitated and maintained on-line

communication. Although the democratic processes may have taken students out of their comfort zones, the experience proved rewarding on an interpersonal and intellectual basis. Consequently, we recommend that co-creation projects be considered favourably as part of students' academic experiences.

Although we acknowledge that it is not always possible, or comfortable, to identify projects and facilitators who are willing to share power with students, we would encourage course teams to consider offering co-creation projects as a viable alternative to the more traditional placement options on every level of an award.

Finally, considering the current preference for social distancing, it is timely to consider new ways of working. On-line co-creation projects provide both focus and means to address issues, engage learners in meaningful activities, and create valuable outputs. Whatever the future holds, this co-creation learning community continues to exist, and support each other, and this paper is dedicated to its members with warmth and admiration.

References

Archer, M. S., & Archer, M. S. (1996). *Culture and agency: The place of culture in social theory*. Cambridge University Press.

Füller, J., Mühlbacher, H. Matzler, K. & Jawecki,G. (2009) Consumer Empowerment Through Internet-Based Co-creation, *Journal of Management Information Systems*, 26:3, 71-102, DOI: 10.2753/MIS0742-1222260303

Kumar, V., & Nanda, P. (2019). Social media in higher education: A framework for continuous engagement. *International Journal of Information and Communication Technology Education (IJICTE)*, *15*(1), 97-108.

Ramaswamy, V., & Ozcan, K. (2014). *The co-creation paradigm*. Stanford University Press.

Robertson, J. (2009) Coaching leadership learning through partnership, School Leadership & Management, 29:1, 39-49, DOI: 10.1080/13632430802646388

Romero, D., & Molina, A. (2011) Collaborative networked organisations and customer communities: value co-creation and co-innovation in the networking era, Production Planning & Control, 22:5-6, 447-472, DOI: 10.1080/09537287.2010.536619

Taylor, C. A., & Bovill, C. (2018). Towards an ecology of participation: Process philosophy and co-creation of higher education curricula. *European Educational Research Journal*, *17*(1), 112-128.

Temple Clothier, A., & Matheson, D. (2017). Using co-creation as a pedagogic method for the professional development of students undertaking a BA (Hons) in Education Studies, Journal of Further and Higher Education, DOI: 10.1080/0309877X.2017.1409344

Terenzini, P. T., Cabrera, A. F., Colbeck, C. L., Parente, J. M., & Bjorklund, S. A. (2001). Collaborative learning vs. lecture/discussion: Students' reported learning gains. *Journal of Engineering Education*, *90*(1), 123-130.

Developing researcherly dispositions as a practitioner in the field in the UAE

A research working paper by Shaun Robison

Abstract

In order to make empowering decisions about their professional lives within the UAE, both teacher educators and teachers may need to develop a set of *researcherly dispositions*. The psychological habits of teacher educators, and the dispositions they develop may provide them with a bridge to academia and a research identity. Little is known about the psychological mechanisms of teacher educators, however; or how workplace factors contribute or impede to developing a teacher educator's ability to conduct research (Tack & Vanderlinde, 2019:1). These psychological mechanisms might be context dependent as a result of the societal structures in place, and the strength of the country's research culture. A narrative study has been conducted in the UAE exploring a teacher educator's emerging knowledge of his own researcherly dispoitions. This paper offers an insight into the literature on researcherly dispositions and the implications for teacher educators in the UAE.

1.Introduction

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the professional learning of teacher educators was poorly understood, and their learning within the context of their roles, mainly in initial teacher training, was under-researched and undervalued. Since then, however, the increasing importance and higher status of teacher educators necessitates the acquisition of specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are different to those of teachers (Van der Klink et al, 2017). While there has been an increase in both research and policy literature (Tack & Vanderlinde, 2014:1) a "systematic overview of studies on teacher educators is still lacking" (Ping et al, 2018:2). The majority of research on teacher educators has been located in Europe or in other Western settings, and most of the research has been conducted within initial teacher-training programmes; rarely with teachers in the field (Ping et al, 2018).

Many teacher educators, however, particularly those working outside of higher

education settings, continue to operate in the profession without the ongoing professional learning necessary to meet the growing needs of today. These professionals need to acquire specific 'habits of mind' and 'researcherly dispositions' to enable them to conduct research within the field, and therefore develop their research identity within the profession (Tack & Vanderlinde, 2014). The process of conducting research is also a form of professionalization that can provide deeper insight into the quality of practices (Kreijens, 2019:1).

2. Research and the teacher educator

The transition from teacher to teacher educator continues to be a challenge, as teacher educators are reported to take up to three years to establish their new identity. Within that time, they are required to develop their pedagogy as a teacher educator and grapple with a research identity to be accepted into higher education (Maaranen et al, 2019:212).

Another disadvantage teacher educators may experience is for their contribution to the research landscape of professional learning to be undervalued (Willemse & Boei, 2013:355) when they should be recognised as legitimate consumers and producers of research (Tack & Vanderlinde, 2019:16). As their identities are complex, some teacher educators may have

difficulty in adopting a specific research identity, especially as they do not always work within academic research settings and are "uneasy residents in academe" (Murray, 2010:198). In other words, these professionals may struggle to adopt a researcher role as 'semi-academics' as some would describe them (Vanassche, 2019:1). Additionally, teacher educators and practitioners in school settings often find the lack of research culture within their workplaces problematic; a situation that underlines their personal responsibility to conduct their own research in order to develop the necessary research skills (Willemse and Boei, 2013:355).

The successful development of a research identity may be the bridge to academia, but crossing this bridge may be particularly challenging in a society without a strong research culture, or where research is still an emerging dimension of that society, like the United Arab Emirates. Ben-Peretz et al's (2012) study and Guberman and McDossi's (2019) more recent research on teacher educators in Israel have identified a range of challenges that teacher educators encounter in conducting research. Both studies highlight the identity issues teacher educators face, although Guberman and McDossi's (2019) study was situated within the higher education sector rather than in the field. In the absence of research structures and support mechanisms, teacher educators in the

field may be more isolated. In higher education settings, they operate within an institutional context, often with support structures such as unions, HR departments, and mentors. Many of their counterparts, however, especially those in developing countries like the UAE, may not have these benefits, and the challenges are therefore different. Despite this, there is potential in teacher education for a new type of research that is well designed, theoretically informed, and capable of generating new insights in the field of teacher educators as well as teachers (Murray, 2010:205). The research should inform discussions around the development of future and existing teachers (Ben-Peretz et al, 2010:113). There is also potential for teacher educators' research to contribute to the space of professional learning as inquiry-based 'model pedagogues' that are reflective, with multi-layered professional identities (Ben-Peretz, 2012:120).

Research and knowledge creation may be better facilitated where there are established networks of teacher educators (Ping et al, 2018; Kelchtermans et al, 2018). Examples include research by professional organisations or networks such as the Association of Teacher Educators in the USA, VELON in the Netherlands, AITSL in Australia, and MOFET in Israel (Ping et al, 2018). Similarly, Kelchtermans et al's (2018) research was conducted with experienced teacher

educators in Belgium, Ireland, Israel, the Netherlands, Norway, and the United Kingdom. All these settings could be classified as developed countries with established education systems; hence the knowledge base that has emerged may be a reflection of those structures.

Within such settings, the concept of disposition can play an important part in explaining behaviours related to an individual's sensitivity to research opportunities, and their ability to respond to these (Tack & Vanderlinde, 2014). Three studies have framed this problem and explored the process of "inquiry of the mind" in teacher educators (Kreijins, 2019) alongside their 'researcherly dispositions" in complex environments with work-related pressures (Tack & Vanderlinde, 2014, 2019). Little is known about the psychological mechanisms of teacher educators, however; or how workplace factors contribute or impede to developing a teacher educator's ability to conduct research (Tack & Vanderlinde, 2019:1).

In psychology, a disposition is defined as a habit of mind or tendency towards a particular pattern of behaviour (Katz & Raths, 1985). The concept raises important questions such as: can dispositions be developed through experience? Are they immutable

aspects of someone's character? What is the relationship between an observed behaviour and a disposition? (Nelson, 2015:87). For teacher educators, a researcherly disposition is "broadly defined as a teacher educators' habit of mind to engage with research—both as consumer and producer—to improve their own practice and contribute to the knowledge base on teacher educators (Tack, 2017:181). A teacher educator's researcheley disposition has three inter-related dimensions: 1) *the affective dimension*, which refers to the extent a teacher educator values a research-oriented approach towards their daily practice, as well as their capacity to be a smart consumer of research; 2) *the cognitive dimension*, which relates to how well a teacher educator is able to engage in research in his/her daily practice; and 3) *the behavioural dimension*, which refers to a teacher educator's ability to carry out research activities (Tack & Vanderlinde, 2019:464).

These dimensions provide theoretical concepts that explain different aspects of teacher educators' researcherly dispositions. The questions that arise around the development of these dispositions focus on whether any differences exist among the traits, whether or not a disposition can be conceptualised, and crucially, whether or not it can be measured. Tack and Vanderlinde (2014) present a typology, the 'Teacher

Educator Researcherly Disposition Scale' (TERDS), which consists of a 20-item questionnaire that can be used by teacher educators' to self-report researcherly dispositions. Within the question, they used first-person statements to explore each participant's self-assessment of their research capability, such as 'I conduct research to improve my own practice' and 'I have enough methodological knowledge to autonomously go through a research cycle (e.g., ask a research question, gather data, analyse and report data, etc.)'. The analytical framework within the study explores teacher educators' inclination to research, their sensitivity and alertness to opportunities, and their ability to follow through and conduct the research. This analysis enabled deeper insights into the factors that influence a teacher educator to behave in a certain way (Tack & Vanderlinde, 2014:301).

The traits necessary in developing a teacher educator's research identity include having a strong personal interest, a positive attitude, and a sense of urgency, and these traits need to be informed by values and missions; while similarly, "our habits are context responsive" (Nelson, 2015:88). These findings suggests that teacher educators need to become more aware of the demands of their professional role and of how their "capabilities for conducting research are evolving" (Willemse & Boei, 2013:357). Without this awareness,

"they can lose their responsiveness thus locking us into patterns of action that inhibit our abilities to live creatively in complex social situations like those of the classroom" (Nelson, 2015:88).

The findings of Tack and Vanderlinde's (2014) study present a typology of three different types of teacher educators: *The Enquiring Teacher Educator*, who is defined as lacking professional knowledge and methodological expertise, and therefore lacking in cognitive and behavioural dimensions; *The Well-Read Teacher Educator*, which refers to a teacher educator who engages in reading academic literature from time to time, and who strongly values research as part of their occupation, but still lacks the behavioural dimension; and *The Teacher Educator-Researcher*, who demonstrates all three dimensions of researcherly dispositions (cognitive, behavioural and affective). A limitation of the above-mentioned study was the small sample of teacher educators involved, so the results may not be generalizable. Nonetheless, however, the complex environments, evolving personal circumstances, and theoretical approach in the study is relevant to understanding this research within the context of my professional roles.

Similarly, Kreijens et al (2019) explore the development of a psychometric instrument to measure teachers' researcherly disposition and improve understandings of teacher educators' sensitivity to research opportunities, along with their capacity to conduct research. In their study, these researchers created a scale with three dimensions to measure a teacher's ability to: 1) *value deep understanding*, 2) *reserve judgment and tolerate ambiguity* and, 3) *take a range of perspectives and pose focussed questions*. Within these dimensions are thirteen 'I can', 'I am', and similar statements that are useful and translatable to the present study. As a set of inquiry habits, these are broad and general, and can therefore provide a scale of behaviours to act upon one's tendency to conduct research. The scale items are in Fig 1.

Value deep understanding
1. I am critical on whether I did the right thing.
2. I wonder if I can improve my work.
3. I watch how colleagues do things in order to learn from them.
4. I ask others what they think of my work.
5. I try to collect information so I can evaluate my work.

Reserve judgment and tolerate ambiguity
1. I refuse to accept unwarranted assertions and explanations irrespective of how plausible they might be.
2. I have a certain tolerance for uncertainties and ambiguities in offered solutions and explanations,
3. I am willing to accept some uncertainty provided that finally there is insight into proven solutions and reasonable explanations.
4. I can deal with situations wherein solutions and explanations are not yet available.

Take a range of perspectives and systematically pose increasingly focused questions
1. I try, when it comes to sorting things out, to pose increasingly better and more targeted questions.
2. I try to view things from other perspectives.
3. I try to avoid prejudices with regard to solutions and explanations.
4. I try, by means of a systematic approach to investigations, to find evidence for solutions and explanations.

Figure 1 Dimensions of inquiry habits
Source: Kreijen's scale (2019)

Although Tack and Vanderlinde's (2014) Teacher Educator Researcherly Disposition Scale' (TERDS) and Kreijen's (2019)

Dimensions of Inquiry Habits (Figure 1) are similar, Kreijen's scale appears to explore more psychological and cognitive traits as opposed to the more behavioural traits in Tack and Vanderlinde's scale. Professional learning that facilitates the development of these inquiry habits needs to "focus on attitudes, communication, and reflection"; and teacher educators need to continue working on their competencies as life-long learners "who keep in touch with the latest developments and insights in their own field" (Kelchtermans et al, 2018:128). The majority of the factors within Kreijen's (2019) dimensions will influence a teacher educator's ability to "consume research as well as conduct it" (Van der Klink et al, 2017:164).

Teacher educators may be required to engage with research in other international settings outside the usual context, and hence to reflect on how they can translate this cultural knowledge into their practice. Their own identities, values, and behaviours will also determine their conceptualisation of this cultural knowledge into a context where they, as teacher educators in the UAE, have complex lives and roles. Consequently, teacher educators' reasons for engaging in research are a combination of internal and external motivations that can coexist (Guberman & Mcdossi, 2019:7). The motivations may include a personal interest in the research, a desire to contribute more fully

to practice, and/or obtain academic recognition and a more influential position within their organisation (Guberman & Mcdossi 2019:11). However, not all teacher educators are interested either in research or in the theory underpinning their practice (Maaranen et al: 2019:213). According to Dengerink, Lunenberg and Kools (2015:92), a large proportion of teacher educators have little interest in research or in the theoretical grounding of their work, and the minority that are active researchers do also contribute to the knowledge base of teacher education (Guberman & Mcdossi, 2019:2).

In their second study, Tack and Vanderlinde's (2019) incorporate the research on dispositions and also on the areas of work-related pressures, professional growth, and job satisfaction. They link self-determination theory, which suggests that all individuals have three basic psychological needs within the workplace: autonomy, relatedness, and competence. Teacher educators are more likely to feel fulfilled within the workplace when they have a sense of choice and experience psychological freedom in their role (ibid, 462), whereas "unfulfilled psychological needs can negatively affect a teacher educator's ability to function within the work-place" (ibid, 463). The need to feel connected and valued by others in the workplace—together with the need to self-report their competence—were the factors used to

analyse the teacher educators' work-related outcomes. The findings illustrate that the satisfaction level of the teacher educators' basic needs was not related to *all* the dimensions of the researcherly disposition. Further, the 'relatedness' dimension was the most important predictor of the extent to which a teacher educator conducted research within their role. This finding suggests that teacher educators in the UAE need to feel confident in their interactions with others, and be able to establish relationships within the contexts if they are working within the field. Although further research is required, the findings illustrate that the deprivation of any psychological need will affect a teacher educator's ability to conduct research (Tack & Vanderlinde, 2019:3).

3. Conclusion

Within the UAE, no formal associations exist, and so the teacher-educator space is fragmented. Largely as a consequence of this, there are no formal teacher educator standards across the profession; in contrast to countries including the Netherlands, Belgium, and the USA where such standards have been developed (Klink et al, 2017). Developing researcherly dispositions requires deep engagement on a cognitive, affective, and behavioural level, alongside a specific study of one's own practice and a commitment to developing a research identity (Tack & Vanderlinde, 2014:314). A particular challenge for teacher educators in the field in the UAE might be their capacity to develop relatedness, especially those not connected to an institution and who are working in isolation from other teacher educators.

One of the emerging findings from this study was the inclusion of 'cognitive flexibility', as part of an inter-cultural disposition (Huber and Reynolds ,2013). In addition to this, 'responsiveness' and 'sensory awareness' have emerged as critical factors that teacher educators require in the UAE.

Therefore, a different set of researcherly dispositions may therefore be more relevant to the UAE context because of the cultural, social, and economic differences within workplace settings. By recognising that workplace factors play a role in developing the psychological habits of individuals, we must acknowledge that learning takes place within these specific settings, and therefore, this knowledge may have significant value in other contexts with similar challenges.

References

Ben-Peretz, M., Kleeman, S., Reichenburg, R., Shimoni (2010) 'Educators of educators: their goals, perceptions and practices', Professional Development in Education, vol 36, no. 1-2, pp. 111-129.

Dengerink, J (2015) 'Teacher Educators' Competencies,

Dengerink, J., Lunenburg, M, Kools, Q (2015) 'What and how teacher educators prefer to learn', Journal of Education for Teaching, vol 41, no. 1, pp. 78-96.

Guberman, A., Mcdossi, O (2019) 'Israeli teacher educators' perceptions of their professional development paths in teaching research and institutional leadership', European Journal of Teacher Education.

Huber, J., Reynolds, C (2014) Developing intercultural Competence through education, Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg.

Katz, L.G. , & Raths, J.D. (1985). Dispositions as goals for teacher education programs . Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, Illinois .

Kelchtermans, G., Smith, K., Vanderlinde, R (2018) 'Towards an 'international forum for teacher educator development': an agenda for research and action', European Journal of Teacher Education, vol 41, no. 1, pp. 120-134.

Kreijns, K., Vermeulen,M., Evers, A., Meijis, C(2019) 'The development of an instrument to measure teachers' inquiry habit of mind', European Journal of Teacher Education, vol 42, no. 3, pp. 280-296.

Ping, C, Schellings, G., Beijaard, D (2017) 'Teacher educators' professional learning: A literature review', Teaching and Teacher Education.

Maaranen, K Kynäslahti,H, Byman, R Jyrhämä, R & Sintonen, S (2019) 'Teacher education matters: Finnish teacher educators' concerns beliefs, and values', European Journal of Teacher Education, vol 42, no. 2, pp. 211-227.

Meeus, W (2018) 'Teacher educators developing professional roles:frictions between current and optimal practices', European Journal of Teacher Education, vol 41, no. 1, pp. 15-31.

Tack, H., Vanderlinde, R (2014) 'Teacher Educators' Professional Development: Towards a Typology of Teacher Educators' Researcherly Disposition ', British Journal of Educational Studies,vol 62, no. 3, pp. 297-315.

Tack, H., Vanderlinde, R (2016) 'Measuring Teacher Educators' Researcherly Disposition: Item Development and Scale Construction', Vocations and Learning.

Tack, H., Vanderlinde, R (2019) 'Capturing the relations between teacher educators' opportunities for professional growth, work pressure, work related basic needs satisfaction, and teacher educators' researcherly disposition', European Journal of Teacher Education , vol 42, no. 4, pp. 459-477

Vanassche, E., Kidd, W., Murray J (2019) 'Articulating, reclaiming and celebrating the professionalism of teacher educators in England', European Journal of Teacher Education.

Vanassche, E., Rust, F., Conway, P., Smith (2015) InFo-TED: Bringing Policy, Research, and Practice Together around Teacher Educator Development" ', In International Teacher Education, vol 22, pp. 341-364.

Van der Klink, M., Kools, Q., Avissar, G, White, S., Sakata, T (2017) 'Professional development of teacher educators: what do they do? Findings from an explorative international study', Professional Development in Education, vol 43, no. 2, pp. 163-178.

Willemse, TM., Boei, F (2013) 'Teacher educators' research practices: an explorative study of teacher educators' perceptions on research', Journal of Education for Teaching, vol 39, no. 4, pp. 354-369.

How Tinkering Helped Us Teach Better: A Professional Development Workshop on the Delicate Balance between 'Boundaries' and 'Freedom' in the Teaching

A practice insight paper by Adina Polen and Beatrice Balfour

In this article, we describe a professional development session that we co-lead for teachers in a Jewish Preschool in Berkeley, California, called Gan Shalom Preschool. The workshop was about the theme of how to teach children about boundaries, while also allowing them to blossom for who they are. This was a 2 hours professional development session that we lead for 7 teachers. In this article, we present some preliminary findings that we gathered through an ethnographic approach. Adina and I co-lead the session, gathered data in the form of written notes and pictures, and acted as facilitators and active participants during the workshop. Overall, we argue that tinkering with clay, wire, beads, and pipe cleaners helped us to better understand the complex relationship between boundaries and freedom in the class, and therefore to teach better. We conclude that tinkering can be a successful way to reflect with teachers about pedagogy and children's socio-emotional development.

Introduction

Gan Shalom is one of the oldest Jewish preschools in the San Francisco Bay Area. It offers Jewish education inspired by progressive pedagogies, based on the idea that the child is capable and that children learn through experiences. The curriculum at Gan Shalom is open ended, children can move freely within the space that's organized around 'provocation' - set ups meant to spark learning around a certain theme through open ended activities. Gan Shalom also has an art studio. The studio of Gan Shalom was created in 2018, and is used by children and staff on a regular basis for classroom activities. It's also the place where staff development training take place in the school, as such training often have a hands-on approach to learning in line with the school curriculum. The professional development sessions at Gan Shalom often are connected to the Jewish calendar, which organizes our curriculum, and to emergent topics or issues. In this article, we want to discuss a professional development session that we collaborated to lead at Gan Shalom. This session took place in 2019 around the time of Passover - a Jewish holiday whose central theme is freedom. The previous year, during a similar professional development session, the staff had discussed what freedom was for us within the context of the school and of our work with the children. In 2019, we wanted to expand

on that reflection and reflect more on what the privileges and responsibilities that came with freedom were.

Overall, our vision for the workshop was to reflect on the connection between freedom and boundaries within the Jewish curriculum of the school and to understand how to better navigate the complex waters between teaching children to be free to explore who they are in the school, while also setting boundaries and teaching them to respect others and the space of the school. This workshop that we describe in this article turned out to be very important to us as a school as, as a result of it, we came up with a list of rules and values for Gan Shalom that now the staff returns to on a regular basis in their teaching. These rules help us in teaching children to blossom for who they are while also teaching them to respect others and the space.

The workshop lasted about 2 hours, we acted as the facilitators, and worked with 7 teachers. In what follows, we describe in detail the workshop that we co-organized and that was divided in three parts: an introduction, a part in which we engaged in a tinkering activity with the teachers, and a part where the teachers shared some reflections on our tinkering processes. Overall,

we argue that this process gave us the tools to teach better in the classroom by helping us to better understand the delicate balance between freedom and boundaries in our teaching.

Learning from an Ancient Mystical Text & Tinkering

Figure 1: Gan Shalom staff tinkering in the art studio.

How do we bring a bit of order to what can often feel like chaos in setting boundaries with children? How do we make those difficult decisions about when to enforce a rule or not with a child?

We began the workshop by turning to the Sefer Yetzira, one of the earliest Jewish Mystical texts. We did so to start reflecting on the meaning of boundaries and freedom within the Jewish framework of the school. The Sefer Yetzira describes the world as having been created at the intersection of three axis - Olam, Shana and Nefesh - Space, Time and Self/Soul. We also turned to the idea that the world had been created using three words from the same root, "sfr"

Sippur, Sfar and Sapar - Story, Number (Time) and Boundaries (Space). We might say that, within this tradition, freedom entails a form of self determination within boundaries that feel personally meaningful, along these three axis - our time, our space and our sense of who we are as individuals and as a community.

Figure 2: Gan Shalom staff tinkering in the studio, while Adina Polen answers some questions.

To dive deeper into reflections about how this might relate to our teaching in the classroom, we moved onto tinkering. We presented the teachers with materials, carefully organized on the table where we were working, including clay, wire, pipecleaners and beads. We asked the participants to just spend a few minutes first just by exploring the materials, their qualities, and how they felt. Then we gave the participants a list of generative questions that they could discuss in small groups or pairs: can you think of a situation where you had to set boundaries for a child? How did it feel? Can you think of a situation where you had to change the structure

of your class to accommodate the needs of a child?
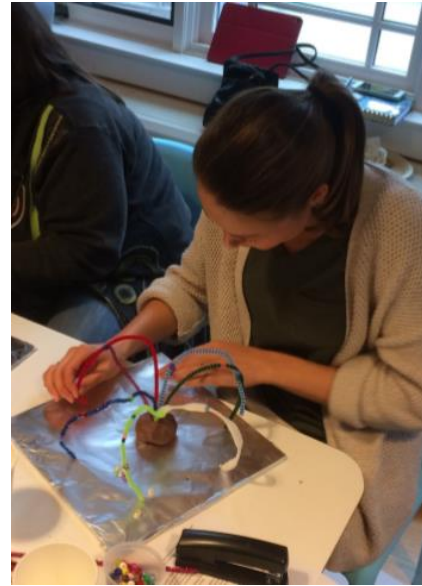
Figure 3: Gan Shalom staff member working on her artifact.

After giving teachers the opportunity to reflect together about those questions for 10 minutes, we asked teachers to start to engage in the making. Specifically, we asked them to make something that reminded them of what a boundary is for them, and of how that relates to letting children free to explore who they are in the classroom. We gave participants about 50 minutes to make. As facilitators, during that time we were answering questions and also engaging ourselves in the making. After 50 minutes, we asked teachers to share their reflections and explain what they made. In what follows, we present a selection of such reflections. This will illustrate how tinkering helped us to better understand the work that we do in the class, and ultimately to teach better.

Reflections on the Artifacts

After 50 minutes of making, we asked the participants to share their reflections of how it felt to create, to describe what they made and how it related to their ideas of boundaries and freedom. We took notes and pictures of the artifacts and on the teachers' reflections of their experiences. In this session, we share a selection of these reflections.

Most people shared that they enjoyed working with the materials. Often, they see the children working with those materials, such as pipe cleaners or beads, but they do not have the time to engage with those materials while they are supervising the children. Others expressed that some materials were harder for them to work with, and so they changed and used a different material. Most importantly, as they were sharing their reflections about their making experiences, some teachers started highlighting how the specific qualities of the materials that they were working with developed their understanding of boundaries and freedom in the classroom.

Figure 4: Teacher Molly's artifact

Molly, for example, said: "I was excited to work with beads. I put beads on wire. Some beads can move along the wire, and others are more stuck. This reminds me of the different boundaries that different children have ." In her reflection, Molly highlights how the way in which the beads were moving along the wire reminded her of the different boundaries that children have, and the different ways in which children react to different situations and limits that we set for them.

Three teachers, of seven, represented boundaries as a container around children – something that helps children to feel safe to be who they are. For example, Ron describes his artifact, represented in the picture below, as follows: "The circle around represents a containment, a boundary. But a boundary is not something that necessarily limits you, as one can see in my work from the pipe cleaners. The pipe cleaners also go beyond the boundary in some cases, so a boundary is more a form of containment, of safety, within

which one can move and explore,
test and be who they are."

Figure 5: Teacher Ron's artifact

Similarly, to Ron, also other teachers described boundaries as important for freedom for children. Robin said that boundaries are important and healthy because without boundaries you can't have freedom. She then goes on to describe her artifact, constituted by two structures. A tall one that represents the community of the school, and a smaller one that represents a child who is dancing to find their balance within the boundaries set by the community. This is no easy process, but it's a very important one, according to Robin. Learning the boundaries is what allows children to be free to really explore what interests them, to move freely in space, and to be able to follow their passions and interests.

 Teacher Ann also describes boundaries as circular. She interpreted the circularity of boundaries as a representation of the repetition that it takes to teach children about boundaries. Educators have to repeat over and over the rules to the children in order for them to learn such rules and to internalize them. More specifically, she says that she "wanted to represent that children need to have a couple of choices and that, within those, it's a circular and repetitive process to teach children about boundaries." For Ann, children have to see the rule applied in the particular context over and over to learn the rule. So, it takes a lot of patience and reiteration to teach children about boundaries.

Figure 7: Teacher Ann's artifact

Lastly, some teachers, like Ines, spoke about boundaries being limiting to children at times. As Ines says, describing her artifact (picture below) "We need to have boundaries like the children. The figure in the middle to me also represents or reminds me of a spider, it reminds me of the work of the artist Louise Bourgeois. This image in the center looks and

feels like a cage a bit, but a spider can also symbolize the mother that protects you and gives you a sense of belonging. Boundaries are like that: sometimes they feel like they protect you, sometimes they feel like they limit you, they have different roles and we have different feelings associated with them at different times."

Ines also mentioned that this process of creation reminded her of her childhood and her own struggles with boundaries learning when she was a child. So here we see how working with hands connected Ines with her own personal inner world, while also reminding her of artistic works. In this process, she developed and reflected upon how boundaries can both protect you like safe containers, as other teachers had previously mentioned, but can also limit you.

Figure 9: Teacher Ines's artifact

Working with the materials and sharing reflections about that process highlighted some important commonalities about the ways that the teachers of Gan Shalom were thinking about freedom and boundaries in the classroom. Teachers understood boundaries as containers that can allow children to be free and to feel safe to be who they are in the school. Engaging in this process of creation reminded us that setting boundaries is a reiterative process, that requires a lot of patience and repetition. Boundaries, however they explain, can also limit children if such boundaries do not account for differences in the needs of children and in the changes in their developmental processes.

Conclusions & Future Directions

This tinkering process and the process of reflecting together about what boundaries and freedom are in the context of the school highlighted for the team a need to create a 'container', a list of rules and values for our school that we could refer back to in our day-to-day work with the children. As a result of this meeting, in the following meeting, we made a list of five rules that are most important for us as a community and that constitute that 'container' that helps us to keep the children safe and that helps them feel free to blossom for who they are in the school. We printed those rules in a big poster and we posted them at the entrance of the

school as a reminder of the boundaries that we live by and that we want to teach to children. We called them 'The Rules of Gan Shalom.' We also talked about how these general rules apply in the day to day interaction of the children and in our work with them. This helps us in the day to day work with the children to make decisions about what to ask from the children. If a behavior does not align with those general rules, we have to intervene in the situation. However if a behavior does not fall within those general rules that are essential to our community, we can decide to let go of it and focus on something else with the children. We understand that also these rules may change and vary according to the changes of the staff, children and other members of our community.

Lastly, as a follow up to this work and to include the families in our community, we extended these reflections and work to the families. We run a similar tinkering workshop with the families. In this workshop, like with the teachers we began by starting to discuss the Mystical text Sefer Yetzira, we spent some time tinkering and then we reflected together on what we created. Much like the teachers also the parents described the need for a vision of family that defines important rules that are set and maintained to help parents decide what are negotiable and non-

negotiable boundaries of their household as you can see from Lili's quotes below: "I had a picture in my head that I wanted to make. I got this connection in mind about a talk I went to recently about how to talk with children about race. It made me think for some reason that almost as a family you need a "vision statement". In what I made, you have the balls that represent us and we are all connected and the boundaries are our home."

Figure 10: A parent's, Lili, artifact

Just like with the teachers, also with the families, through the work with clay, wire and pipe cleaners, we were able to dive deep into our understanding of what boundaries are for each one of us. Sharing our thoughts about making the pieces while thinking and reflecting about boundaries and freedom helped us to bring our different reflections to the surface and to learn from each other about the delicate relationship between boundaries and freedom when teaching

and parenting. During this workshop, we also discussed the 'Rules of Gan Shalom' with the families, got their feedback and modified them accordingly so to all be on the same page about the community that we want to create, and the values that we want to teach to the children.

To conclude, tinkering helped us to teach better. It helped to shed some light on how to navigate the complexities of teaching children in a way that allows them to be free to develop into the unique self that they are while also setting boundaries for them. Through this process, we came to see as a group that for us, boundaries are exactly what enables the children to feel safe to really feel free into exploring who they are.

Book review of Mandy Coalter (2018) Talent Architects: How to make your school a great place to work

Publisher John Catt Educational Ltd
Review by John Diamond

The risk for many good books on school management and leadership is that they end up being read through the lens of the Corona Virus. It makes it harder for books, authors and practitioners to hold our attention in such a crowded and dysfunctional environment. There are three good reasons why Mandy Coalter's book deserves our collective attention :

1. It has an authenticity in its language, ideas and approach which holds the reader's attention

2. She has extensive and varied experience as a senior HR professional and brings that way of thinking to schools and leadership.

3. She invites the reader to engage with a very simple proposition that we are all involved in securing and retaining talent and it is through the talent that comes to our schools that we create not only great places to work but (more critically ?) great places to learn and develop.

The book is organised around a series of very practical questions and potential strategies for school leaders ranging from : leadership, relationships and climate to developing your people and talent to managing workload and creating a culture of well being to marketing your school to knowing if your school is a great place to work and who can help you. Each chapter has a broadly similar chapter including summaries of some key reports and research plus the salient features from a number of leadership studies or texts. The chapters conclude with a series of questions for reflection. The language style, pace, summaries and questions lend themselves as material to stimulate discussion at a governing or trust board and with senior leadership teams or a whole school event.

The challenges and points for reflection are the ones you would expect : challenge on schools to recruit, retain and promote the most talented staff available ; to navigate the complexities of competing expectations and requirements of regulators, parents, governors, children and young people and staff. And , at the same time achieve this with

limited or reduced resources in a time of social change too.

What makes this book fascinating and stimulating is how Mandy Coalter by drawing on her varied HR experience offers insights and ways of thinking which results in seeing things differently sometimes from conventional educational writers. This is evident in two chapters one on managing work loads and the other on branding. Some might think the former will be overtaken either by governmental actions or the Corona Virus and the latter will only be addressed as we come out of the Corona Virus. But both , I think, need to be read together : branding is not just about marketing it's essential about values and culture and branding is, also, appeal recruiting staff not just parents with

children. Work load is about well being and that's about retention which is linked to performance and to results. And these matter irrespective of the virus but, also, will matter too in a post virus world.

The strength of this book lies in its invitation to think and to see what we might see as familiar in a different way. The weaknesses are that some of the research will be out dated soon and the references to specialists can always include others. But these are to miss the point. I like its way of making the reader think and encourage critical thinking about one's practice. That makes it a good read.

Book review of Biesta, P.G. (2020) Educational Research: An Unorthodox Introduction

Published by Bloomsbury
Review by Ed Podesta

I'm often struck by the similarity of the messages that emerge from weekend conferences, mini-conferences, teaching literature and books. Whilst this clearly shows the emergence of a number of key ideas and evidence based practices, the extent that they can be rolled out, or are immediately useful to a range of practitioners across our profession is I think still in doubt, especially when one looks at the prescriptions more closely.

In order to make generalisable claims, the promise and principles of many of these talks, blogs, articles, books and weekend conferences have to be abstracted, often to the point of genericism. This, in turn, tends towards the production of rather bland instructions to 'check understanding' or 'sequence' learning, 'chunk adequately', avoid 'overloading working memory', or 'enable recall'. These become so broad in the attempt to make them applicable to all situations that they become empty categories - chunking becomes bullet points, recall becomes testing, sequence becomes the examination specification. In this way empty categories are open both to interpretation (which is not

necessarily a bad thing but can become wild and self-referential) or to the imposition of interpretation in social or management hierarchies. Each can mean however that what results is either confusing, comforting mantra, or inflexible diktat.

Biesta's new book is a kind of drawing together of some of his recent work, developing and bringing out conclusions into a series of arguments against the imposition of generic intervention on the professional judgement of educators. Along the way he asks us to reconsider the appropriateness of a client – profession relationship which draws its forms of accountability from the market, and instead urges us to recognise that educational professions are part of the fabric and practice of democracy.

This book is an extended examination of the assumptions of an ontology based on cause and effect which underlie the calls for evidence-based practice in education. The recognition that such knowledge can only be generated in closed systems in which

variables can be limited and controlled is well understood and accepted. The recent vogue (now in decline) for all pedagogical discussion and decision making to be based on evidence generated solely by the gold standard in research represented by Randomised Controlled Trials is evidence of the pervasive hold that it has taken in education.

Instead Biesta argues for scientific knowledge to take its place as one way of understanding reality - one form of knowledge, gained from a particular kind of interaction with the world. In the process he suggests that we dethrone it from its status as 'pure' knowledge of an unchanging eternal world 'out there'. The world outside the laboratory is not a closed loop. The fundamental insight made here is that correlations, between action and outcome, occur as a result of "people trying to make sense, trying to communicate, trying to teach and trying to be taught" (p.40) rather than these things just 'working'.

This is not however a call for 'anything goes', for unbridled relativism in research, or for an ultra-progressive rejection of the systems and rules that help schools function. It is rather a call for a focus on 'function' or purpose in both arenas, and a recognition that in choosing particular tools or systems we risk closing off opportunities for wider understanding or obscuring or denying the

relationship between education and wider social and political functions.

For the profession this pragmatic approach means recognising that a focus on 'what works' means little whilst we leave unexamined the aims of education. We also need to be much more thorough in our consideration of the purposes of education than a focus on the body of knowledge that is to be transferred will allow. It means also being alive to the ethical and social costs of the mechanisms that we use to make education more systematic. In highlighting three overarching purposes of education, credentialisation, socialisation and subjectification Biesta opens up a rich and exciting arena in which we can explore what schools are for, and enables us to address the question of what we lose when some purposes are squeezed at the expense of others or, using the striking metaphor of pasteurisation, when we try too hard to make schools work like closed loop laboratories.

Biesta conceptualises teaching as a 'deliberative', values-based profession, orientated towards a particular form of human wellbeing. Professional action can therefore never be merely technical, as it is concerned with the articulation and realisation of a 'telos' - a purpose beyond immediate goals. In teaching that purpose is

the promotion of 'educatedness', which is characterised as 'promotion of cognitive and moral independence of students'. This telos, whilst it gives the practice of education identity, direction and meaning, cannot be settled in detail or once and for all but requires ongoing reflection and deliberation amongst interested parties, in specific contexts and always involves norms and values and not only 'facts' and 'technique'. This, in turn, implies the need for communication and discussion, for public deliberation and defence of professional action.

Technical visions of teaching are a kind of invasion of and stake a claim over the 'natural', in that they make a claim that 'this is how the world works'. In making this claim they squeeze out the kind of deliberation and conflict that is the oxygen of a democratic society, which itself is not a 'natural' state of affairs, not an equilibrium to which human society will automatically oscillate through crisis towards. Rather than present this as an eternal category, Biesta is admirably clear that a desire for democracy is based on values and culture, and that such values and culture need to be maintained and preserved. This includes their passing on, but goes beyond their transmission. Our commitment to democracy should go beyond 'preferences' and 'choices' in a market or the passing on of the wisdom and decisions of previous generations, and

extend to the expression of and collective deliberation over values, wants and desires. In this way democratic professions provide important opportunities for practising and experiencing the wider dynamics of democracy, and an important contribution to processes in which society is democratised (113). Rather than becoming sucked into a 'reduction of options for thinking and doing' (146), Biesta argues that we should be part of a 'democratization' of knowledge, especially if we aim to 'enhance the scope for professional action' (146) rather than describe 'what works'.

There are things which I think Biesta needs to expand upon. What are the structures and practices that might promote the kinds of democratization and intersubjectivity that Biesta is calling for? How might we relate these to entirely understandable calls for accountability to the public as a whole (given they are the source of funds which allows public education systems to operate), rather than within the client-professional relationship (which is already covered in the book). The brief description of "interaction, cooperation, coordination and communication" I think is underdeveloped. In particular we need to consider the role of others' ideas and experiences (in other words the role of knowledge) *during* the transactions in which we form our subjective understanding. Is it really possible to separate

the subjective and intersubjective into these temporally different categories?

What I find myself thinking about, almost a week after finishing the book, is the way it could help us question the 'sacred and profane' dichotomy introduced by Durkheim and so influential in the social realism that underpins the academic justification for a 'knowledge-rich' curriculum. If we take a Pragmatic conception of 'sacred' categories and conceptions we might conclude that they do not act as a ladder to help us move beyond the profane everyday to a more profound understanding of hidden, eternal explanations. Instead in our search for unshakable steady ground, these sacred ideas risk trapping us in truth paradigms, rhetorical camps and even twitter bubbles.

This makes me wonder in turn if what we need is less research, and more conversation, less prescription and pronouncement and instead more attempts to consider, to understand, less 'what works' and more scope for action. In short I wonder whether we need less research and more scholarship. This would certainly help us to avoid the distortions and distractions of competition created by performance management in schools and in some universities, it would help us inform our teaching and our own academic development, in helping us expand our understanding and scope for action as well as those of our trainees and students.

You can find a longer version of this review at my blog www.onedamnthing.org.uk

Book review of Malcolm Groves and John West-Burnham (2020) Flipping Schools! Why it's Time to Turn Your School and Community Inside Out

Published by John Catt Educational

Review by Gerry Robinson

This book was always going to be important. In the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, it couldn't be more timely.

As school leaders, we have known for some time that the current models of school improvement and the 'standards agenda' have a limited reach. We are stuck in what the authors accurately refer to as the 'school improvement cul-de-sac' from which we now need to escape.

The sense that our system is no longer fit for purpose, has never been felt more acutely than in the time of lockdown, when schools have been forced to offer so much more than a 'measurable' education. Schools have offered frontline services. Ten years of austerity measures have forced many schools to provide food banks, social care, housing advice and mental health support. For some this has been an emergency response in a crisis but what Flipping Schools advocates, is taking time, planning and organisation to build and embed a 'community centred and learner focused mindset' in order to 'secure the best futures for all young people.' In spite, or maybe because of all the uncertainty and

chaos, this is the perfect opportunity to think about how we dismantle the current system and build something better.

This thoroughly researched book highlights the difference between organisation and community and refocuses our attention on what schools are trying to achieve and how well they achieve it. Groves and West-Burnham argue that one of the most important reasons why change is needed is because our current school improvement models do not take into account the influence on educational achievement of genetic and personal factors as well as social and economic context. Through evidence based research they claim that schools alone are only able to influence 20-30% of the factors that affect educational achievement. It is for this reason, that they argue that a fundamental system change is required that gives greater recognition to the contribution of a school in building social capital, within and around itself. Instead of focusing on education as a tool to influence social mobility, we need to be thinking about the role of schools in building social capital and therefore social justice.

It is reassuring to read case studies from four different schools, both primary and secondary, who have spent years 'turning their schools inside out' as Groves and West-Burnham believe we all should. What is of particular importance is that none of these schools are brand new nor do they appear to have undergone significant restructuring or changes in leadership. Many school leaders may be initially hesitant as they are wary of the work involved in transforming a school or anxious about moving away from more traditional models of school improvement. However, the beauty of this approach is that 'flipping a school' isn't about changing the way that a school is organised or structured, it's about re-evaluating a school's values and purpose, particularly in terms of how it simultaneously engages with and develops the community in which it is situated.

Groves and West-Burnham state that in moving a school from being an organisation which concerns itself with the internal, traditional model of school improvement to an outward facing approach which models community and builds strong social capital, it is possible to achieve both equity and engagement.

Using research evidence and examining four case studies of existing UK schools, they identify four key building blocks for the change now needed. In their words, they argue that the new 'outward-facing' school needs:

- An unrelenting focus on the quality of relationships, on becoming a model of community itself – a place of trust, mutual respect, and belonging.
- A strong base of value and values, in which the curriculum is central but tailored to a much greater extent to each learner.
- A commitment to seeking anew the active and ongoing engagement of all stakeholders.
- A fresh understanding of the role of a school as a focal hub of support for learning and wellbeing more widely.

In relation to this, Groves and West-Burnham highlight the need to recognise parents and carers as key stakeholders in the community and strongly recommend they, as well as staff and students, are involved in the process of deciding, developing and reflecting on the shared values. The shared values must then underpin every action, every policy and every decision the school makes.

A particularly useful feature of this book are the toolkits provided throughout. Groves and West-Burnham acknowledge the complexity of 'flipping schools inside out' so it is therefore incredibly helpful that they also offer strategies to help schools make these ideas a reality. That said, don't expect to come to this book and be given a practical step by step guide, because crucial to their argument is that there is no 'one size fits all.' There is no denying that the process they are

promoting takes time and a genuine commitment but it is one that the case studies demonstrate is well worth it.

So as we plan for the return of students to our schools post Covid-19, it is the time to be asking 'what happens next?' to our education system. Burnham and Groves-West inspire us to seize the agenda and radically overhaul our current models of school improvement. The evidence is there that the attainment gap has hardly moved during the past decade at secondary school level. We know that the system isn't working. While some may decry this as yet another strain placed on school

leaders following the most stressful period in educational memory, the crucial thing to remember is that everybody should be involved in flipping schools. Lockdown has shown us the power of community, so we should utilise that to collectively find the courage to flip the system.

I cannot recommend this book highly enough to anyone working in education. I would urge all educational leaders and policy makers to read it, ask questions, rethink current systems and take urgent action to ensure that we achieve the best for the young people in our care.

Book review of Lee J. Colan & Julie Davis-Colan (2018) The Power of Positive Coaching: The Mindset and Habits to Inspire Winning Results and Relationships (1st ed.)

Published by *McGraw-Hill Education*

Review by Emily Markovic

The Power of Positive Coaching: The Mindset and Habits to Inspire Winning Results and Relationships (2018) is written by coaches Lee Colan and Julie Davis Colan. The duo applies their expertise to examine the transformative power of embracing a positive coaching mindset and the implementation of effective coaching skills and processes. Though advertised to coaches at the executive level, this book is a valuable tool for anyone who wishes to develop and sustain a positive mindset. Readers and educators who value positivity, growth and collaboration in their own lives and workplace should consider adding this book to their collection.

Topics examined in business and educational contexts alike include the psychology behind positivity, the undervalued importance of coaching, and Carol Dweck's (2014) 'growth mindset,' described as the power in believing you can improve. Colan and Davis-Colan explore major contributors to the field of positive psychology, including researchers, philosophers, authors, coaches, and poets, which support their overarching argument about the benefits and power of the positive coaching mindset. Their research suggests that those who apply this positive mindset have improved personal and employee performance. For example, "managers who used a strength-based approach with their employees helped to improve employee performance by 36.4 percent" (pt. 1, intro).

The book is divided into three main parts, Part I: Positive Coaching Mindset, Part II: Positive Coaching Habits, and Part III: Your Coaching Game Plan. Each topic contains concise, digestible chapters (~ 20 minutes per) with accessible language and engaging content, including relatable references, personal anecdotes, evidence, and helpful visuals to support the authors' claim. The Power of Positive Coaching effectively provides actionable solutions to break the "cycle of negativity" and invest in the development of a sustainable positive mindset for individuals and their teams.

In Part I, the reader learns what it means to have a positive mindset in coaching. These

first four chapters, or 'four levels of knowledge', encourage the reader to know their thoughts, purpose, values, and emotions, before moving ahead with the implementation of the five coaching habits in Part II. Colan and Davis-Colan argue that "inspiring coaches choose to understand, control, and change their thoughts to form a positive mindset" (pt. I, ch. 1). They emphasize the importance of surrounding oneself with people who offer 'constructive input,' and actively filter out intrusive negative thoughts.

The authors describe "The Yellow Car Phenomenon" (pt. I, ch. 1), a nod to neuroscience and the brain's ability to take relevant information and bring it to the conscious mind; if you are thinking about yellow cars, you are more likely to see them. Through exploring their anecdotal evidence in support of the phenomenon, the authors demonstrate the importance of choosing one's focus: "the things we focus on create a magnet for our lives" (pt. I, ch. 1). Those who are problem-focused will likely encounter obstacles, whereas, those who are opportunity-focused will invite positive outcomes.

Part I discusses the development of self-awareness and the value of listening to peer advice when identifying areas of improvement. Hypothetical scenarios and personal anecdotes are provided to effectively demonstrate positive and empathetic coaching approaches and responses. Empathy is an integral concept in the field of coaching and mentoring, which the authors identify as a 'cornerstone of emotional intelligence.' Colan and Davis-Colan believe in putting the needs and success of the team before those of the individual, otherwise emphasized as, 'TEAM over me'. Early investment in a team, or a project, will produce a quality foundation, supporting its longevity and success. This concept of setting a foundation is a recurring and important theme in this book. The authors implore the reader to consider, "what kind of coach do you want to be for your team?" (pt. I, ch. 3). Coaches play a vital role in supporting a team and providing connectedness. The impact of creating valuable connections is seen in various studies, for example, "researchers found that if a person is looking at a hill […], the simple presence of a social support (friend) made the hill look 10 to 20 percent less steep than if the individual were alone" (pt. I, ch. 2). Building a sense of community and connectedness, and investing in one another, contributes to the prosperity and strength of relationships. The foundations set out in Part I are essential to Part II and III; it allows the reader to understand what a positive mindset is and its capacity for positive and productive change, successfully guiding the reader to take control of their coaching mindset. Part I concludes

with a summary and a reflective fill-in-the blank activity to solidify the reader's knowledge of the concepts explored thus far.

In Part II, the authors illustrate how to effectively and sustainably employ this new mindset. Each chapter explores one of five positive coaching habits outlined in this book: 1) explain expectations to gain alignment, 2) ask questions to ignite engagement, 3) involve team to enlist ownership, 4) measure results to boost accountability, and 5) appreciate people to deepen commitment. To strengthen the reader's understanding, the authors provide a variety of helpful and purposeful visuals throughout, including a poignant diagram outlining the five habits and their corresponding results. The 'Taking Action' section located under each 'Habit Summary' allows the reader to reflect, make valuable connections, and apply their learning – all qualities of an inspiring coach.

Chapter 5 focuses on the 'Fundamental Four Questions,' which is the development of clear expectations for goals, plans, roles, and rewards. A lack of clarity or information, and 'unanswered questions,' can lead to doubt, fear, panic, and worst-case thinking – also known as the 'silence spiral.' The authors provide tips and tricks to avoid this spiral, faced by many companies and schools. A chart is provided, designed to assist in the identification of expectations and to increase

communication and team alignment. They believe that inspiring coaches successfully follow "a continuous cycle of explain-observe-coach-adjust-align" (pt. II, ch. 5). Outlining expectations is a popular learning support in education, particularly using 'Steps to Success' and 'Learning Outcomes' (Van Der Veen & Van Oers, 2017).

In Chapter 6, the authors outline the importance of active listening and purposeful questions in a professional context. When a leader or coach applies active listening by demonstrating patience and understanding, they are investing in their employees and generating accountability for one's responses and corresponding actions. According to Colan and Davis Colan, the insights gathered from active listening provide valuable knowledge used to adapt one's "questions and coaching approach" (pt. II, ch. 6) and increase overall engagement. The ability to ask the right questions is a fundamental aspect of effective coaching. The authors emphasize the importance of which questions are the right ones, how to ask these questions, and how to patiently await a response. The authors provide a detailed chart filled with examples of purposeful questions in the subcategories "understand, assess, innovate, and motivate."

Chapter 7 focuses on team involvement and promoting accountability. Brainstorming and sharing ideas are valuable aspects of

teamwork, especially when it is focused on employee and workplace improvement. By involving every individual in the problem identification and resolution process, leaders are demonstrating the importance of shared responsibility. A coach must promote purposeful involvement, instead of ideas for ideas' sake. Colan and Davis-Colan state, "inspiring coaches go for quantity, not quality, of ideas to build a culture of innovation and ownership" (pt. II, ch. 7). Using a positive mindset to endorse involvement can improve workplace relationships.

Chapter 8 provides advice on appropriately measuring and presenting results. Building on the benefits of personal reflection as outlined in Part I, it is important to indicate the results and progress of the team. By identifying areas of success and improvement through reflection and the maintenance of a 'compelling' scoreboard, the team empowers the coach to "adjust continually, enhance accountability, and boost results" (pt. II, ch. 8). Examples demonstrate that measurements are a beneficial way to validate high-achievers and improve lower-achievers, which is common in the field of education. The gamification – applying "game-related elements to nongame contexts" (Basten, 2017) – of a workplace, classroom, or even a technological application promotes the innate human desire to win. Using a simplified visual of measuring results and behaviour, a

quadrant chart is provided to determine the best coaching approach for various situations. This chapter emphasizes the coach's role in addressing small concerns in a positive way before they grow into less manageable issues.

The final, and arguably most important, coaching habit is appreciation. By demonstrating an appreciation for every team member through visible actions, the coach is inherently promoting positivity, which drives sustainable success. Showing appreciation and recognition entirely depends on the individual, and this coaching habit requires a personalized approach. As Colan and Davis-Colan state, "know your people, not just your employees" (pt. II, ch. 9). This investment will often reveal positive returns as people express their loyalty and commitment. In a study by Ferdinand Fournies, interviewing 25,000 leaders found that "the most effective leaders had one thing in common—they expressed a sincere interest in their employees" (pt. II, ch. 9). This chapter provides ways for coaches to show their appreciation, as well as a list of "three-word" phrases to deepen individual commitment.

Chapter 9 ends with a concise chart that summarizes and reflects key knowledge. Part III is brief and determines the reader's next steps or "game plan" for the successful implementation of a positive mindset and the five positive coaching habits. Coaches must

"start with the right mindset and [...] develop the habits necessary to achieve their goals [and have] specific strategies to put their mindset and habits into action" (pt. III). Every individual is given a choice as to which person, or coach, they would like to be. The first decision is to work on developing a positive coaching mindset, as it will impact all choices from that point forward. Or, as the authors state, "living a positive life and being a positive coach is the best way to leave a positive legacy" (pt. III). Hence, there is power in positivity.

Overall, the authors have created a resource with useful and applicable advice, supported by research, statistics, and relatable examples, analogies, hypothetical scenarios, and personal anecdotes. However, in future editions, I hope to see more of their own coaching experiences, as opposed to hypothetical scenarios. Positive coaching is not a new topic, but the authors have created a clear and convincing guide that prepares the reader for real-world coaching. They communicate in a very accessible style and format, promoting inclusivity and allowing for increased readership. Colan and Davis-Colan provide a variety of business and workplace references and examples to appeal to their audience, but it remains applicable in many fields.

The authors' perspective is clear, they believe that it is never too late to change one's mindset, particularly when applying it to leadership roles. They provide additional 'reinforcement resources,' a positive coaching self-assessment website, as well as a 'game plan' section to support the reader's continued learning. In a world where we have numerous resources at our fingertips, I would recommend this book on positive coaching to those in the fields of business, education, and beyond.

References

Basten, D. (2017). Gamification. IEEE Software, 34(5), 76-81.

TEDTalks: Carol Dweck: The Power of Believing That You Can Improve. [Video file]. (2014). Retrieved from https://fod.infobase.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wID=99232&xtid=167005

Van Der Veen, C., & Van Oers, B. (2017). Advances in research on classroom dialogue: Learning outcomes and assessments. Learning and Instruction, 48, 1-4.

Book Review of Buck, A. (2020) The Basic Coaching Method: All you need to know to coach with confidence

Published by Cadogan Press

Review by Lizana Oberholzer

During a time where schools report their concerns regarding teacher retention, and highlight the importance of the support via mentoring and coaching, for teachers from the outset of their careers, as set out in the Early Careers Framework (DfE, 2019), all the way to headship - Buck (2020) provides the education landscape with a timely book. It explores the BASIC Coaching Method, and how it can help to enable others to make the most of their talents. At first 'BASIC' suggests that it is simple, easy to use, approach to coaching; however, as you work your way through the book you soon come to realise that 'BASIC' is an acronym outlining Buck's (2020) coaching methods. BASIC stands for: background, aim, strategy, implementation and commitment.

The introduction to the text, shares the author's reflections on how he uses coaching strategies to engage with his Uncle Peter, and as Buck works through the book explaining how the BASIC Method of coaching works, he returns to Uncle Peter, outlining how these strategies are not only relevant to support colleagues in the work place, but also in everyday life. Buck makes the valuable point, that Uncle Peter, is far more willing to work

with him on difficult decisions when he has options, and can explore how to find solutions for himself. The author makes the direct link to how coaching enables others in the workplace too to discover solutions to their challenges within themselves. Uncle Peter is no exception when it comes to not wanting to be told what to do, most of us are, and we can immediately relate to his concerns of losing his independence. As colleagues we too want to take control of our own destiny, and coaching enables coachees to do that by finding their own solutions.

Each chapter takes the reader through what each letter of the acronym refers to, and it outlines key strategies, on how to engage with a coachee as coach, by exploring the coachee's background and context, with the aim to truly understand, and to develop a meaningful and trusting relationship with the coachee. Buck unpacks key coaching definitions too, to ensure that the reader is clear on what is meant by coaching, and he adds an additional layer to definitions by authors such as van Nieuwerburgh (2019) by outlining coaching as '[a] one-to-one conversation that focuses on the enhancement of learning through increasing

self-awareness and a sense of personal responsibility, where the coach facilitates the self-directed learning of the coachee, through questioning, active listening, appropriate challenge, and when needed, practical guidance in a supportive and encouraging environment that leaves the coachee feeling clearer and more optimistic about the future' (Buck, 2020, p. 20). Buck emphasises that it is important for coaches to have agency to share advice when needed, if it is the most appropriate way to help move the coachee forward in their thinking. Buck helpfully outlines the coaching continuum, explaining how coaches need to be aware of the needs of their coachees, to ensure that they can move between the continuum of mentoring and coaching to offer the best possible support.

The importance of trust is fully explored, and coaches are reminded of developing a strong trusting relationship, and when to make important judgement calls to support the coachee in the best possible way, with the aim to drive the coachee's agenda. Coaches are encouraged to remain curious, and the value of good questioning skills cannot be underestimated. Buck advises on asking neutral and open questions, and like Thomson(2013) in Non-Directive Coaching, advises coaches to avoid asking 'why' questions, too early as it might impact on the coachee, and it might feel 'like a challenge' (Buck, 2020, p.102). The BASIC Method of

coaching, like most coaching methods, outlines the importance of empathy, listening skills and the importance of clarification. Coaches need to be present and in the moment with their coachees throughout the coaching session.

When working through the BASIC Method, it becomes very clear, that what initially felt like a seemingly 'basic' approach to coaching, is nuanced and skilfully explained, in an uncomplicated way. The book makes reference to a wide range of invaluable authors in the field such as van Nieuwerburg's (2019) text focusing on 'Coaching in Education', Scott's (2017) 'Radical Candour' and Bungay Stanier's (2016), 'The Coaching Habit: Say Less, Ask More and Change The Way You Lead Forever' to name a few. The book provides a fresh take on coaching in education, it is research- informed, accessible and well-balanced. It provides the reader with practical advice on how to coach, key strategies as well as, models to draw on, with clear examples of how coaching applies in everyday life.

The references Buck makes to Uncle Peter, sharing personal life experiences, helps illustrate how coaching can help Uncle Peter, and anyone else in a similar position, to think through the challenges of life, in a dignified and supportive way. These deeply personal moments provide the reader with true insights into the author's in depth

understanding of how coaching can help others. It is heart-warming. These personal touches are so true to the author's style as a leader, colleague and coach.

It is fair to say, that 'The Basic Coaching Method: All You Need to Know To Coach with Confidence', initially presents a deceptively simple take on coaching. However, as readers work their way through the text, it becomes clear that Buck's clear mastery of coaching, helps him to explain very complex processes clearly. He is well informed, and the text is well researched and detailed. It is a good starting point, explaining the key concepts well. After a second or third read, and working through the strategies, putting it into practice, it becomes clear, as previously said, that the text is nuance, subtle, extremely relevant, timely, helpful and clear. It is a book that will benefit experienced coaches to extend their coaching practice even further, and it is an excellent starting point for those setting out on their journey as a coach. In addition, the text can be used as a reflective workbook too, and there are key questions to reflect on at the end of each chapter with. Overall the text, as with many of Buck's work, reflects an in depth understanding of the education landscape. It is an insightful read, that stays with you for a long time. It is highly relevant, and it will no doubt help to guide future coaching practices in education, to ensure that teachers are well supported throughout their careers.

References

Buck, A. (2020) The Basic Coaching Method: All you need to know to coach with confidence. UK: Cadogan Press
Bungay Stanier, M. (2016), The Coaching Habit: Say Less, Ask More, and Change the Way You Lead Forever, UK: Box of Crayons Press
Department for Education (2019) Early Careers Framework London: Department for Education Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/773705/Early-Career_Framework.pdf (Accessed: 25.06.2020)
Scott, K (2017), Radical Candor: How to get what you want by saying what you mean, UK: PAN
Tomson, B (2013) Non-Directive Coaching: Attitudes, Approaches and Applications, UK: Critical Publishing
Van Nieuwerburgh, C. (2018) Coaching in Education, UK: Routledge

Thank you to our wonderful issue 11 contributors

Name	Role	Contact info
Rachel Lofthouse	Professor of Teacher Education and Director of CollectivED, Carnegie School of Education, Leeds Beckett University, UK	r.m.lofthouse@leedsbeckett.ac.uk @DrRLofthouse @CollectivED1
Charmaine Roche	Accredited Executive Coach, Education Consultant, CollectivED Associate, PhD Student Carnegie School of Education, Leeds Beckett University Doctoral Student, UK	charmaine@lifeflowbalance.co.uk Twitter @lifeflowbalance
Claire Dutton	Primary Classroom Teacher and Middle Leader, CollectivED Fellow and Carnegie School of Education, Leeds Beckett University Doctoral Student, UK	Cdutton965@gmail.com @Claire_D_teach
Margaret Mulholland	SEND and inclusion specialist at the Association of School and College Leaders, UK	Margaret.Mulholland@ascl.org.uk @MargaretMulhol2
Julie Greer	Headteacher Cherbourg Primary School, Southampton, UK	julie.greer@cherbourg.hants.sch.uk
Caroline Daly	Reader in Education, UCL Institute of Education, UK	Caroline.Daly@ucl.ac.uk
Jasen Booton	Primary phase practitioner, coach and researcher, Founder of Global Effective Learning Network	jasen@gel-network.com @JasenBooton
Melanie Chambers	The British School of Brussels, Belgium, CollectivED Fellow	mchambers@britishschool.be @BSBMelanie
Emma Adams	Teacher and Professional Learning Partner, The British School of Brussels, Belgium	eadams@britishschool.be @PrimaryEAdams
Angie Browne	Former headteacher, coach and founder of Nourished Collective	hello@nourishedcollective.com @nourishedschool
Chris Munro	Chris Munro, Managing Director, Growth Coaching International, Australia	cmunro@growthcoaching.com.au @CMunroOz
John Campbell	Founding Director, Growth Coaching International, Australia	jcampbell@growthcoaching.com.au @JohnGCI
Jason Pascoe	Director of Consulting Services, Growth Coaching International, Australia	jpascoe@growthcoaching.com.au @jpgci
Andrea Stringer	Managing consultant, Growth Coaching International (ACT/NSW), Australia, CollectivED Fellow	astringer@growthcoaching.com.au @stringer_andrea
Julia Skinner	Education Consultant at The Head's Office	jskinner675@gmail.com @TheHeadsOffice

Lizana Oberholzer	Senior Lecturer, University of East London, UK, Leadership Coach, CollectivED Fellow	L.Oberholzer@uel.ac.uk @LO_EduforAll
Ruth Whiteside	Freelance coach and CollectivED Associate and Fellow	ruth@coachingsolutionsforschools.uk @ruthcoaching
Cath Proffitt	Coaching, Development and Research Senior Lead Practitioner, The Halifax Academy, UK	cproffitt@thehalifaxacademy.org @ProffittCath
Corinne Holden		corinneholden@icloud.com
Christian van Nieuwerburgh	Executive Director, Growth Coaching International, Australia, Professor of Coaching and Positive Psychology, University of East London, UK	chrisvn@growthcoaching.com.au
Henry Sauntson	NQT and ITT Coordinator and Professional Tutor, City of Peterborough Academy, CollectivED Fellow	hsauntson@cityofpeterboroughacademy.org @HenrySauntson
Karli Wilkinson	Hazelbeck Special School (secondary), UK	hazkwi@hazelbeck.org @karliwilky84
Ruth Jones	Hazelbeck Special School (secondary), UK	hazruj@hazelbeck.org
Charis Hart	ITT and NQT coordinator and Senior Mentor, UK	c.hart@lordswoodtrust.co.uk
Jodie Lomax	Secondary school teacher, Research Lead and School Direct Lead, UK	Jmlomax85@gmail.com @researchleadjo
Aaron Berry	Lead Teacher of Biology, Founder EduMentoringUK	aaronandrewberry@gmail.com @aaronaberry
Abul Kalam	Founder EduMentoringUK	abulcamera@gmail.com @HereToLearnED
Sarah Hutchins	EYFS Teacher, Upton Upon Severn Primary School Worcestershire, UK	tshutchins@hotmail.com @magical_mrs
Hannah Wilson	Former Headteacher and the Co-Founder of #WomenEd and #DiverseEd, CollectivED Associate and Fellow	hello@hannah-wilson.co.uk @Ethical_Leader
David Gumbrell	Former Headteacher and the Co-Founder of The Resilience Project, CollectivED Fellow	david@theresilience-project.co.uk @Auribins
Vincent Andrew	Brunei Darussalam Teacher Academy, CollectivED Fellow	vincent.andrew@moe.gov.bn @vsumping
Nor Rozalina Sallehkin	Sayyidina Ali Secondary School, Brunei Darussalam	
Ayaz Ahma	Sayyidina Ali Secondary School, Brunei Darussalam	
Hjh Rashidah Hj Md Jair	Sayyidina Ali Secondary School, Brunei Darussalam	
Kamariah Jaya	Sayyidina Ali Secondary School, Brunei Darussalam	
Anne Temple Clothier	Senior Lecturer, Teacher Fellow Carnegie School of Education, Leeds Beckett University, Leeds, UK	A.Temple-Clothier@Leedsbeckett.ac.uk

David Matheson	Reader, Faculty of Education, Health and Wellbeing, University of Wolverhampton, UK	d.matheson@wlv.ac.uk
Shaun Robison	Chief Executive Officer of BBD Education, Dubai	shaun@bbd.ae
Adina Polen	Atiq Founder & Director, USA	adinapolen@gmail.com
Beatrice Balfour	Gan Shalom Preschool Director, USA	bjvbalfour@gmail.co
John Diamond	Independent public policy and professional practice consultant	diamondj2014@icloud.com @ProfJohnDiamond
Ed Podesta	Secondary Education ITT Phase Coordinator and Senior Lecturer, Institute of Childhood and Education, Leeds Trinity University, UK	e.podesta@leedstrinity.ac.uk @ed_podesta
Gerry Robinson	Leader in Inclusive Education, Headteacher, Educational Activist, CollectivED Fellow	gerryrobinson37@gmail.com @gerryrobin5on
Emily Markovic	Educator, University of Ottawa (Master of Education), Canada	emark083@uottawa.ca

Contributing a working paper

If you would like to contribute a research, practice insight or think piece working paper please see the guidance on our website http://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/riches/our-research/professional-practice-and-learning/collectived/

Please follow us on twitter @CollectivED1 and Rachel Lofthouse at @DrRLofthouse

Email: CollectivED@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

To be added to our mailing list regarding these and other regional events please email CollectivED@leedsbeckett.ac.uk or keep an eye on twitter @CollectivED1.

Professor Rachel Lofthouse