EDUCATION JOURNAL MAGAZINE

Welcome

Welcome to the second edition of the Birmingham City University (BCU) Education Journal Magazine (EJM). Our first edition, released in December 2020, contained ten articles, with nine articles from across the partnership and one guest writer article. This edition has proven to be another challenging experience, with contributions arriving during what has been the country's third National lockdown, but it has turned into a bumper edition for the journal.

This edition contains 18 articles in total from an amazing 23 contributing authors! With 15 articles written from across the partnership and three from guest writers, this is a fantastic edition of insights into current research, reflections and lines of enquiry. What is exciting about this edition is not only the increased quantity of articles on offer, but that we have a have a fantastic variety of contributions on offer from varying writers.

We have an increased number of articles from our trainee teachers (both undergraduate and postgraduate), our partnership teachers and a wider contribution from across the school of education and social work at BCU, including academic tutors, research professors and members of the senior leadership team.

We have topics this time based upon school key stages, subject specific articles to whole school issues and teacher and trainees perspectives. We have articles for teaching staff and articles for those involved in initial teacher training. Whatever your specialism, you will hopefully find something here to captivate you and arouse interest.

We will now look forward to a summer term that will hopefully be getting us back towards some level of 'normal', where we can see and speak to each other in person rather than through a screen. If you read this edition and feel inspired to write something yourself, please feel free to reach out and contact us. We love hearing your thoughts surrounding new and interesting articles – especially from new writers!

Best wishes

Grant Huddleston

Meet the editorial team:

Grant Huddleston	*Course Leader for BSc/BA Hons. Secondary Education (QTS)*
Dr. Tina Collins	*Senior Teaching Fellow/ITE Secondary Partnerships Research Lead*
Mary Bennett-Hartley	*Senior Lecturer in Primary Education*
Dr. Chris Bolton	*Senior Lecturer in Drama Education*

Our Aim

Our aim is to help support practice across our partnership schools and promote enquiry and research. We welcome contributions from students, teachers and academics who wish to make a positive difference to teaching and learning and believe they could help develop and support other's practice. We aim to support new and experienced writers to submit their work so that we share a variety of perspectives.

Our Goals

- *Showcase the excellent work our BCU students produce.*
- *Allow an opportunity for those interested to publish their work to promote positive development and reflection across our partnership schools.*
- *Promote confidence and competence to write for an education publication*
- *Promote interest towards research and enquiry*

How to Contribute

Anybody wishing to contribute an article for consideration should email their draft to BCUEJM@bcu.ac.uk.

You do not need to decide which chapter you wish your article to appear, but you can indicate this if you wish. Please ensure you follow the house style. Final decisions on publication are made by the editorial board. You can submit as many articles as you wish. If the editorial team have received a large number of contributions, your article may be held for later editions.

> **House style**
> When submitting an article for consideration, please aim to follow the subsequent *house style*:
> - Documents must be submitted in Word in font Calibri, size 11, with 1.5 line spacing.
> - Include your full name and role – this will appear under the title.
> - Any web links given should be accessible by the reader and not sit behind passwords or paywalls.
> - Word count is expected to be **500** to **3000** words "all in" (references included).
> - Acronyms and abbreviations must be written in full the first time they are used in each article; thereafter the abbreviation may be used, e.g. "The special educational needs and disability co-ordinator (SENDCO) is … "
> - UK English should be used, e.g. "…ise" endings instead of "…ize"
> - Numbers one to ten written in full; thereafter numerical (e.g. 28 pupils aged nine completed… etc.)
> - Double speech marks for direct speech or quotes; otherwise single speech marks
> - Please use the Harvard referencing system (where applicable – we can support with this if necessary).

Please note that the editorial team will amend the final copy to suit our house style. You will may receive a copy back if any major changes have been made for you to proof read.

Contents

Developing Subject Knowledge for Secondary English teaching during a pandemic

Fiona Darby – Deputy Course Leader Secondary PGCE and Secondary English PGCE Subject Leader

This article was originally published on the NATE website (National Association for the teaching of English) in 2020.

https://www.nate.org.uk/are-you-preparing-to-start-secondary-english-teacher-training-during-a-pandemic/

Tips from a Secondary English PGCE Subject Leader.

We are very lucky to have English as our specialist subject as the first stage of developing our subject knowledge is likely to involve getting immersed in novels, plays and poems – a perfect distraction from the stress and uncertainty we might be feeling right now or a way to spend any extra time we might find ourselves with during a lockdown.

Where to start your reading:

➢ NATE resources

One of the best places to start is NATE's newly designed website where there is:

• A dedicated page for new English teachers

• A NATE ITE Working Group who provide a forum to share ideas and a build a community of good practice

• A termly newsletter – designed exclusively for new English teachers – NATENET.

• Magazines, journals and newsletters that include a range of support for trainee teachers.

• NATE's teaching resources, including GCSE Poetry, 19th century novels and Shakespeare lesson materials.

• Opportunities for your personal development, including the chance to have your work published with NATE.

• Latest news page that provides you with regular updates about opportunities for English teachers at all stages of their career.

• Home-Learning support page which provides a whole host of free resources, enrichment opportunities, wider reading, blogs and much more that will be useful in preparing for your trainee year.

From my experience as a Secondary English PGCE Subject Leader and English Subject Knowledge Enhancement Course Tutor at Birmingham City University, as well as 15 years as an English teacher, I have been able to collate a selection of the most popular texts that are taught in the schools across the West Midlands.

Looking online at the different GCSE English Literature specifications (AQA, EDEXCEL, EDUCAS, and OCR) to see what the named texts are is a good place to start expanding your knowledge of different texts and writers. Use this as a starting point and then see where your reading takes you beyond the set texts as there are so many wonderful books, plays and poems to enjoy.

If it's English Language that you want to develop, using the glossary of terms on the KS3 English Programme of Study will give you a good starting point:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/244215/SECONDARY_national_curriculum_-_English2.pdf.

Websites such as Cyber Grammar http://www.cybergrammar.co.uk/index.php or Englicious http://www.englicious.org/ are good places to start developing and revising your English grammar knowledge.

Drama Texts

I would say that the most popular text of all in English departments is J B Priestley's play An Inspector Calls. This is also one of my favourite texts to teach as I find that most pupils really enjoy reading the play. Themes such as rich v poor; socialism v capitalism; young v old; and feminism are relevant to the world our pupils live in. After reading the text, there is also a BBC adaptation of the play that you may wish to watch to consolidate your understanding of the plot. There is also a wealth of information to support your reading of the play, and many other texts, on the British Library website: https://www.bl.uk/works/an-inspector-calls

Another play that's popular is Willy Russell's Blood Brothers. I read this play recently for the first time after one of my trainees lent it to me. I really enjoyed the story of two boys, separated at birth, and their different lives. I can see how pupils would connect with it too as the themes could be relevant to their lives.

Shakespeare

I can't write about English subject knowledge without mentioning the big man himself – William Shakespeare! Shakespeare is the only named writer on the Secondary English curriculum. I would recommend that you get to know at least one tragedy and one comedy. Obviously you need to read the play text in full but there are many different on screen versions you can watch to develop your understanding – Shakespeare did write the plays to be performed after all. I recommend starting your Shakespeare reading with Macbeth as this seems to be the most popular of all Shakespeare's plays taught in the schools that I spend time in. A close second in the tragedy genre is Romeo and Juliet, with Othello now becoming more commonly taught too.

For comedy, A Midsummer Night's Dream is a must read, with Much Ado about Nothing, and The Tempest (not strictly a comedy – there's an area of research for you!) being popular too especially in KS3 lessons. I would also recommend these resources to develop your Shakespeare knowledge: Folger Shakespeare Library: www.folger.edu

The Globe: www.shakespearesglobe.com

The RSC: www.rsc.org.uk and Teaching Shakespeare: A Handbook for Teachers by Rex Gibson.

Novels

If you're looking to get lost in a novel then the list can seem endless as there's so much choice. Perhaps you could use some time to branch out of your reading comfort zone; it's always good to have a range of ideas for reading to recommend to your pupils. I'd strongly suggest getting ahead with reading 19th century novels as these can be more challenging to read quickly if you're given one to teach without much notice.

The most popular 19th century text in the schools that I visit is Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol. Even if you haven't read it you will be familiar with the plot of how Scrooge learns the error of his ways through the three spirits visiting him on Christmas Eve. There are many on screen adaptations to support your reading of A Christmas Carol – don't tell anyone but my favourite is The Muppets version, a Christmas Eve tradition in my house despite Michael Caine's dubious singing and dancing!

Next on the 19th century list would be Robert Louis Stevenson's The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. Again, this is a story that's probably familiar to you even if you've not read it before. It can be challenging for pupils to get to grips with this text because of the different narrative approaches, the language, and the confusing plot that's not properly revealed until the end of the book. This is definitely a text to get to know well in advance of teaching it.

I'm also really pleased to see that Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre is becoming more popular in schools as it's probably my favourite 19th century novel. Finally, if you're looking for a longer read during lockdown, Great Expectations by Charles Dickens is often taught in many English classrooms.

Moving onto more modern novels, I'd suggest George Orwell's Animal Farm should top your list as this seems to be taught in so many schools. Other choices would be William Golding's Lord of the Flies, The Woman in Black by Susan Hill, and Anita and Me by Meera Syal. You might be surprised that I haven't yet mentioned John Steinbeck's Of Mice and Men and To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee. These two novels are definitely worth a read, firstly because they are superb texts and pupils really engage with them and enjoy reading them, secondly they are often taught to KS3 classes – but these two books are not included on the reformed GCSE specifications for English Literature because they are not British literature. However most English departments have copies of these texts from previous specifications so you are likely to encounter them in school.

I find that the subject knowledge area that needs the most attention from the trainees I work with is children's literature. I can recommend a few texts from the schools I visit, but this is just a starting point given the number of texts for 11 – 14 year olds that are available. Noughts and Crosses by Malorie Blackman, Holes by Louis Sacher, Stone Cold by Robert Swindells, The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas by John Boyne, Private Peaceful by Michael Morpurgo, My Sister Lives on the Mantelpiece by Annabel Pitcher. Other advice for choosing which KS3 books to read would be to look at the recent Carnegie Medal award winners and nominations: https://carnegiegreenaway.org.uk/about-the-awards/

When you're in school, have a rummage around the department to see which KS3 texts are in the English department cupboards. The School Reading List website gives suggestions by pupil age: https://schoolreadinglist.co.uk/category/secondary-ks3-ks4-reading-lists/

Finally, you should read J K Rowling's Harry Potter series if you haven't already. Most pupils love all things Harry Potter and will appreciate sharing their love of the series with you.

Poetry

I don't know exactly why but poetry seems to be the subject knowledge area that many trainees over the years have feared or even – shock! - disliked. If the thought of teaching poetry fills you with fear then now is the perfect opportunity to do some reading to help boost your confidence in this area.

I suggest starting with some poems from poets that are included on GCSE English Literature specifications. Have a look at a small selection of poems from the different poets so that you can get a feel for their style and the topics they tend to write about. I would recommend starting your reading of poetry with some of the more modern poets to ease yourself in to this area of subject knowledge. Some poets to explore could be: Carol Ann Duffy, Benjamin Zephaniah, Simon Armitage, Seamus Heaney, Gillian Clarke, and Ted Hughes.

Once you've read around some modern poets, you should then start to look over some older poets. War poetry is a popular genre taught in schools so looking at poems by Wilfred Owen, Seigfried Sassoon, Rupert Brooke, and Edward Thomas would be a good place to start.

The only named time period on the KS4 English Programme of Study is the Romantic period https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/331877/KS4_English_PoS_FINAL_170714.pdf. If this is a new area for you, definitely focus some attention on getting to know the key features and topics of the Romantic poets. You should look at: William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, John Keats, Percy Bysshe Shelley, William Blake and Lord Byron.

Another way to develop your subject knowledge of poetry is to look at the poems included on the different exam board specifications for GCSE English Literature. Finally, I'd also recommend Amanda Naylor and Audrey B Wood's book Teaching Poetry: reading and responding to poetry in the Classroom.

Final Thoughts

We are English teachers so it goes without saying that we love to read and write. So even if you are juggling caring for family during lockdown and working from home, I'm sure you might be able to devote some time at the start of the day before everyone else is up, or at the end of the day when you have a moment's peace for reading. If you really are very short of time, I'd recommend these texts as a priority for your subject knowledge reading: An Inspector Calls by J B Priestley, Macbeth by William Shakespeare, A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens, Animal Farm by George Orwell, and Romantic poetry.

Use your reading time for reading for pleasure and get to know what happens in the texts you choose to read. If you do this, then when you come to learning about how to teach the texts in your teacher training, you can make the

transfer from subject knowledge to pedagogical knowledge. You'll find the process of learning different English pedagogical approaches more straight forward if you have sound subject knowledge of the texts in advance.

Your reading list as an English teacher is a never ending one, the pile of books by my bedside does not get any smaller – ever! The texts I have mentioned are just the beginning and there will always other exciting texts to read. You also might revisit texts that you have read some years ago from your own school days and I can guarantee that you will see new things as you reread, and your pupils will bring new interpretations and ideas to texts for you too. There is always more to learn as an English teacher so take pleasure in reading widely and not only the most common texts. Two final recommendations are Barbara Bleiman's book What Matters in English Teaching: Collected Blogs and Other Writing, and Robert Eaglestone's Doing English or Literature: Why it matters.

I hope you enjoy getting lost in some wonderful works of fiction over the next few months.

Are teachers trained to deliver the kind of education needed for the twenty-first century?

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Abstract

This article considers the recommendations of the Carter Review of Initial Teacher Training (2015) in the context of the World Economic Forum Report (WEF): New Visions for Education (2015). Against defined criteria, it is clear from the WEF report that education provided in the United Kingdom is not as good as that provided by other high income OECD countries. This article considers the impact on teaching in the United Kingdom if improvements are to be seen. It asks whether the current training of teachers meets the needs of the twenty-first century. By reviewing government policy over recent years we recognise a decline in teacher autonomy and a concomitant rise in a compliance culture. In light of this we are proposing that the content teacher training be augmented to restore autonomy and address gaps identified in the WEF report.

Introduction: Vision for the twenty-first century

The World Economic Forum (WEF) Report: New Vision for Education (2015) is based on a detailed analysis of research literature and defines what it considers to be the most crucial skills for twenty-first century citizens worldwide. The WEF states that:

To thrive in a rapidly evolving, technology-mediated world, students must not only possess strong skills in areas such as language arts, mathematics and science, but they must also be adept at skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, persistence, collaboration and curiosity. All too often, however, students in many countries are not attaining these skills (2015:1).

The WEF notes the existing, and perhaps more familiar, deficit skills in adult standards of literacy and numeracy but also draws attention to the even more startling figures quoted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Adult Skills' survey which finds that between only 2.9% and 8.8% of adults demonstrate the highest levels of proficiency in problem-solving in 'technology-rich environments' (2013:23).

The WEF define the skills needed in the twenty-first century under three categories:

- Foundation Literacies which include, literacy, numeracy, scientific literacy, ICT literacy, financial literacy and cultural and civic literacy
- Competencies which include, critical thinking/problem-solving, creativity, communication and collaboration
- Character Qualities which include, curiosity, initiative, persistence/grit, adaptability, leadership and social and cultural awareness (2015:3).

Compared with other high-income OECD countries it appears that the United Kingdom performs very well in the skills of critical thinking/problem solving and curiosity (ranked in the fourth pentile in comparison with other high income OECD countries); quite well in the skills of literacy, scientific literacy and cultural/civic literacy (ranked the third pentile) but poorly in numeracy and creativity (ranked in the second pentile). There was no data available for ICT literacy and financial literacy, the implication being that this represents a gap in provision. In fact, "At an individual country level, a gap exists between foundational literacies and competencies and character qualities such as critical thinking, creativity and curiosity" (WEF, 2015:7). Of the nine skills measured Finland, Japan and South Korea perform particularly well (ranked in the fifth pentile in at least seven skills) (WEF, 2015).

If these are the skills needed by the next generation of twenty-first century adults, all educators should question the extent to which they form an explicit part of the education of young people. Are new teachers trained to be able to deliver this education?

Where is ITT now?

Since the Coalition Government of 2010, or arguably, since the Conservative second term of office in 1983, politicians have focused on the initial training of teachers. Debate has centred around:

- the move towards a more schools-led model
- the consequential role of universities in ITT
- the nature of teaching as a craft or a profession
- what the content of initial teacher training should include.

There are clear statements of what the national expectations for teacher training must be and these impact on the actual content. The Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2011) is perhaps the most obvious, along with the Initial Teacher Training (ITT): criteria and supporting advice (DfE, 2018). Helpfully, perhaps, the government recently commissioned a review of the content of initial teacher training led by Sir Andrew Carter. The findings led to the statement that, "ITT should introduce new teachers to crucial elements of knowledge, skills and understanding that all teachers need" (DfE, 2015:3). The recommendations of the Carter Review were an attempt to improve initial teacher training in the current climate of what 'teachers need' for schools and schooling. However, is this current climate addressing the needs of the citizens of the twenty-first century to enable them to thrive?

The conclusion of the review was that, "ITT should have a relentless focus on pupil outcomes (including pupil progress, achievement and well-being) and should be delivered purposefully towards this overarching goal" (2015:6). The review identified five areas that it considered to be "significant gaps in a range of courses". These were "subject knowledge development, subject-specific pedagogy, behaviour management, assessment and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)" (2015:6). However, the proposals of the Carter Review would seem to be more in line with a continued focus on what the WEF report lists as the 'Foundation Literacies' to the exclusion of 'Competencies' and 'Character Qualities'. Whilst Carter states that pupils are, quite rightly, the centre of education, in reality it is the outcomes that pupils achieve that are the focus of the Carter Review. It is our view that this focus seeks to strengthen our own system of education rather than the broader skill set that the WEF report recommends.

Where should it be?

In considering what initial teacher training ought to include, we have been influenced by some of the thinking of Orchard and Winch (2015) who argue that teachers need to understand the principles that underpin practices to make sense of the specific education system for which they are being trained in order to exercise professional judgment. Because "…If they do not understand at the level of principle why the subjects they teach are worthwhile or the methods they use are appropriate, they will be operating as mere technicians" (2015:20). This statement echoes the debate surrounding the nature of teaching as either a craft or a profession introduced by Gove in 2010 at the Annual Conference of the National College for Teaching and Leadership. Kirk (2011) argues that teaching is both a craft and a profession in his article for the Times Educational Supplement, *It's not a craft or a profession. Teachers without both skills will be a walking disaster*. On one hand, he argues that the craft of teaching "involves the exercise and deployment of an extensive repertoire of practical skills and strategies to motivate pupils". These need to be learned under the supervision of accomplished practitioners in the classroom. On the other hand, Kirk argues that, "the personal knowledge associated with the learning of a craft has to be complemented by the broader knowledge that comes from the review and study of existing academic evidence about the conduct of teaching".

We would suggest that if teachers are to respond to and develop in light of changes in practice for the twenty-first century they need to be trained as professionals; they need to be leaders of learning, and to be leaders of learning they need to be able to make decisions. To make effective decisions they should, as Orchard and Winch (2015) suggest, understand some of the history of education, how education policy comes into being, how and who makes the decisions and why some potentially worthwhile educational activities became established whilst others never took hold. "This awareness will help teachers to discriminate between compelling and incoherent reasons for one action rather than another" (Orchard and Winch, 2015: 20). There are those who insist on the term 'teacher education' rather than 'teacher training' to reflect this view.

Nunn (2017) however, sees a value for initial teacher training in also developing an understanding of the psychological and sociological factors that impact on the learning of children and young people, not in an abstract way but to be "linked to practical teaching in schools and help to contextualise professional practice" (2017: 63). This view is also supported by Boyd who suggests that trainee teachers need curriculum subject knowledge, pedagogical knowledge (how best to teach key concepts and skills) and, more controversially, knowledge of the wider social context in which they are working, "Beginning teachers need to critically consider and articulate the purposes of education" (2017: 99-100).

Orchard and Winch go on to propose that trainee teachers need to know something about general philosophy, Plato, Locke, Rousseau, Aristotle as "Engaging with these classic accounts enables teachers to clarify their own understanding of the purposes of education and their reasons for favouring some educational activities and approaches over others" (2015:20). This understanding, we concur, would enable teachers to contribute to the development of national education policy which is something that Critchley (2018) argues has been removed from the workforce with the reduction of the Civil Service. It has been some time since the Civil Service acted as the conduit for various expert groups allowing the "much broader understanding of the various stakeholders in the educational system to be thrown into the policy mix" (2018). As profession educators have lost the voice they once had through the channels of the Civil Service and Local Government; the more significant influencers on Ministers now are their Special Advisors, "who tend to come from the same ideological space as Ministers" (Critchley, 2018). Surely educators would want teacher trainees to have that philosophical understanding of the purposes of education if they are to create influence in the twenty-first century?

Critchley (2018) gives a detailed analysis of the way in which education policy making has changed over the last two decades and not for the better, resulting in an overstretched teaching workforce that doesn't have time or inclination to question. As university teacher educators, we have seen this in our own practice and have despondently noted a generation entering teaching with a 'tell me what to do and I'll do it' attitude. A by-product, whether intentional or otherwise, of the national strategies, first introduced in 1998, has been a contribution to the compliance culture witnessed in today's teachers. The initial strategies were focused on literacy and numeracy at key stages one and two, the Primary Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Furlong (2013b:36) states that "for the first time a government took it upon itself to define what effective pedagogy should be in relation to these two aspects of primary teaching". The glossy documentation supporting the National Strategies provided the theoretical underpinning behind the pedagogy which, in our opinion, resulted in a reduction in teachers' independent thinking.

In 2002 the government of the day revised the list of teacher standards arguing that some of the standards linked to the national strategies with the expectation that newly qualified primary teachers would know "the frameworks, methods and expectations set out in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies" (TTA, 2003:8). The implicit message from the government here, we argue, is that they are now the experts; teachers' expertise has been eroded. We would agree with Critchley (2018) who states that "…we need to restore experts to the centre of policy making: Experts who have walked the classroom walk for years, rather that talked the talk for a couple of terms (of office)".

The way forward

In summary we are proposing that education for the twenty-first century needs to be much more in line with the WEF Report which includes competencies and character qualities as well as foundation literacies. In light of this we propose that, initial teacher training ought to incorporate, amongst other things:

- principles and practice specific to the education system for which they are being trained
- the history of education
- education policy making
- psychology and sociology of education in the context of professional practice
- philosophy leading to an understanding of the purposes of education.

We want teachers to become engaged and critical thinkers, empowered professionals whose expertise is sought to influence and inform education policy and practice. It is clearly time to start thinking about an extension to the duration of teacher training programmes allowing those in training to really understand children and their society alongside the competencies and character qualities needed for the twenty-first century.

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Reflections on preparing university staff for a non-judgemental, inquiry-based model of peer observation: opportunities and challenges

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Introduction

This year marks the fifth anniversary since the introduction of an innovative cycle of peer observation (CoPO) in the Faculty of Health, Education and Life Sciences at BCU. Following a successful pilot in 2015/16, CoPO was rolled out to all teaching staff across the Faculty in 2016/17, together with an accompanying observation training programme. Since then, hundreds of teaching staff have completed the training and worked collaboratively with their peers on applying CoPO to their chosen areas of focus in their teaching contexts.

This collaborative paper captures some of the collective reflections of the members of the current CoPO training team who have been responsible for delivering the observation training for staff as well as being directly involved themselves in undertaking CoPO with their colleagues. The focus of our paper seeks to explore some of the challenges as well as the benefits that we have encountered in preparing staff for a non-judgemental, inquiry-based model of peer observation. We also reflect on the lessons learnt and the implications for our continued use of CoPO as a tool for exploring rather than explaining practice, with the aim of improving the quality of teaching and learning across all courses.

Putting CoPO into context

It is not within the scope of this paper to provide a detailed account of the underpinning philosophy of CoPO nor to explain how the cycle actually works in practice. We have written about this in a previous paper if readers wish to understand more about it (See O'Leary & Savage 2020). Nonetheless, we are mindful that in order for readers to make sense of the discussion that follows, it is important to provide a brief backdrop to how and why CoPO emerged. With this in mind, what follows in this section is a brief overview of the rationale for the conceptualisation of CoPO.

Drawing on the latest research and practice in the field of observation and learning from the pitfalls of how it has been misappropriated as a performance management tool in education for many decades (e.g. O'Leary 2020; O'Leary and Wood 2017), we decided to reconfigure the way we think about and engage with observation. We identified the conventional use of observation as a method of assessment as the single most significant obstacle to maximising its benefits. Our starting point was thus to sever the longstanding, normalised link between observation and its use as a method of assessing teaching and teacher performance. We were convinced that unless we were able to remove observation from its association with assessment, then this would jeopardise our efforts to create a safe, trusting and collaborative environment for reflection and dialogue among staff.

To overcome some of the limitations of conventional approaches to observation, we were convinced that we needed to ensure that CoPO prioritised collaborative inquiry, critical reflection, professional dialogue and collegial development. The decision was therefore taken to use it as a data collection tool of exploratory inquiry into teaching practices among staff in the Faculty, providing a platform for enabling collaborative development. This was a crucial distinction to ensure a safe and nurturing environment for reflection and dialogue.

The Cycle of Peer Observation (CoPO, see **Figure 1**) was thus developed as a process to facilitate effective dialogic interaction between observer and observee.
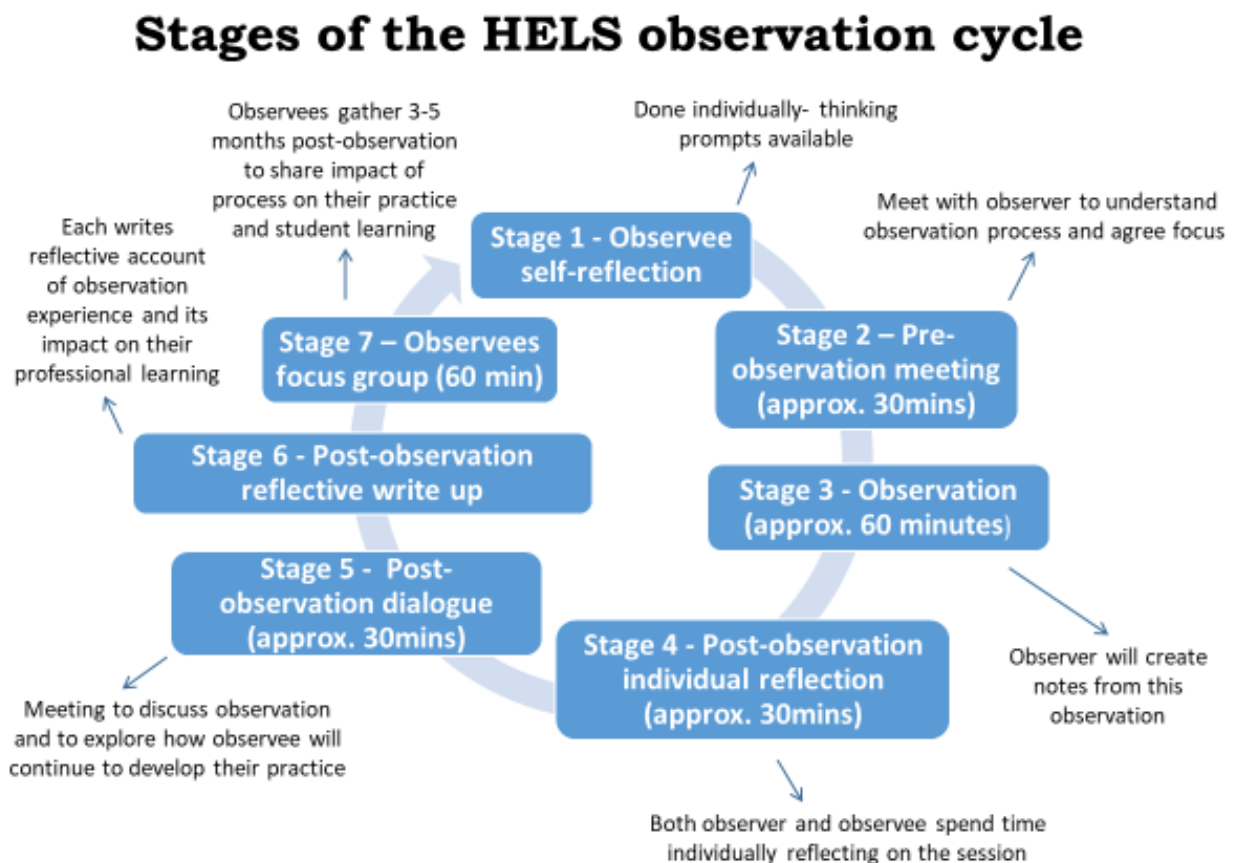
Stages of the HELS observation cycle

Observees gather 3-5 months post-observation to share impact of process on their practice and student learning

Done individually- thinking prompts available

Each writes reflective account of observation experience and its impact on their professional learning

Meet with observer to understand observation process and agree focus

Stage 1 - Observee self-reflection

Stage 7 – Observees focus group (60 min)

Stage 2 – Pre-observation meeting (approx. 30mins)

Stage 6 - Post-observation reflective write up

Stage 3 - Observation (approx. 60 minutes)

Stage 5 - Post-observation dialogue (approx. 30mins)

Stage 4 - Post-observation individual reflection (approx. 30mins)

Observer will create notes from this observation

Meeting to discuss observation and to explore how observee will continue to develop their practice

Both observer and observee spend time individually reflecting on the session

Figure 1 – Cycle of Peer Observation (CoPO)

From the launch of CoPO, all observers have been required to undertake a one-day observation training programme. Over the last two years, this training has been extended to include observees too.

The first part of the training focuses on staff discussing and critically reflecting on their understandings, perceptions and prior experiences of observation. We have since come to articulate this stage of the training as a process of *conceptual catharsis*, having learnt that unless academic staff are allowed to divest themselves of prior experiences and associations with observation as an assessment tool, then expecting them to engage with a radical, reconceptualised approach is likely to be more problematic and ultimately less successful. In short, encouraging teaching staff to detach observation from assessment and embrace it as an exploratory tool requires a significant shift individually and collectively, and it is important to integrate time for this in the training.

The second part of the training provides staff with opportunities to develop an understanding of the epistemological and methodological underpinnings of CoPO, to discuss the processes of the cycle, as well as practise some basic coaching and observation skills through a series of interactive tasks. For example, they practise carrying out non-judgemental observations via a selection of video clips of teaching and compare their observation notes and reflections with their peers. This is to help to develop an awareness of what different observers notice when they observe, reflect on their values of learning and teaching and how these values inform their observations and reflections. During the training, staff are instructed to compile a descriptive log/field notes of what they observe, along with associated questions and/or reflective comments to discuss during the professional dialogue stage rather than make evaluative judgements. This is exactly the approach that observers are asked to adopt when undertaking

CoPO. It is made clear to all staff that observers are not 'experts,' nor are they there to provide answers or solutions to all their observee's questions but to support them as peers to reflect on their practice. They are there to record what they see and to stimulate discussion. They also practise conducting conversations using coaching questions in the second part of the training.

Challenges and tensions of a coaching-based model of peer observation

The ethos and application of CoPO is underpinned by coaching. While the concept and practice of coaching and peer observations may appear to be two separate frames of reference, they are combined in CoPO to support the development of the teaching practices of staff with various levels of experience and expertise.

If coaching is considered a methodology that purports to promote individual self-development through thoughtful, person-centred questioning and probing techniques, then its application as a tool for supporting all teaching staff in CoPO seemed logical to us. As CoPO has become embedded in staff collaboration across the Faculty, some challenges and tensions have emerged. These largely centre on juggling the expectations and/or demands of the University and its staff. Like other universities, BCU is committed to delivering high quality teaching for its students. Key levers such as the Teaching Excellence Framework and the National Student Survey ensure that the quality of teaching remains high on the policy agenda. One of the challenges for institutions is therefore to achieve a balance between supporting the individual development of its teaching staff while simultaneously meeting the institution's wider commitment to improving the overall quality of teaching. That said, the ethos of CoPO does not see these two as being mutually exclusive. On the contrary, it regards them as two sides of the same coin, with one feeding into the other.

Tensions can sometimes surface in relation to staff perceptions of what they expect and/or want from their engagement with CoPO. For example, some may assume that CoPO would have a more directive and instructional approach to supporting individual development. This is a common misassumption that is often influenced by staff's prior experiences of observation and its predominant association with performance management. Furthermore, misconceptions about CoPO and its underlying purposes can also result in some staff being reluctant to engage with it due to fear of criticism and judgement of their practice. This is one of the reasons why time is provided for staff in the training session to discuss their prior experiences and to clarify what the purpose of CoPO is/isn't. In short, both individual perceptions and expectations can be an ongoing source of challenges and tensions that are best confronted directly and transparently in a discursive forum.

Embedding coaching into the way in which we use peer observation requires an investment of time for both parties to ensure that they maximise the reciprocal benefits. This can be a challenge when workloads are high and time availability is scarce, even leading to resentment among some staff that they are required to participate. Therefore it is important to emphasise that BCU's workload allocation model formally recognises the time required to complete the CoPO cycle as part of learning and teaching development activity.

The perceived and real benefits of CoPO are manifested in a variety of ways. For example, developing staff confidence to explore and try out new teaching methods without fear of punitive judgement or evaluation. Equally, the ongoing development for both coach and coachee is noticeable, providing individuals with the autonomy to develop their thinking and practice in a supportive environment.

Benefits and opportunities of a coaching-based model of peer observation

Mentoring is often the most common approach adopted by many of us in our work when preparing students for education and healthcare roles. This approach essentially underpins the professional development of early career professionals, whereby support is very much about sharing knowledge in a directive way to model effective practice.

This practice is largely centred on placements across different disciplines within the context of observation in the traditional, evaluative sense. As professional practice develops, so too does the role of the 'mentor' i.e. adopting a less directive approach, becoming more 'coach' than 'mentor'. In recognising this shift and maintaining a non-judgemental approach to the observation and support offered to colleagues, developing coaching skills therefore emerged as another important aspect to consider in our training. While staff are provided with an introductory insight into the role of coaching in CoPO as part of the training, we were conscious of the need to further develop the coaching aspect of the observer's role, hence the decision to offer additional coaching skills sessions to all staff.

The additional coaching training provided by the team allows participants to conduct and practise professional conversations in a safe space, using the coaching skills of listening, the underestimated power of silence in conversation, along with paraphrasing and questioning. The aim is to enhance the importance of these coaching principles that underpin the ethos of CoPO and to extend the impact that effective coaching can have in supporting professional development for the individual, but also on department teams and more widely across the university.

The additional training sessions we offer help to develop a greater sense of awareness among staff of the skills needed to support the non-judgemental and enquiry-based approach that underpins CoPO. An enhanced coaching approach aims to provide effective and successful support to both observer and observee. This also helps to create the conditions in which a more evenly balanced, trustworthy relationship between observer and observee can flourish, rather than a more traditional hierarchical relationship, where the observer is seen as the 'expert' who advises the observee on how best to develop their practice.

The coach adopts a greater facilitator role, allowing for a more open and productive professional dialogue to occur, which is ultimately led by the observee rather than the observer. The skills of listening, paraphrasing and questioning are key to the success of this process to allow the observee to reflect constructively on their own practice, identifying aspects of practice that they themselves are interested in changing or developing, with a sharper solutions focussed approach. As Thomas and Smith (2004, 12) argue, 'we have our own maps of reality and we interpret the world around us in ways that are our own'. As part of the training, we explore coaching models such as GROW (Whitmore 2002) and STRIDE (Thomas & Smith 2004), both of which help to provide a structure for setting challenges, recognising the reality of the moment, the goals the individual wants to achieve and the barriers that may be holding them back from achieving them.

This positional shift from traditional mentor to coach recognises that the observee possesses their own valuable frames of reference about their teaching and they are the ones who are best placed to identify their own needs and enact change themselves, with the support of their observer as coach. As part of the coaching approach adopted by CoPO, the observer explores the observee's frames of reference through skilful questioning, taking care not to be judgemental. Focused listening allows the observer to understand the observee and their own view of a situation. Paraphrasing allows for mutual understanding of that reality and focused, open-ended questioning enhances this further. The role of the observer is thus to steer the observee to discover their own solutions rather than prescribe them.

Part of the rationale for drawing on coaching to inform the ethos and methodology of CoPO was based on the premise that the greater the degree of agency and ownership staff are afforded to identify and shape their professional learning, the more authentic and enduring such learning can become. Coaching works on the basis that individuals can improve their own practice by developing a greater self-awareness, which in turn can trigger a process of deeper delving into their thinking and decision making. Using the metaphor of an iceberg, coaching offers us the potential to delve beneath the surface, to interrogate those underlying beliefs, feelings and incentives that shape how we think and learn. Coaching is a vehicle that has the potential to allow us to lay bare and unpick our thinking and decision making. Through the framework provided by CoPO, staff are encouraged to do just this right from the beginning of the cycle, to challenge normalised thinking and behaviours with a view to provoking self-reflection and dialogue that can encourage us to reimagine our practice and to look at it through a different lens.

With this enhanced self-awareness comes increased self-efficacy and a renewed confidence that can extend beyond our own teaching and into other areas such as playing a greater role in development work across teams, departments and the Faculty as a whole.

At BCU, CoPO training is delivered as an all-inclusive, cross-departmental approach, with members of the team representing a range of schools, departments and roles across the Faculty. This inclusive approach reflects a deliberate strategy that aims to promote a culture of collegial collaboration and a greater understanding of some of the commonalities as well as the differences that exist across departments, enhancing the development and support of core values, visions and impact on outcomes across the Faculty.

Looking back and looking ahead

The milestone of five years provides an important juncture for reflecting on the journey of the Faculty and its staff since the introduction of CoPO. It is no exaggeration to say that CoPO has transformed the way in which education and health staff think about and engage with observation. Despite the challenges and tensions that can arise with the implementation of a new policy, ongoing feedback and evaluations of both the training and the CoPO cycle itself clearly highlight how positive these experiences have been for staff, along with the tangible impact that this faculty-wide development has had on their thinking and teaching practices. And this has not been disrupted at all by the Covid-19 pandemic over the last year.

One of the many strengths of CoPO is its flexibility. Since the onset of the pandemic and the transition to online teaching, CoPO and the accompanying training sessions have been moulded to adapt to working in these new virtual spaces. This has meant that staff can still complete the training as well as undertaking the cycle with their peers. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, many staff have chosen to focus on developing their online/virtual teaching skills as their priority for CoPO.

At the same time, the pandemic has also provided an opportunity for the use of 'unseen peer observation' to run parallel alongside CoPO and/or as an alternative. Like CoPO, unseen observation is a teacher-centred model of observation where the fundamental work takes place in the pre and post-session conversations that form the foundation of the unseen observation cycle. The main difference between unseen observation and CoPO is that unseen observation is a model of observation that does not actually involve observing a taught session but instead relies on the individual teacher's recounting and reflection on the taught lesson as the stimulus for the professional dialogue between 'observer' and 'observee'.

So, looking ahead, what next for the CoPO team and our continued use of observation for improving the quality of teaching and learning? Prior to the pandemic, discussions were underway as to the university-wide rollout of CoPO across the other faculties. These discussions will be revisited once a sense of normality is restored across the university. This institution-wide implementation would allow for the sharing of good practice and the embedding of the collegial culture on an organisational scale that CoPO has been so successful in achieving across the Faculty. In the meantime, the HELS Faculty CoPO team will continue to offer training and additional support sessions to all staff and look forward to doing so in person as soon as possible in the future.

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Classroom Observation by Matt O'Leary.

Building on recent changes and debates surrounding the use of observation, this fully updated second edition of Classroom Observation explores the role of lesson observation in the preparation, assessment and professional learning of teachers, lecturers and educators at all levels and across all educational organisations. Offering practical guidance and detailed insights on an aspect of training that is a source of anxiety for many teachers, this thought-provoking book offers a critical analysis of the place, role and nature of lesson observation in the lives of education professionals.

Enabling readers to use observation as a lens for understanding, informing and improving teaching and learning, and equipping them with structured frameworks for applying observation, this book includes sections on:

- *Teacher autonomy and professional identity*
- *Performance management, professional standards and accountability*
- *Peer observation, self-observation and critical reflection*
- *Educational assessment and evaluation*
- *Peer-based models of observation*
- *Using digital technology to inform learning*
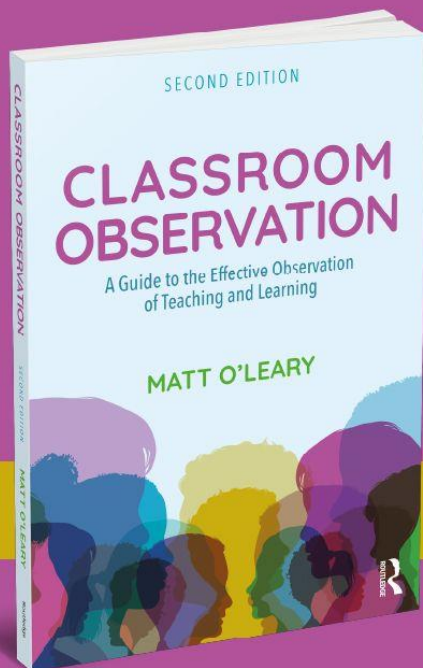
How prepared are primary pre-service teachers in delivering physical education as they approach their NQT Year?

Grant Huddleston - Senior Lecturer in Physical Education, Birmingham City University

This article explores how prepared primary pre-service teachers (PPSTs) feel about teaching PE as they approach their NQT year. It explores the key literature, whilst analysing the findings from 48 participants from across six universities. It is a condensed version of a full research paper, of which details can be found at the end of this article.

The traditions of primary education

Traditionally, primary education promotes the thematic or topic approach. Therefore primary education has been delivered through a multi-subject curriculum, taught by generalist class teachers who teach most, if not all, subjects. When it comes to a 'secondary model' of teaching (teachers teaching to a specialist subject), it was found that only 6% of primary school teachers were classed as specialist teachers of PE (Jess, McEvilly and Carse, 2016). Going back to the early 1990s, Her Majesty's inspectorate found that around 30% of lessons in primary schools were taught as single subjects (Alexander et al, 1992), with those subjects namely being music and PE. It has long been argued that creating separate subject lessons would not be beneficial to primary aged children as it is inconsistent with a child's view of the world and their lack of abstract thinking (Schaffer, 1988). It was acknowledged that children be allowed to construct their own meaning and understanding of the world around them, whereas subject teaching involves the imposition of a received version of knowledge (Alexander et al, 1992). However, the introduction of mandatory planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time in 2005 created a demand for additional timetable resourcing.

Why begin a career in primary education?

Teachers are initially attracted to the teaching profession for a number of reasons. Perhaps the best way to consider these reasons is to look upon Lortie's (1975) five themes behind why adults join the teaching profession. PE specific PPSTs have done so likely because of Lortie's "continuation theme" (Ralph and MacPhail, 2015), due to the strong relationship that sport and coaching has with PE. However this is unlikely for those PPSTs on a generalist route, with the biggest factor arguably being the "interpersonal theme" (choosing a career in teaching because they want to work with and help others). Therefore, it is perfectly reasonable to believe that a generalist teacher's motivation could naturally differ across subjects.

Alongside motivation, PPSTs will have varying beliefs and experiences. Beliefs can be defined as understandings that are personally felt to be true by that person (Richardson, 1996), borne out of their own experiences. Thomson (2002) recognised that PPSTs bring along a whole 'virtual schoolbag' of understandings, skills, expertise, experiences with them, rather than coming to the profession with a blank slate. The impact these 'institutional biographies' (Richardson, 1999) can have on the engagement of a PPST can vary the experience and motivation from one PPST to the next. Teachers can hold negative views of PE (Morgan and Hansen, 2007), based upon reflection of a "critical incident" of their own experiences of PE as a pupil. Retaining this negative view could also therefore have a negative impact on their teaching (Haynes, Miller and Varea, 2016). Based upon this, Jess, McEvilly and Carse (2016) found that only 56% of teachers within their study felt that PE was 'very important' or 'important', whilst 39% considered PE to be of 'limited to very limited importance' within the education system. When reviewing teachers' personal histories, they found that 20% of the teachers involved rated their own experience as less than good. One of the factors surrounding this has been centred on the lack of formal training at an ITE level, which PPSTs tended to use their prior experiences to shape their teaching (Randall and Maeda, 2010). It has therefore been suggested that the majority of primary teachers do not feel competent teaching PE due to low confidence, minimal skills and knowledge to deliver PE, whilst having limited subject knowledge (Tsangaridou, 2012).

ITE

PPSTs reportedly receive an average of anywhere up to twelve hours (Kirk, 2012) of PE specific training during ITE in England. This is based upon a generalist model, where the PPST will be teaching all subject areas of the national curriculum (NC). It has therefore been suggested (Ardzejewska et al, 2010) that the core subjects (English and maths) become the focus of the generalist teacher, whilst PE be taught or supported according to the available expertise in school (PE co-ordinator).

How do we define 'prepared'?

When carrying out ITE in England, PPSTs must satisfy the teacher standards (DfE, 2013) to gain QTS. However, against a generalist ITE model, evidence can be shown across all areas of the NC.

The importance of 'preparedness' is an important indicator for teachers' awareness and future performance, but could also help estimate job retention and support issues (Mohammed et al, 2017). In a study on music PPSTs in USA, Randall (2012) described how changing the ITE offer away from 'what we teach' towards 'how we teach' could help make the PPSTs better "prepared". It is important to note however that PPSTs have to cover many theoretical elements alongside their placements in school. This includes knowledge and understanding of SEND, behaviour management and planning within PE. One strategy to help support and promote development of the NQT is the

establishment of the early career framework, which entitles NQTs to a fully-funded, two-year package of structured training (DfE, 2019).

Subject Knowledge

In order to ensure that PPSTs are best prepared for entering the workplace, they must be aware that teachers are accountable for the learning that takes place in their lessons. Therefore, PPSTs must be aware of what makes a PE lesson effective. Dyson (2014) argues that pedagogical content knowledge is what creates positive learning environments, supporting pupil learning. What the teacher does is critical to whether the pupil learns (Rink, 2014) and this can be brought about by the use of different orientations to teaching (for example the use of different pedagogical models).

Currently, the use of co-ordinators or specialists have been integrated into schools to help deliver PE effectively. It is important to note that a co-ordinator is not always a specialist and vice versa. Griggs and Randall (2018, p10) stated that defining a specialist is somewhere between "contested" or "not known". Rainer et al (2011) found that PE co-ordinators generally had no specific PE training background, with one headteacher indicating that the PE co-ordinator was selected on the basis that they played sport most of their life, suggesting they were more equipped than other staff members. It is therefore important that the co-ordinator and specialist roles be defined. Jensen et al (2016) described "specialisation" across two categories: ITE and what is happening within school. Therefore, during ITE, the more modules undertaken around PE would make them more of a specialist, whilst in school, the less subjects you teach would make you more of a specialist in the ones that you do.

For the purpose of this study:

- ✓ *A specialist is a teacher (with QTS) who has received specific primary PE training* (through either additional CPD or in ITE)
- ✓ *A co-ordinator is a teacher (with QTS) who has responsibility for the management of PE in their school*

For the most effective support of generalist teachers, it is important to note that schools promote a specialist co-ordinator in position in their school.

Who is teaching PE?

Generally three different groups of people deliver primary PE lessons: generalist teachers, specialist PE teachers, and adults other than teachers (AOTTs); in most cases a coach (Jones and Green, 2015). The curriculum model of delivery is therefore taught or supported through one or a combination of these three groups. Since the introduction of the

PESS premium, the workforce delivering PE has transitioned greatly, revealing that a large number of coaches are now being outsourced to deliver curricular PE lessons alongside or instead of QTS staff (Griggs, 2018; Lawless et al, 2019). In the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG, 2016) report, it was stated that the "primary PE workforce is no longer expected to be comprised of qualified teachers" (p29). This workforce shift, whilst clearly affecting qualified teachers, can also have a large impact on the experiences and possibilities for PPSTs.

In English primary schools in 2016, more than a third of staff delivering PE did not hold QTS (Randall et al, 2016). In fact, very few schools even reported the qualifications of outsourced providers. A Birmingham-based case study (Huddleston and Randall, 2018) found the use of coaches was one of the most common and costly uses of the PESS premium spend, finding that 88% of schools were outsourcing all/parts of their curriculum for coaches - one of the most common themes of the funding, but also the largest expenditure (Huddleston, 2019a). Less schools (60%) spent money on CPD opportunities and this was comparatively low in monetary terms. This has raised a number of concerns regarding this spread of largely unregulated array of private coaching companies delivering in schools, but also the fact that priority, it seems, is being given to short-term delivery over long-term development (Lindsey et al, 2020). These findings are not relevant to the UK alone; Williams et al (2011) found that 85% of Queensland (Australia) schools outsourced their PE offer in some way. It is clear that in England, a large number of coaches must be readily available, so moving into school PE seems a logical transition; however, it is important to highlight that there are numerous differences between a coach and a teacher. An uncertainty that remains and one that requires much further exploration is the effect of employing a non-QTS workforce in PE has in regards to pedagogy, curriculum and assessment (Sperka and Enright, 2018) in order to advance quality in PE (Penney et al, 2009).

Confidence and competence of teaching staff

The wholescale introduction of outsourcing curricular PE has not happened by chance. The trend towards outsourcing PE to AOTTs has been growing (Green, 2008) and it is more evident in primary schools than any other industry area. Alongside the portrayed low hierarchical worldwide landscape of PE in primary schools, the increased use of AOTTs covering PE is often justified by schools due to the perceived lack of competency or confidence the teachers have. Interestingly, children's enjoyment and competence in PE is affected when they sense that their teacher lacks competence to teach PE (Domville et al, 2019).

Whilst it's acknowledged that teacher confidence, skills and knowledge to deliver PE is known to be limited, several studies (APPG, 2019 most recent) have alluded to how schools now see coaches as a possible solution to teachers' concerns over delivering the subject. It was found that teachers even had a willingness to give up on the delivery of PE (Griggs, 2010), which gave rise to the increased use of coaches to deliver more curriculum PE; with generalist teachers stating that a lack of training was a barrier to delivering PE lessons (Faulkner et al, 2008). This lack of

training could stem back to ITE or be based upon a lack of CPD in the school. Whilst having a coach delivering PE will often satisfy a generalist teacher's needs (Griggs, 2010), it does however decrease the opportunity for teachers and PPSTs to observe and teach PE and this can trigger stakeholders (pupils, teachers, parents) to see PE as 'less important' than other school subjects (Smith, 2015).

Whilst coaches can often have more understanding of a specific activity or sport, they may not have an education background (Cope et al, 2015). Other concerns that have been highlighted have included classroom management, prioritising sporting objectives over educational ones and having knowledge of both the NC and pupils (Smith, 2015), thus potentially becoming a threat to the professional identity and status of PE (Sperka and Enright, 2018).

Study Methodology

Data collection took place between May – July 2020. With the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic, it was estimated that participants completed a minimum of 75 days on placement.

Data collection involved an anonymous online questionnaire, involving 48 participants across six universities in England. Twelve questions were asked, based around four key concepts:

1. Experiences
2. Outsourcing
3. 'Preparedness'
4. Continual Professional Development

Findings

For PPSTs on a generalist primary education pathway, 'non-PE' or 'NPE' was used; whilst 'PE' has been used for those on a route that includes additional PE module/s. For individual statements, the PPST has had their pathway and participant number stated, for example, the fourth PPST on the non-PE route was coded 'NPE4'.

1. **Experiences:**

Exploring what experiences PPSTs had prior to starting their course, the majority (54% average) had taught zero hours of PE (Figure 1), whilst the majority of those who had observed some PE, had observed 5 hours or less (63%). What is interesting from this data is that the non-PE pathway PPSTs had generally taught or observed more PE than those opting for a PE pathway.

Teaching/Observing PE **prior** to the course	PE		Non-PE		Average	
	Taught	Observed	Taught	Observed	Taught	Observed
0 hours	55%	32%	54%	15%	54%	24%
1-5hrs	18%	27%	23%	50%	21%	39%
6-10hrs	5%	5%	0%	4%	2%	4%
11-15hrs	9%	9%	4%	0%	6%	5%
16hrs+	14%	27%	19%	31%	16%	29%

Figure 1

On completion of the course, 83% of PPSTs had taught some PE, leaving an average of 17% having taught no PE lessons (Figure 2). The majority (49%) of PPSTs experienced between 1-5 hours of PE teaching whilst on placement, however there was a large difference between the pathways, with 36% of the PE PPSTs teaching 1-5 hours versus 62% for the generalist. The number of PPSTs who experienced teaching 11 hours or more of PE (equating to 11 lessons based on the estimate that a lesson is one hour) was on average to be 19% of the participants. This is a worrying statistic.

Teaching/Observing PE **on Completion** of the course	PE		Non-PE		Average	
	Taught	Observed	Taught	Observed	Taught	Observed
0 hours	18%	0%	15%	4%	17%	2%
1-5hrs	36%	55%	62%	58%	49%	56%
6-10hrs	27%	27%	4%	15%	16%	21%
11-15hrs	5%	9%	15%	15%	10%	12%
16hrs+	14%	9%	4%	8%	9%	8%

Figure 2

In Summary

On completion of the course:

➢ 66% of PPSTs had taught 5 hours or less of PE

➢ 58% of PPSTs had observed 5 hours or less of PE

2. Outsourcing

The majority (over 70%) of PPSTs saw coaches as a benefit to pupils; however, the benefit to teachers varied, with 50% seeing them as beneficial to teachers. An average of 38% (PE and non-PE) saw coaches as not being beneficial.

The four biggest themes were:

1. the coach is an expert (46%),
2. it created PPA time (29%),
3. the teacher observing the coach is beneficial (19%)
4. and it prevents development of the teacher (17%).

NPE10 was one participant responding that a coach is an expert:

> "...*it allows pupils to have <u>a fully-trained person</u> teaching a specific field, who is able to support a range of learning styles and a thorough knowledge of Primary P.E. standards*"

Perhaps an explanation for these responses is the halo effect: are PPSTs viewing coaches as experts, without knowing if they have the experiences or qualifications to make them so? It would be impossible to distinguish this from the material present in this study.

A common finding was the positive responses related to the creation of PPA time from using coaches. A response from NPE12 stated that 'extra' time could be created, however also noted that the coach may not be most suitable, in regards to pedagogy:

> "*It is often seen <u>as extra PPA time for teachers</u>, even though they should really stay to support the external coach. I am not always convinced that the coaches are trained in pedagogy as much as trainee teachers have been*"

Meanwhile, NPE17 responded with how the PE lesson can create PPA time, which can then be used to benefit other lessons:

> *"PPA time… will be useful for me to plan my lessons and liaise with my team on how to share ideas and resources."*

Perhaps one way to explain these responses was a response from PE1, who stated:

> *"It doesn't feel as important a subject, as the responsibility is deployed to a level 2 sports coach."*

PE4 stated that observing can be positive; however, it can also be a drawback if teachers are not able to apply what they learn:

> *"Beneficial to teachers as they can observe quality teaching of these areas of PE, however teachers may not have the opportunity to put this into their own practice due to constantly observing."*

In Summary

➢ 73% of PPSTs believed outsourced coaches benefit pupils
➢ 50% of PPSTs believed outsourced coaches benefit to teachers

3. **Preparedness'**

There were 26 themed responses relating to how the PPST perceived themselves in regards to being prepared. The most common theme (Figure 3) to appear from this question was somebody who has 'strong' knowledge and understanding of the subject (44%). Responses after this were much lower, with four themes appearing between 20-30% of the responses. These were based around knowledge of differentiation or inclusion (29%), being organised/prepared (29%), having 'strong' lesson planning (27%) and using resources/tools/equipment (21%).
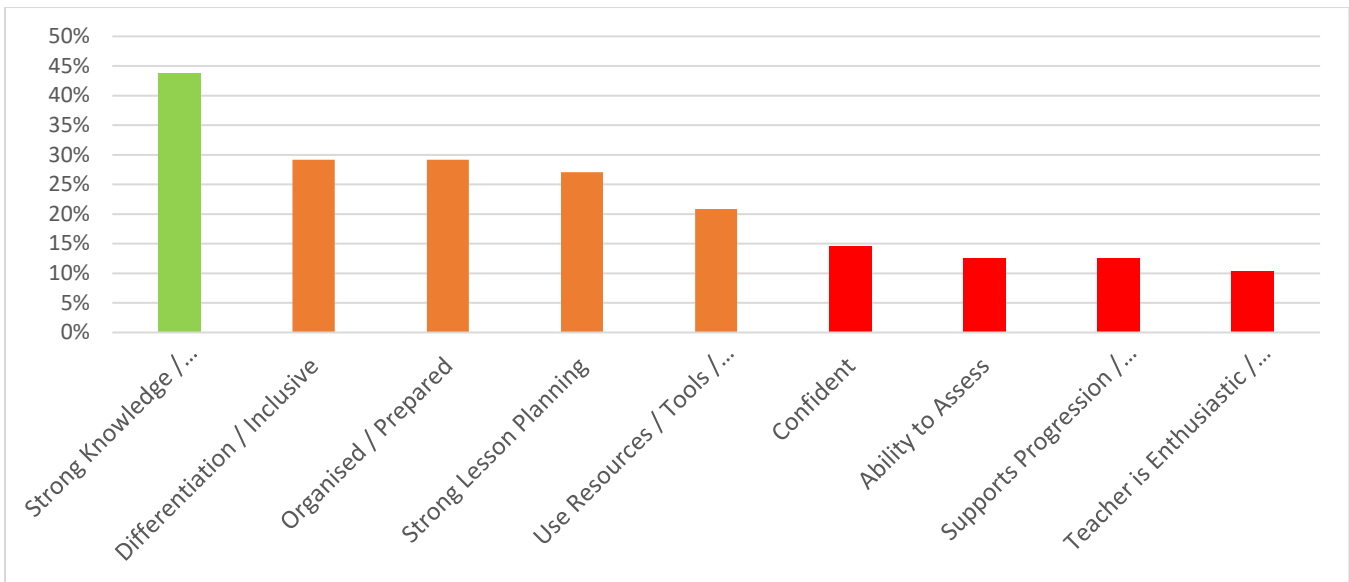
Figure 3 – (Graph shows responses that have scored 10% or more only) (Nb. Green – over 30%, Orange 20-30%, Red 10-20%)

When analysing a PPSTs feelings of being prepared against different themed areas within education (Figure 4), the majority of trainees felt they were at an excellent or good standard in all but one of the themed areas: the ability to use technology within PE.
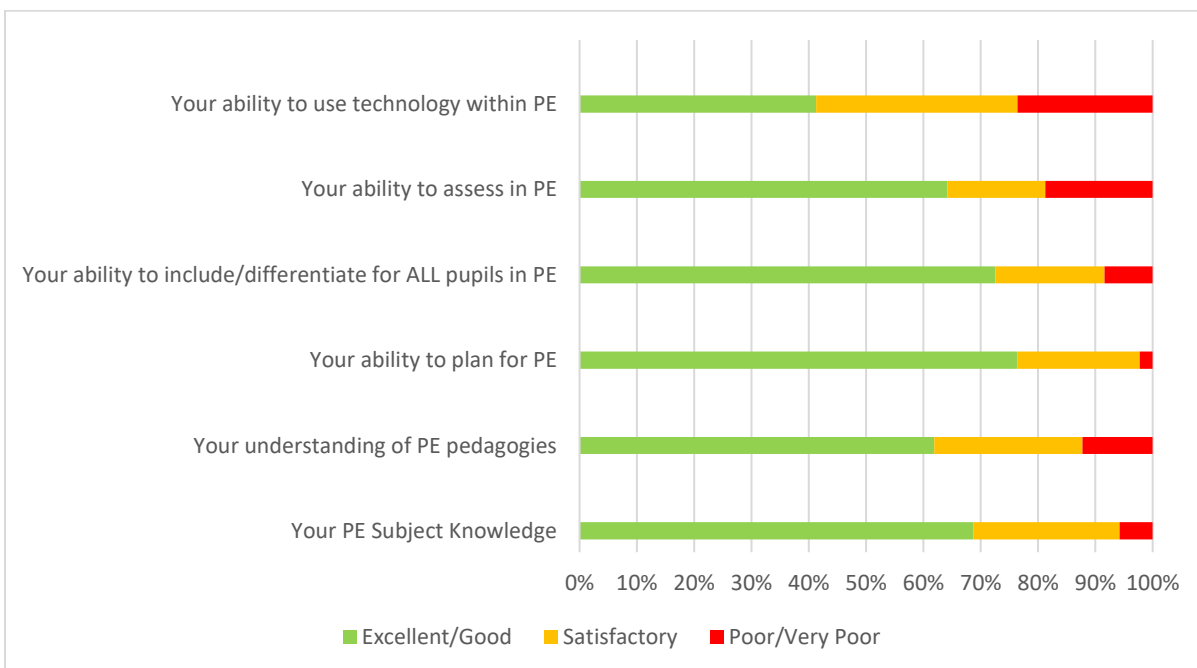
Figure 4

When analysing the responses between the PE and non-PE PPSTs, the ability to plan was much higher for the non-PE PPST (85% versus 68%), along with the understanding of PE pedagogies being much higher for the non-PE PPST than the PE PPST (70% versus 55%). Overall, responses across all six themed areas had higher positive responses for the

non-PE PPST than the PE PPST. This is an interesting finding, as the evidence has shown that they have less ITE contact time, are less satisfied with that time, and have less observation and teaching time. One possible explanation to this phenomenon is the Dunning-Kruger effect (Kruger and Dunning, 1999). This theory is based on a cognitive bias, where the less competent paradoxically feel more confident, mainly due to them not knowing the 'full picture'.

Feelings towards preparation around areas of the NC were varied by activity, but also by pathway (Figure 5). Overall, swimming* (* not specifically a NC PE activity, but a mandatory activity on the primary NC) was deemed the activity least prepared for, with an average of 47% feeling they had poor or very poor confidence. Whilst the remaining areas were very close in regards to confidence, dance and gymnastics recorded much higher rates of poor/very poor confidence, at 16%. Games was the most confident area to teach, with an average of 90% of PPSTs stating that they had excellent or good confidence to teach this activity. Whilst this could help explain why some school's curriculum design and activities on offer are rather 'games heavy', it also explains why those coming to ITE are more confident in games in the first place.

Figure 5

Understanding why there are differing levels of confidence towards teaching these different areas is important in order to promote effective change for future PPSTs. The data found that a 'lack of experience or application' was the largest reason for poor/very poor confidence to teach areas of PE, with 48% of respondents stating this as the reason. Responses varied between stating specific areas and not doing so:

NPE8 logged:

"Simply lack of experience"

and PE2:

“Not enough experience in placements”

PE18 described in detail why this was so:

“In [placement one], PE was taught by a TA one day a week. In [placement two], PE was taught by a HLTA, and I observed several lessons... …timing/scheduling meant I didn't have opportunity to actually prepare or teach a lesson of my own.”

and comments by PE1:

“I don't feel like I've been exposed to dance, games, OAA, or swimming thoroughly enough to know the progression steps..”

Interestingly, some attributed their ability to teach the area against their ability to teach it, such as NPE16:

“My response to swimming is poor because I do not know how to swim so I do not feel confident to teach swimming”

In Summary

➢ University contact time felt "about right"
➢ Least confident in using technology within PE
➢ Least confident in swimming, dance and gymnastics
➢ Lack of experience was the defining factor

4. **Continual Professional Development**

Learning technology was found to be the largest CPD need that PPSTs wanted to develop once in their NQT year, with an average of 64%. Based on pathways, the non-PE PPSTs stated that CPD in assessment (81%) and inclusion (69%) were the two biggest requirements, whereas the PE PPSTs recorded much lower scores for these areas (59% and 45%).

Final analysis looked at how PPSTs felt they would undertake CPD once commencing their NQT year. There was a clear relationship between the methods of CPD and the joint take up from the PPSTs (Figure 6). Observing other teachers/coaches was determined as the most likely method of CPD in their NQT year with an average of 96% choosing this method.
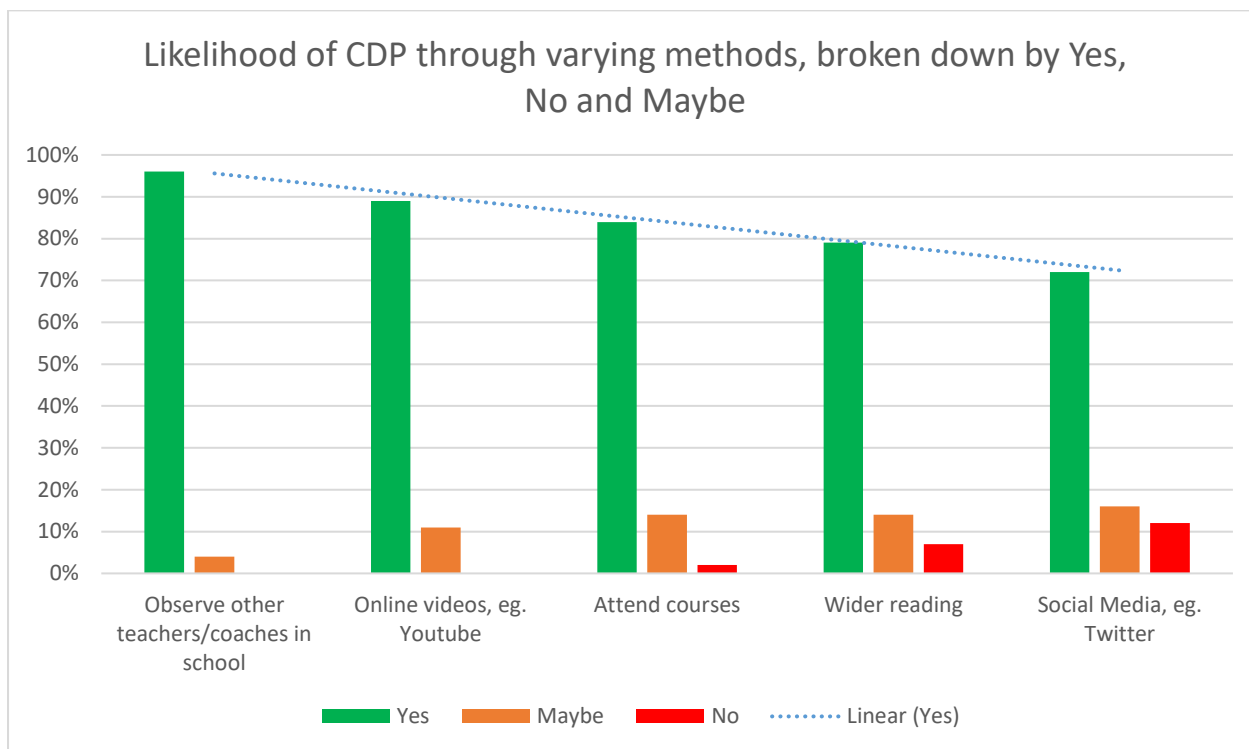
Figure 6

In Summary:

  ➢ Learning technology was the largest CPD need

Method of CPD in their NQT year:

  ➢ As an NQT, they would most likely observe others as a form of CPD
  ➢ As an NQT, they would least likely engage in social media as a form of CPD

Moving Forwards and future recommendations:

ITE must be viewed on the basis that it is exactly that; it is the 'initial' training that an adult receives on their way to becoming a qualified teacher and it is expected that the teacher then continues to develop in their profession and hone their skills.

1. The delivery of PE to become the domain of the QTS teacher, a recommendation specified in the APPG (2019) report.

2. Schools to provide as many experiences in PE for the PPST whilst on placement.

3. A call for ITE to address their use of learning technology in PE.

4. Provide additional experiences during ITE around PE, specifically including activity areas outside of games, namely swimming, gymnastics and dance.

References can be found via the following link to the full paper:

https://www.pescholar.com/research/primary-pre-service-teachers-delivering-physical-education/

Evaluation of a Social Constructivist approach to education: How questioning, scaffolding and modelling can be used to address said misconception

Siobhan Taylor – Secondary English Teacher, Teach First 2020-21

This document provides a literature review conducted for a PGDE assignment as part of the Birmingham City University partnership with the Teach First scheme. The unit is titled The Emerging Philosophy of Teaching and Learning and required engagement with teaching and learning theories and strategies to design an intervention for a misconception in the classroom. The focus group was a year 9 class who struggling with cohesively integrating AO3 context into their writing.

The Cox Report (1989) suggests that the importance of English within the curriculum can be seen from a number of views; two of these views revolve around the importance of 'culture'. The first cultural view is what the report refers to as 'cultural heritage' where it may be believed that English is required so that students appreciate the great works of literature. The second is 'cultural analysis' where the suggestion is that English should be 'helping children towards a critical understanding of the world and cultural environment in which they live' (DES/WO, 1989: 60). Research into the impact having wider cultural appreciation shows that this knowledge goes beyond merely passing an exam. The metacognitive ability to have a critical and multi-perspective view of literature and the sociohistorical context in which it is written correlates to having a more empathetic wider world view. I believe that cultural analysis is a key component to successfully attaining the cultural heritage view of English teaching, because how can one truly appreciate literature without being able to analyse the conditions under which it is written and set? It is with this belief that I aim to interact with my students and have them interact between themselves through the social constructivist lens to get them to this evaluative mind set.

Vygotsky states that the Zone of Proximal Development is "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky 1978: 86). In order to achieve the Zone of Proximal Development, Vygotsky argues that a Socratic approach to learning is the most productive (Beliavsky 2006). The implication of this for the teacher is that the classroom environment should be one with discussion and interaction at the forefront of most tasks.

The social constructivist approach establishes its origins in the idea that learners actively construct their meanings and responses to new information based off their existing knowledge. Capel (2016) discusses that a constructivist approach is built on the assumption pupils "construct meaning for themselves from their experiences" which is why there needs to be such a focus on "knowing about your pupil's prior knowledge" (Capel 2016: 392). Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development links to this because the knowledge the students already have is the foundation for them being able to access skills they cannot yet do unaided with the help of either the classroom teacher, or a more confident peer to assist them. Inevitably I will experience the students with varying abilities of recall, so it will be crucial that I am able to gauge to what extent the concept is still known to them. In order for Vygotsky's theory to function at an optimal level within the classroom, it is paramount the teacher accurately evaluates where the

students are at throughout the scheme of learning. It is through dialogical, interactive environments that this consistent assessing of students' understanding becomes possible.

Andy Tharby states that if "we want to encourage critical and divergent thinking, then we must provide our students with the tools they need to this" (Tharby, 2017). Therefore, it is vital that the receive the knowledge from their 'master' of pedagogy to give them the secure contextual information required, allow them to ask questions to solidify this knowledge, but then for the teacher to return abstract questions to encourage this critical and divergent thinking. When considering that I am wanting my students to try and understand a worldly point of view that they, of course, cannot relate to, it is important to remember that their main route through which they acquire knowledge will be social interaction. Students will ask questions. However, it is important to track whether students are becoming overwhelmed by assessing the purpose of the questions they are asking. Are they inquiring to build on their analytical knowledge and deeper understanding of the content, or are their questions to simply grasp the concept at a comprehensive level? Students are at risk of experiencing 'cognitive overload' when they are being introduced to new material and this is where "the capacity of our students' working memories are exceeded, which often happens if we introduce, or expect them to think about, too many items of complex information in one go" (Tharby 2020: 68). As a result of this, the social constructivist teacher may pre-empt this potential for cognitive overload and consider modelling their expectations and supporting the students through the process of attainment.

"A collaborative effort between the child and a more knowledgeable partner" is essential when employing a Vygotskian approach to learning (Beliavsky 2006: 2). This urge of the collaborative effort links to Jerome Bruner's concept of scaffolding who declares that "well executed scaffolding begins by luring the child into actions that produce recognisable-for-him solutions" (Wood, Bruner and Ross, 1976: 96). The metaphor of scaffolding suggests that support must be provided in tasks where teachers want to stretch their students. One method that I will employ as a result of this research is live modelling. Previously, I have provided prewritten exemplars of the required structure of work and get students to break down work that I have supplied them with, however this may not be 'recognisable' to them. I have interpreted Bruner's research to suggest that collaborative live modelling is the way forward. Students are asked for their contributions when the teacher models an analytical piece of work so they can see how I construct their ideas into an academic piece of writing. The work, therefore, becomes recognisable to them because their own ideas are being manipulated before them. Bruner emphasises that the adult must gradually withdraw the support so that the student applies the skills independently (CUREE 2006). This will be a difficult task to demonstrate within the small sequence of learning I present to my students just on this topic; however, it is a key consideration in my personal development as a teacher. Beyond the scheme of learning provided for this specific intervention, I am aware that as the students become more confident in their analytical writing, they will need less support in how to structure their writing and more focus can go into the content and analysis they include.

Furthermore, Bruner asserted the concept of 'the spiral curriculum' where fundamental ideas within a curriculum should be revisited frequently in order for the students to cumulatively build on concepts they learn. These multifaceted connections are what lead to the increased chance the students will master what is required of them (CUREE 2006). If students "repeat the same thought demanding task again and again, it will eventually become automatic" Willingham (2009: 6). It is through allowing this repetitive nature to unfold that will eventually allow the teacher to withdraw the scaffolding that is currently in place. Whilst analytical writing is not strictly a 'topic' within English literature, it is absolutely a fundamental skill that the students must develop in order to succeed. Analytical writing reflects characteristics of the spiral curriculum as the structure and requirements are constant, it is merely the context in which the students are writing that changes.

Ultimately, underpinning and tying in all of this research is the influence of Barak Rosenshine (2012) and his principles of instruction. Rosenshine presents a structure of learning that helps the classroom teacher consider thorough how they are delivering their subject content. Many of his principles arguably take a number of the main learning theories' key concepts and creates a cohesive document that focuses on how students learn best, rather than trying to stay loyal to a particular branch of research. Due to my focus on the works of Vygotsky, Tharby and Bruner, the principles that fundamentally manifest in my scheme of learning is the emphasis on: asking a large number of questions, ensuring students are understanding the content; having the teacher model the expectation of the work or lesson and to provide scaffolds for success; finally, ensuring material is being presented to the students in small steps so to not overwhelm the working memory and risk actually hindering their progress (Rosenshine 2012).

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Classroom Behaviour: The relationship between self-efficacy and its impact on newly qualified teachers

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In this paper, I aim to discuss the importance of self-efficacy and the role it plays in behaviour management, exploring the impact this has on newly qualified teachers.

Bandura's (1986) theory on self-efficacy formed the basis for teacher-efficacy, which can be defined as a teacher's evaluation of their skills and self-belief. However, Malinen and Savolainen's (2016:145) explanation offers more clarity and a holistic outlook of teacher efficacy. Explaining it beyond self-belief but as a "multidimensional concept consisting of different elements of a teacher's work; instruction, collaboration, student engagement and behaviour management". Therefore, by combining this knowledge it is feasible to suggest that having a positive influence on a student's attainment, regardless of difficult behaviour, plays an integral role in teacher efficacy (Dellinger et al., 2008). Teacher self-efficacy has been frequently connected with positive outcomes, such as high-quality teaching in a greater range of situations (Duffin et al., 2012; Chang, 2009). This potentially results in pupils being more motivated to perform in class, thus students have a higher chance of success and behaving in a more orderly manner (Grayson and Alvarez, 2008; Moran and Hoy 2007).

A study by Guskey (1998) compared teachers against fellow peers with stronger levels of positive self-efficacy finding that the latter had increased levels of confidence, a positive outlook and a greater proficiency to teach. It has been stressed as an indispensable trait for beginner teachers to have a sure and confident self-image, as this translates into the success, the novice teacher will have in a classroom (Mulholand and Wallace, 2001).

A strong self-efficacy has been attributed to a lower chance of burnout, which is stated to consist of "emotional exhaustion, cynicism and a sense of inefficiency" (Klassen and Chui, 2010; Maslach et al., 2001). This has a direct effect on a teacher's ability to manage and is supported in research, indicating that teachers with positive self-efficacy were inclined to be more fulfilled with their profession (Skaalvik and Skaalvik, 2010). However, a more direct approach is taken by Lam and Yan (2011) who argue that a major mechanic of teacher satisfaction is linked to behaviour management. In their research, it was highlighted that satisfaction achieved in a teaching career can be directly connected to teachers' relationships with students.

This self-confident outlook is valuable for the mental health and behaviour of a teacher as this will have an impact on student conduct (Wong and Wong, 2008). The impact of high self-efficacy has been recognised as a major contributor, which determines the quality of teaching performed by new teachers (Raudenbush et al, 1992). The researchers go on to suggest that a correlation cannot be determined yet between the relationship of student behaviour and teacher self-efficacy (Raudenbush et al, 1992). However, this is challenged by strong evidence, which

highlights the positive correlation between teacher and pupil self-efficacy, resulting in students having self-belief in their capability to be taught. Thus improving their chances of academic success and effective classroom control (Milner, 2002)

These encouraging outcomes of self-efficacy are linked with a positive mind-set. However, it is important to highlight for inexperienced teachers that this is not achievable without a foundation of classroom control (Cohen, 2009). The cause and effect relationship between efficacy and classroom management means that a teacher must aim to keep misbehaviour as an outlier within the classroom, failure to achieve this will result in an inability to build teacher self-efficacy (Split, 2011).

The behaviour of students is the main element in creating a classroom which motivates, challenges and stretches pupils. Student misconduct would be counterproductive in being able to create an expected teacher standard of a classroom rooted in deep mutual respect (Veldman and Wubbles, 2013). A negative learning environment can be the result of a mismanaged class through observation. The importance of class management in physical education is crucial as repercussions can affect health and safety (Capel and Whitehead, 2015). Ultimately leading to negative teacher efficacy as a teacher standard is to create a safe learning environment, which has been compromised through the lack of classroom control. This can create a knock-on effect for beginner teachers as they take a hit to their confidence, amplifying the situation and preventing the correct responses to student behaviour. Thus negating the opportunity to placate the students and gaining back classroom control (Evertson and Weinstein, 2006; Chaplain, 2003). To put this into context a reference will be made to a session led by myself, a trainee teacher, which had been thoroughly planned. However, during the execution of the lesson, there were instances of misbehaviour and a failure to address further issues in a relevant timely manner, which can now be attributed to a lack of confidence and experience (Chaplain, 2003). There is evidence that argues that failure to communicate effectively can be due to emotional interference, which is defined as the ability to recognize and control emotions, as well as the feelings of individuals (Pacios et al, 2015). This highlights that it is not possible to state that low self-efficacy is the major or only contributor in the aforementioned case. However, Chaplin (2003) makes a relevant link between low confidence and emotional barriers in affecting communication. Furthermore, the correlation between the belief to instruct will result in stronger resistance to negative self-efficacy even in situations where the lesson strays from the plan, whereas low confidence results in a higher chance of self-doubt and as a consequence generates more incidents (Bandura, 2006). Applying the above information enables for a clear link to be established between confidence and failure to effectively manage classroom behaviour.

When thinking of behaviour management there is a tendency to think of a disciplinary process for misbehaviour, the general goal of classroom management should be to defer from sanctioning pupils (Wong and Wong, 2009). Instead, behaviour management should be thought of as a multitude of essential functions with discipline being a small part of a larger picture (Wong and Wong, 2009). This has been recognised as an area where there can be a gap of knowledge for teachers who have recently started their career, with a student's management revolving primarily around a sanction process (Sadler, 2006; Melnick and Mesiter, 2008). However, it is important to highlight that there is evidence of beginner teachers starting with increased enthusiasm (Grayson and Alvarez, 2008), which is a key

characteristic of self-confidence. Yet, for self-confidence to be achieved this needs to be coupled with the ability to regulate and control situations (Capel and Whitehead, 2015). This combination of characteristics are significant as they form the building blocks in self-confidence, which leads to a high self-efficacy playing a vital role in the management of discipline (Blandford, 2003).

The latter two characteristics have been recognised as lacking in novice teachers with research suggesting that this is due to a lack of experience or the shock of real classroom settings (Sadler, 2016). There are however strong valid arguments made that the support offered by a mentor or the teacher training course plays a crucial role in the development of confidence of newly qualified teachers and teacher trainees (Henson, 2003). With further supporting research underlining that teacher efficacy is more malleable at the beginning of a teacher's career, highlighting that a duty of teacher training programmes is to build confidence (Hummel and Strom, 1987). A more reasonable statement is that progressive child-centred methods are taught in education programmes, but due to a lack of practice they are substituted for autocratic methods (Melnick and Meister, 2008). Most likely a combination of these factors are at play and in the end teachers without high self-efficacy will be more likely to go to a command style of teaching and traditional discipline methods than progressive methods (Boghossian, 2006).

As established earlier there is a genuine link between self-efficacy and confidence and the similar response this can elicit from students impacting their learning competence (Midgley et al, 1989). This can be validated by the "modelling-effect" established by Bandura (2006) in which he states the conduct of an adult is imitated by a child. In an educator and pupil context, this can be a student recognising a teacher's confidence in their ability of a topic and emulating this in their ability to learn (Bandura, 2006).

In summary, self-efficacy plays an integral role in behaviour management and its effectiveness can depend on key-characteristics of the teacher. There is sufficient evidence to suggest this is an area of weakness for newly qualified teachers as stated within the paper. The impact of self-efficacy and the positive or negative mind-set has a clear impact on; job satisfaction, student behaviour and ability to learn, modelling, classroom environment and the behaviour management strategies adopted for use by the teacher. There are strong links for newly qualified teachers struggling with self-efficacy. However, positively there is also evidence to indicate that during early years there is also a better opportunity to improve self-efficacy.

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Tune-Up Tuesday: Re-valuing the role of arts in education

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The world has changed in an unprecedented way. The impact of Covid-19 has seemingly shone a bright light on many things in education and has raised many questions for teachers. It is probably beyond the realms of an article here, but amongst all the questions raised, the impact of the pandemic has both revealed and concealed much about the world in which we live. From the PPE fiasco to issues around 'track and trace' and from the removal of historical statues to last summer's school exam debacle. In amongst all this, what is the role of the arts in helping young people understand the world in which they live? This question is particularly profound given that young people have a strong felt understanding of the world, which can often be ignored. The recently launched 'Tune-Up Tuesday' project, which worked with schools both nationally and internationally, sought to address this question and attempted to re-value the role of arts in education.

Neelands (2002: 121), writing just after the 9/11 attacks in New York, suggested that "In time of crisis we turn to art as necessary response. When the events in the world are of such magnitude, such horror, such a challenge to our notions of civilisation and culture we are drawn to the explanations of artists as much as to politicians and 'experts'". The role of the arts in education as both an aesthetic form and as a way of knowing the world, is, and has been, influenced historically by the relationship between notions of epistemology and aesthetics (Rasmussen, 2010). This influence has been exacerbated and further troubled by Covid-19, with the value of the arts in education, and the spaces in which it is facilitated, being left in a relatively insecure position.

Spaces for art in education to thrive has, and continues to, face some significant challenges. Teachers need only look at the on-going current general debates surrounding education in England, which has seen a muddled picture in terms of assessment(s), ever-narrowing curricula through the rise of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) and a greater focus on measurable outcomes. More than this, evidence from The Cultural Learning Alliance (2020)[1] shows that pre-Covid teaching hours for all arts subjects (Art and Design, Design Technology, Drama, Music) were already down by 23%

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[1] The Cultural Learning Alliance (2020) *Hours of arts teaching and number of arts teachers in England's secondary schools mostly stable but not recovering after years of decline* Available here https://culturallearningalliance.org.uk/hours-of-arts-teaching-and-number-of-arts-teachers-in-englands-secondary-schools-stable-but-not-recovering-after-years-of-decline/ [Accessed 14.12.2020]

since 2010. This, alongside Covid-curriculum adaptations, such as restrictions on practical activities and virtual teaching, as evidenced by Ofsted (2020)[2], only leaves the arts in an ever more precarious position.

What is worrying here is that if arts education exists to enable learners to have a voice; see alternative futures; to believe in something else; and ultimately understand the world in which they live, then reducing these spaces becomes problematic. There is also evidence to suggest that arts education, specifically drama, is 'under attack', not just being marginalised or trivialised but in some cases being viewed as a "supplementary extravagance" (Rasmussen, 2010: 530). As a result, arts teachers face a turbulent situation in which their subject exists in a temporal and transient position in education. What is at stake is learning in and through the arts could be lost in a Covid-Black Hole. This poses not only an issue for the arts in education but society more generally.
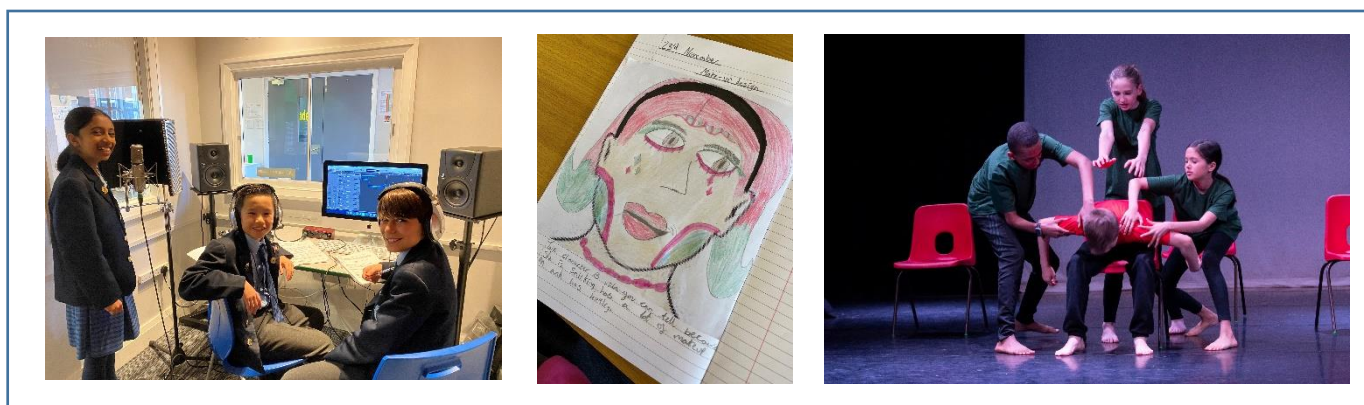
The Tune Up initiative:

School leaders and teachers across the UK have noted and felt the effects of lockdown, not only on pupils' educational progress but also on their mental health[3]. Not only has this current crisis heightened the marginalisation of the arts in school curricula but also the vital shared participation of a cultural experience, whether it be a theatre trip or a concert, a museum visit, or a community performance. In short, opportunities for uplifting, vital, human interactions have been limited.

Against this backdrop of knowing that the arts have, in these times, been cut back further in some schools' curricula, and having many friends in the 'non-viable' arts world who have been personally affected by the severe reduction of live performances, newly arrived Principal Kirsty von Malaise and Director of Drama Hannah Proops at King Edward VI High School (KEHS) in Birmingham, conceived of a project to inspire children once more about the vitality of the arts, and to bring professionals and children across the UK and beyond, together to celebrate the impact of the arts in the development and mental health of young people. Balzalgette (ACE, 2014) usefully suggests that "When we talk about

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[2] Ofsted (2020) *COVID-19 series: briefing on schools, October 2020* Available here https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/933490/COVID-19_series_briefing_on_schools_October_2020.pdf [Accessed 14.12.2020]

[3] NAHT (2020) Coronavirus: Supporting pupils' mental health and well-being Available here https://www.naht.org.uk/advice-and-support/coronavirus-information-and-resources/coronavirus-supporting-pupils-mental-health-and-well-being/#an-impact [Accessed 2.02.2021]

the value of arts and culture, we should always start with the intrinsic- how arts and culture illuminate our inner lives and enrich our emotional world." Furthermore, research from the Arts Council itself found that "… a higher frequency of engagement with arts and culture is generally associated with a higher level of subjective wellbeing", which is historically supported by further research, such as DICE (2010)[4]

In her first assembly at the school, Kirsty Von Malaise talked through her journey and as a musician, speaking passionately about the importance of the arts and how they had shaped her educational journey. In response to this, several students raised concerns about the value of pursuing a career in the arts considering the current climate. This relatively small incident highlighted the current potential impact of the Covid-19 situation on the long-term future of the arts, and together with a small but passionate team of professionals at King Edward VI High School for Girls, they conceived an initiative aimed at highlighting the importance of the arts in schools. TuneUp Tuesday started initially as an in-house project to uplift and motivate students in the school, however the idea soon exploded and the support from the arts world was so incredible, that it was clear that the aims of the TuneUp Tuesday initiative were something worth sharing.

The aims of the project were to gather many thousands of students across the country in an uplifting online event, connecting them all with the power of creative arts. TuneUp Tuesday aimed to highlight how vital the

'The five minute videos are AMAZING - they will be invaluable. I can see how they can be added to all the time and I hope they continue to be available as I will use these a lot. Thank you!'
St Edmunds School, Surrey

arts are in our culture for understanding the world in which we live, and how important it is that they are protected and sustained through the pandemic, whilst continuing to encourage young people to pursue a career in the industry. The plans for the day caught peoples' imagination quickly, as professionals rallied round to create content to engage young people, major organisations pledged their support, and hundreds of schools from all corners of the UK, and internationally, registered to take part. There were three strands to the project:

TuneUp and… **Upskill**	TuneUp and… **Uplift**	TuneUp… **Upcoming**

Upskill: schools had access to a free library of 5-minute activities aimed to develop their artistic skills.

Content included an inspired drumming workshop from TuneUp Patron Dame Evelyn Glennie, which involved pupils beating duplets against triplets on their knees and with their feet whilst saying 'Beans on Toast'; a song-writing lesson

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[4] **DICE ("Drama Improves Lisbon Key Competences in Education")** was an international EU-supported project. In addition to other educational aims, this two-year project was a cross-cultural research study investigating the effects of educational theatre and drama on five of the eight Lisbon Key Competences. For a summary of the results see here
http://dramanetwork.eu/key_results.html

from Hip Hop producer Mr Hudson; a costume design workshop from SIX's Gabriella Slade that guided students through a demonstration in making a paper maquette of an Elizabethan collar. In addition, there was a screen writing and self-tape workshops from *Line of Duty* actors Alastair Natkiel and Maya Sondhi. Other activities included ballet, singing, comedy, mime, puppeteering, circus makeup design, writing, painting and creating your own 'mini' book.

Uplift: young people had the opportunity to come together and experience the uplifting power of a free-streamed performance, from Vamos Theatre, there was an exclusive streaming of their moving and thought-provoking production '*Finding Joy'.* JCS Online gave all participating schools access to their drama online library including the National Theatre and RSC collections. Digital Theatre+ offered Frantic Assembly's *Things I know to be true.* Gecko Theatre, The Young Vic, Cirque du Soleil, and Little Angel Puppet Theatre were amongst the many other companies that shared their stunning productions with schools for the day.

Upcoming: schools also had access to a free library of career advice from successful practitioners in all art disciplines, showcasing the variety of roles and opportunities available in this exciting profession. Examples ranged from ballerina Darcey Bussell, playwright James Graham, comedian Greg Davies, who shared the joy and fulfilment which comes from creative work, musical director Alex Lacamoire; actor and screenwriter Martha Howe-Douglas; artistic directors Emma Rice and Michael Grandage and West-End stars Giles Terera and Aimie Atkinson, not to mention invaluable advice from company managers, theatre producers, lighting designers, puppeteers, musicians, theatre critics, poets and artists.

> '...*careers have been a focus for our school for a couple of years and it is so important to have a collective voice speaking out for the arts.'*
>
> **KE Camp Hill, Birmingham**

As the project gathered momentum, a small team of dedicated staff worked tirelessly to put the project together in a few short weeks. The word spread on social media and the number of schools registering grew from 30 to over 400 in two weeks! As more professionals and 'names' in the arts world came on board and offered support, it was clear that this project was catching a moment and a need that was close to many hearts. In their 'Upcoming' videos, artists were keen to share their career stories in the hope it might inspire and engage the next generation, reminding us in these challenging times that the arts are viable and will continue to be so, long after this pandemic has run its course: 'The arts enrich society, and creative industries are a fast-growing sector in the UK with low risk of automation in the future.' (Morrison McGill 2019)

The TuneUp team were keen to support teachers of the arts in their endeavours to ensure students had access to and were engaged in practical and creative lessons that were inspiring. The TuneUp team aimed to make this easy and manageable for teachers who had had their subject matter and teaching plans so entirely changed and uprooted by the pandemic.

Impact:

In summary, there were a total of just over 110,000 pupils who registered for this initiative, coming from a range of educational contexts. The mix of primary and secondary schools, both in the state and independent sectors, demonstrated the need for such a movement.

Tune Up Tuesday Engagement- School Type
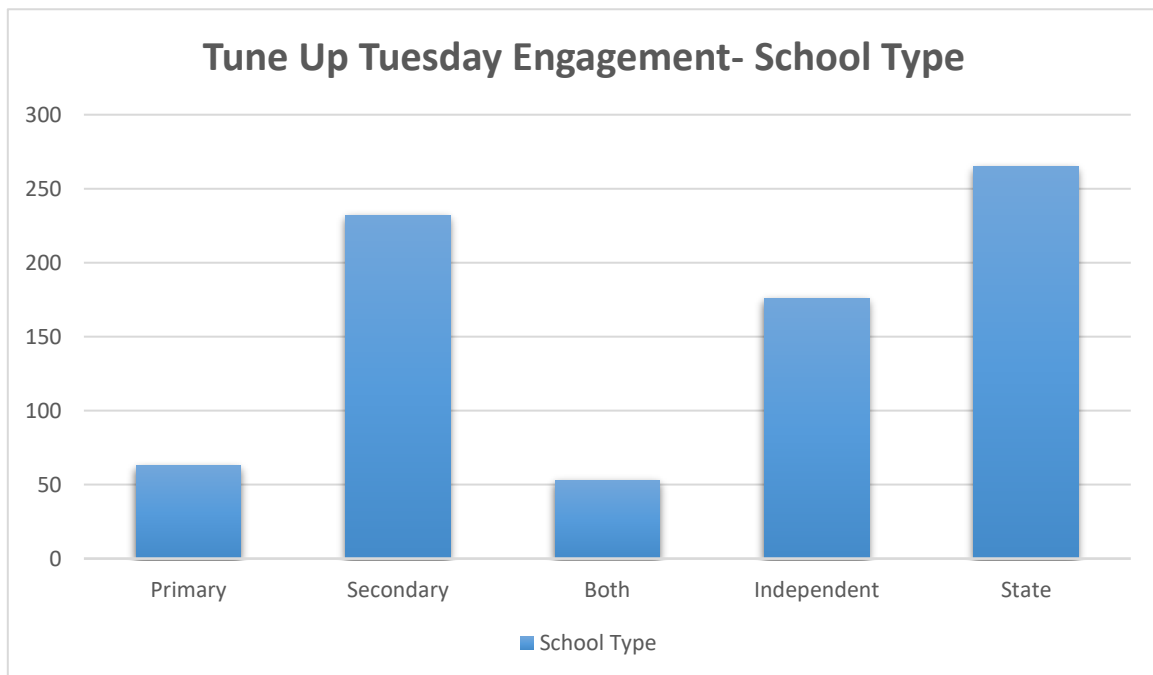
Students from all over the world took part in this uplifting online event, connecting them all to the power of the creative arts. The day was a resounding success and highlighted how vital the arts are in our culture, and how important it is that they are protected and sustained through the pandemic, whilst

'*It was fabulous. So helpful and beneficial both for the teacher and the students. The upskill videos provided both the teacher and students to learn and develop their understanding and the streamed theatre, meant they were inspired and were able to watch theatre again. The career path videos gave us all an insight into each career and the paths you can go down. What we all most loved, was the variety and it helped to show students just how many careers there are in the Arts.*' **Dartford Grammar School, Kent**

continuing to encourage young people to pursue a career in this amazing industry. The feedback from the schools that took part was phenomenal and showed how emotionally charged the re-engagement of students in a shared experience is.

Going forward, TuneUp aims to:

- Provide a virtual platform for schools across the UK in the delivery of Arts curricula and activities.
- Facilitate teen Arts Ambassadors to lead outreach activities in schools in their regions
- Engage professionals and arts companies to share expertise with and support the programme's activities
- Set up a youth arts steering committee
- Continue to promote a career in the arts.

Having already built a relationship with many artists and professionals who share the same vision and with James Graham OBE and Dame Evelyn Glennie as our patrons, we hope to continue to engage more artists in our cause. Whilst many creatives have already generously donated their time and skills, we are very aware of the need to begin to fairly pay for their time and expertise. We

'Our school has hit a bit of a crisis point at the moment so this was really welcomed … having video instructions from people in the industry was excellent and made the subject real for our students. I have found that several of my disadvantaged pupils really engaged with it. We try to break the economical background barriers down to the Arts and this really supported our faculty ethos and vision. I cannot say enough how fantastic it was and have raved to our Senior Leadership Team about how great it was. Thank you and please let me know about more things in the future. We need to keep the arts and particularly the performing arts alive and this will help inspire future theatre makers.' **Ashton Park, Bristol**

are currently seeking funding that will enable us to build on our promise to support and promote artists, with ongoing projects and paid workshops. This will not only create an income source for art professionals but also help to build relationships between schools and creatives, promoting their work, building future working partnerships and other revenue streams.

We will also set up a youth arts steering committee to give young people a voice in the decision-making process. School budget cuts have meant that many extra-curricular concerts, exhibitions and plays are no longer viable, creating an even wider divide between state and independent schools. We look to find ways to enable all schools to have the opportunity to inspire and excite students with theatre trips, concert tours and art shows as well as helping to resource school productions and concerts. We wish to facilitate teen Arts Ambassadors to lead outreach activities in schools in their regions and help all schools, within region, to work together in the promotion and celebration of the arts.

Students, no matter what their socio-economic background, should have the opportunity to experience live theatre, art exhibitions and music concerts whether that be through school trips or taking part in school. The value of the arts subjects needs to be made clear to school leaders, students, and parents alike and is something that Ofsted (2019)[5] are looking for in terms of 'cultural capital'. We know the benefits are numerous; they help to improve critical thinking, creativity, focus and concentration, motor skills, confidence, team working abilities and more, and there is growing evidence to support this (Salkind 2008). In the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) framework[6], they highlight the importance of the performing arts in the quality of education provided: 'their achievements in scholarships and competitions, other academic distinctions, and success in sports, the performing and other arts;' the framework also details the importance of learning collaboratively and developing resilience in students; all outcomes of a healthy creative arts education.

For many of us, it was this first experience as an audience member or performer that sparked our interest in the arts and encouraged us to pursue our passions. We fear that many schools do not have the money or resources to enable their students to have this experience and many are missing out. If we fail to inspire the next generation of set designers, musicians, sculptors, directors, costume makers, composers or illustrators – what hope does the arts industry have? More than that, the arts should be a fundamental educational right for all young people.

In 2021, we hope to launch a new Tuneup initiative, an arts project that aims to generate a national archive of student work to enable young people across the whole of the UK to come to terms with and express their experiences of the lockdown and the challenges they have faced due to the pandemic. We want to create a nationwide event that makes a genuine statement about the vital role culture has to play in our society and help schools and young people come together as a community.

The first phase of the project is the creation of a digital platform from which young people can learn to express themselves through a wide range of media. From performance poetry and monologues through to sculpture, painting, illustration, music and photography. Schools would submit their work to us for a national digital exhibition that would be freely accessible online.

By creating this body of work, we also hope to engage the general public now and in the future. It will be a useful tool as part of a discussion about the impacts of Covid 19 and help find ways to heal, understand and engage with young people's experiences of the pandemic. We understand that access to the arts improves cognitive ability, develops important communication skills and improves our mental health. We also appreciate and understand the power of art

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[5] Ofsted (2019) Education Inspection Framework is available here https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-inspection-framework [Accessed 4.02.2021]
[6] The Independent Schools Inspectorate: Framework for Inspection (2020) is available here https://www.isi.net/site/downloads/1.1%20Handbook%20Inspection%20Framework%202018-09.pdf [Accessed 04.02.2021]

to enrich our lives on individual, communal and national levels and we feel this project has the potential to do just that.

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The Problems with PEE-ing

Nina Matthews - Secondary English Teacher

Innumerable methods of structuring analytical responses have been circulating the teaching sphere for years; the structure I had as a pupil was Point, Evidence, and Explain (PEE). This structure has provided students with a way to 'relate' different parts of a text to each other, which when confronted with 8-mark, 10-mark, 25-mark questions, makes it feel more manageable. However, one part of Bruner's constructivism theory (1960) that I continue to return to is "to enable the transfer of thinking processes from one context to another, children needed to learn the fundamental principles of subjects," (Bruner 2006, p.1). Therefore, I must question whether the 'PEE' structure could remotely represent the 'fundamental principles' of analysing texts. Louisa Enstone (2017) describes what she learnt when she examined the 'Point, Evidence, and Explanation' formula: she monitored two Year 7 groups, with roughly the same ratio of boys and girls and SATs levels. The control group used the 'PEE' essay structure and sentence starters to write analytical responses, whereas the test group had no structural input. Across three terms and data collections, by the end the test group outperformed the control group. Yet, throughout survey results showed the control group felt more confident and enjoyed the ease of structure, logic and predictability (Enstone 2017). What's important to note is that the group that Enstone looked at were high ability and highly engaged. Furthermore, Enstone only investigated one year group and two classes. Enstone concludes that she's not "stopped using 'PEE' completely […] as 'PEE' itself is not the problem- it's the way we use it," (Enstone 2017, p.6). Whilst I agree with majority of Enstone's examinations and she further recognises the importance of structure, much like Bruner (1960), the final conclusion is a point of incongruity for me. I believe that PEE 'itself' *is* the problem, as most of the limitations of PEE, (that the length and quality of responses can lead to complacency, and greater freedom can enhance quality), can be explained by the reductive terminology of Point, Evidence, Explain. Point directs students to provide limited detail, pointing students towards one direction. Whilst Evidence and Explain are too vague. What are we supposed to be explaining? What kind of evidence is expected to be provided? Hence, students are simultaneously only sent in one direction, whilst not being given pathways to explore. The reductive terminology of Point, Evidence, Explain is so far from what I believe the 'fundamentals' of English are, that despite it being a structure, it was not one I could implement in my lessons.

As researchers and experts in this field, such as Enstone (2017), have begun to explore the limitations of this structure, it perhaps may encourage us to move away from structures altogether. However, I (somewhat boldly) propose that a structure can represent the 'fundamental principles' of English: What, Where, How and Why (henceforth referred to as WWHW). 'Where' is a less common component to this formula, that directs pupils to embed quotations; it is asking where in the text can this be shown? On the basis of this formula, it can cover most of the AQA assessment objectives: What (AO1), Where and How (AO2) Why (AO3). Nonetheless, after having explored

the reductive impact of acronyms on pupils writing, it seems almost an insult to diminish the art form of writing to formulaic letters once again. Yet, there is a fundamental and crucial difference between these two acronyms (PEE and WWHW); questions. Beyond all the techniques that educators have explored across centuries of teaching, there is one pedagogical approach that every teacher, in all classrooms, in every language and subject will have used- questions. This is the 'fundamental' Socratic dialogue of teaching that can allow students to go further. If we, as educators, are using questions to probe understanding throughout pupils learning, why would students not use questions to do this for themselves?

It is perhaps controversial to state that four questions: What? Where? How? And Why? are the 'fundamental ideas' of the English subject. Yet these general principles can be used to explore almost all forms of literature. I have found that 'why' (author intention) was the most complex principle for my students to understand, as it causes students to draw upon their own experiences, and if their experiences are limited, it becomes more challenging. This is the reason *why,* is pivotal to opening the doors to literature, its impact broadening reader's horizons.

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'Bringing Construction into the Classroom' – A trainee teacher's experience of developing the Construction and Built Environment programme at Halesowen College

Alexandra Roche – Construction Lead, Halesowen College

The year 2020 has been a strange one for all and for me I packed away my hard hat and boots and went into the field of education. As an ex-BCU student I had undertaken my Bachelor's degree in Construction Management and graduated in 2019 with a First Class Honours. During my degree I worked for a main contractor working on some of Birmingham's biggest developments, one of which being the new Life Sciences Building at the BCU City South Campus.

I have always been interested in education and during my work as a STEM ambassador I wanted to do nothing more than to inspire young people to pursue a career in Construction. So when the opportunity to develop the Construction Department from scratch at Halesowen College arose in August 2020 I knew it was one I couldn't miss out on. It has been an interesting few months and leaving an industry that was all consuming, still very male orientated and fast paced and going into the education sector was a complete change.

I am also a trainee teacher and as such I am completing my Diploma in Education and Training through Halesowen College via the University of Worcester on a day-release basis. This course has allowed me to mix with other trainee teachers; however none of which are writing and developing a course from scratch. While I commend my peer's development and we work together as a great team, I have in some instances felt alone in my pursuit of developing the course. 'Construction' as a subject is a new one and in terms of finding resources, developing on pre-existing resources, the information out there is minimal. Therefore, all my resources and ideas are my own, based on my own experiences. However, my connections within industry, speaking to my previous lecturers at BCU and also leaning on the Business & Engineering department at the College, I have developed a great support network of teachers, lecturers and professionals who have helped me with developments. Something I would encourage trainee teachers to do would be to optimise the experience around them and talk to their peers; whether their knowledge is completely different on the same subject, their insight would be invaluable.

Developing a course from scratch hasn't been easy; the lesson planning, assignment writing, writing schemes of work for the course units and related apprenticeships has been a mammoth task. I have found myself slowly working through this huge task to which I am writing this in the spring of 2021 still planning and amending the course developments. The list is endless – but one day I will get there! For me this point is key for all trainee teachers –

whether you are brand new to teaching or have been teaching for 30 years, the profession is constantly changing, amending and developing itself.

The experience of developing the course is challenging but doesn't come without its many benefits. The course leader role goes beyond lesson planning and teaching; I have had to develop business contacts with local employers for apprenticeships, work with the College's marketing department and most importantly, make a topic that can seem overly intimidating to students, exciting, fun and modern. I have achieved this through allowing students to explore case study projects, given them my real-life experiences and even shown them different soil types in petri dishes so they can relate this to the real world and their future careers.

Planning a course goes beyond the initial needs of lesson planning and teaching. I will keep on planning and would recommend that any teacher and/or trainee who gets the opportunity to dive in at the deep end and develop a course from scratch. The process is rewarding when you see the students you teach succeed in their education and develop as future professionals.

My top ten tips for developing a course from scratch:

Start from the very beginning

- Analyse the course specification so you know the course inside and out, research and review all the modules available before you pick them and consider who you will be teaching. Some optional modules can be very specified so consider if this is relevant to your future students.

Research

- Start by developing the 'Programme of Works' if unsure research the course and see which other schools, colleges or institutions provide the course and see how they market the course, set out their course specification and their 'Programme of Works.' Other important information like; entry requirements, funding, future job opportunities and even how they describe the course will allow you to make assumptions and go with the common standard. Never stray from doing what you want but consider why your competitors haven't chosen something like yourself.

Plan, plan and plan

- I've found planning time is invaluable even if you know your subject inside and out when lesson planning a new course with no resources ensure you have the time allocated for you to complete the work. Never let anyone underestimate the importance of your planning time especially when developing a new course people may say things like *'you have too much planning time'* or *'you should teach more.'* Ignore those comments and plan, plan, plan!

Don't worry if you have a bad lesson

- Whether the IT equipment failed, your students didn't turn up (yes this happened to me – I only teach a few students currently and one week all of them were absent, I felt so disheartened, but we caught up no problem the week after.) I have found as a trainee teacher that my students enjoy the lessons where I elaborate on the lesson and create a flow of discussion – so don't worry if a lesson suddenly goes off track.

Be creative

- Some elements of your course may be very 'dry and laborious' ensure you inject creativity in these topics through videos, quizzes and real-life examples (I mentioned the soil petri dishes.) Remember that what works for one student or class doesn't work for the other so ensure you adapt and get to know your groups.

Try out your assignments

- Writing assignments are a daunting task but ensure you follow the exam board criteria while making them relatable. Try out your final assignments on your peers and see their opinions. Also, a lot of exam boards offer free assignment checking services so make sure you use these to double check.

Apprenticeships are confusing

- If your course links to an apprenticeship and you are utterly confused by the whole process don't worry! The apprenticeship standards have all changed recently and in Construction the apprenticeships are newly written and still not fully developed. I found shadowing an assessor in another subject was key to myself understanding the process, the wording that they use and help write your own apprenticeship 'Scheme of Works.'

Don't be afraid of employer engagement

- I felt a bit like a tele-marketer when I first started speaking to employers and industry leaders. However; the response I got was overwhelming most employers are genuinely looking into upskilling staff, developing staff and taking on apprenticeships but ensure you are prepared; don't speak to them until you have compiled a little crib sheet of what to say etc and ensure you have your course information up. If you don't know an answer be honest and get back to them. Some employers may ignore you but that's okay - its their loss at the end of the day!

Marketing is key

- Whether you have a marketing team to hand, or you are doing it yourself never undervalue the importance of social media. I have found creating separate social media accounts to market the course, get the word out there and never be afraid to ask for these resources if you feel you are not getting the engagement. If you don't need to market the course remember word of mouth is still important – if a parent, lecturer, teacher or student says one thing to another about this new exciting course it can pay you dividends in the long run.

Completing the course development

- Like I said earlier you won't have it all done at once and that's okay. You will change your lessons when it doesn't work, you will never stop writing and rewriting assignments when getting course approval from the exam board and you will constantly develop and find things to add to the course to enhance it. I would list out your short term and long-term goals I do planning for the course one term at a time but also look at my overall yearly vision of completing the course development.

The Importance of Physical Education within the National Curriculum

Oliver Quinton – Yr1 BA (Hons) Secondary Physical Education QTS, Birmingham City University

What is the National curriculum?

Before we find out why the national curriculum for PE is important, first we must recognise what the National curriculum actually is.

The National curriculum is:

"A set of subjects and standards used by primary and secondary schools so children learn the same things. It covers what subjects are taught and the standards children should reach in each subject."

https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum

(The Department for Education, 2013)

Summary of the National curriculum:

- It contains a complete and consistent content of the learning required
- Serves as a reference point for what each subject should cover
- Acts as a 'big tick list' for teachers to ensure they have fully completed the relevant content
- It is important to note, that even though the National curriculum is used in all primary and secondary schools, this does not mean all teachers use the same lesson structure or deliver it in the same way.

Why is it important that PE is part of the National curriculum?

The following extracts are taken from the National curriculum, created by the Department for Education (DfE) and can be viewed at https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum

- Purpose of study:

'A high-quality physical education curriculum inspires all pupils to succeed and excel in competitive sport and other physically demanding activities. It should provide opportunities for pupils to become physically confident in a way which supports their health and fitness'

- The National curriculum aims to ensure that all pupils:

'Develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities, are physically active for sustained periods of time, engage in competitive sports and activities, lead healthy, active lives'

What do these aspects of the national curriculum have in common?

They both provided clear aims and the examples of the curriculum had:

- A clear aim and purpose
- Aims and objectives help guide teachers on how to assess their students
- Meeting, or finding difficulty in achieving aims and objectives, informs teachers as to how to progress learners

Having clear aims is very important for a student and a teacher's perspective –

"If one does not know to which port one is sailing, no wind is favourable."

The quote above is from Lucius Annaeus Seneca a Roman philosopher. This quote explains that when the destination is known, it is far easier to navigate to it and complete the journey. Seneca stresses the importance of well-defined and articulated objectives, and their impact on achieving goals.

What does the National curriculum offer students?

The National curriculum should be in place in order to benefit the students. Some of the benefits the National curriculum offers students are

- Equal and fair opportunity to all students, as most schools in the UK learn from the same criteria and follow the national curriculum.
- Teachers are able to track student's progress and achievement levels, benefiting students by identifying weaknesses in the students learning progress and to look to find ways to bridge or fill learning gaps.
- The PE curriculum encourages students to be physically active and maintain a healthy lifestyle, which in today's society is a huge benefit.

Conclusion

The National curriculum is vital for both teachers and students and this is evidenced by most schools in the UK having it at the heart of their learning. The curriculum serves as a framework and guide to deliver a quality education and offers students from all backgrounds an equal opportunity to learn and develop. Physical education has an important role to play for both young individuals and the wider community, both from a health and wellbeing point of view, so the importance of PE being part of, and wrapped within, the National curriculum demonstrates its importance to us all.

Tackling the issue of Race on pupil's attainment and wellbeing

Faizah Mehmood – Yr3 BA (Hons) Primary Education QTS, Birmingham City University

The issue of race is one that has caught a lot of attention over the years, especially during The Black Lives Matter Movement in 2020. Having reflected on my own experience I realised that though I had not experienced racial bullying growing up, my race has always been a big part of my upbringing and identity. I was always aware that the curriculum I was taught was not inclusive as I could not recognise myself in it. I was a Pakistani girl growing up in multi-cultural Birmingham learning exclusively about British History. My friends and I often discuss how our school left us feeling devalued and neglected, as a lack of representation of our race left us feeling disempowered. As a result, I experienced immense pressure to learn about myself later in life to fit into my community. Now training to become a primary teacher, my role in the education system has reversed from gaining to providing. This responsibility has emphasised the importance of changing the experience of all children in education to feel included and empowered by and through representations of their race. Through my training I have always taught in multi-cultural schools, so I have observed the benefits change can have on children and the importance for it. During a school placement I was responsible for the 'Class Read'. I recognised the whole class was from a South Asian background and were all Muslim. I decided to read 'Planet Omar' as I thought it would be engaging. The reaction was incredible, the children were so engrossed with this book. We saw the highest number of book reviews than ever before. Children loved sharing their similarities with Omar, such as praying five times a day and going to mosque. My experiences have emphasised the importance of racial empowerment and representation in schools and my role in ensuring I provide this. Researching into the current issue of race, this article further discusses the importance of revitalising the position of race in our schools and provides support for teachers to fulfil their responsibility for our young people.

What is the problem?

Racism is defined as inferiority linked to colour, ethnicity, nationality, or race. This can lead to being treated differently or unfairly, which is racial discrimination. Racial bullying can include being called racist names, being left out or being made to feel like you must change your appearance (Childline, 2020). Children experiencing racial bullying can be impacted in several ways including perceiving school as a dangerous environment, feeling unimportant and devalued or even feelings of anger, which can then be acted upon. As previously discussed, the negative impacts of race are not limited to physical bullying, there are many damaging, passive messages we can send to pupils about their race.

Why should we care?

Issues arising from racial bullying can have long term and serious implications on children's well-being and attainment, many of which are interlinked. Racial bullying can cause a weak sense of belonging as targeting a child can make them feel excluded and unwanted. Additionally, staff may be perceived as enabling, disinterested partakers (regardless of whether their view is different). This can cause negative emotions in pupils as they do not feel respected by the school, diminishing their confidence and self-worth. Consequently, they become more vulnerable to issues with mental health including depression (BBC Own it, 2020). This can lead to absences from school as victims do not feel comfortable or protected in school (Anderson, 2016) and do not want to engage with 'racist' staff. As a result, they fall victim to lower attainment through absence of the curriculum. This increases that

feeling of exclusion and so it becomes a vicious cycle (PISA, 2015). Furthermore, Thomas (2020) explains some may turn to crime as the only way to succeed. It is crucial that we, as teachers, take responsibility as continuing this pattern is detrimental for pupils' attainment and wellbeing.

This weak sense of belonging can also be caused by the curriculum itself. The urgency for an accessible, inclusive curriculum was massively increased this year through the Black Lives Matter movement. Osluga (2020) explained those who led the Black Lives Matter protests expect much more from schools. They have educated themselves and are frustrated towards the absence of Black History. This neglect is harmful to pupils' wellbeing and attainment. Similarly, Hack (2020) criticises the curriculum for simultaneously failing to provide the truth as to who it is catered to, whilst also discouraging many others from engaging with it. It is clear that pupils who do not see themselves represented in the curriculum are not engaged or excited to learn (Thomas, 2020) as the lack of representation associated with feeling isolated and disconnected (Hack,2020). Unsurprisingly, claiming it is not in our hands as teachers will not make the necessary changes. Pupils will eventually learn about their pasts and they should not feel anger or frustration during this, which is likely the outcome if it is not taught in classrooms (Asthana and Chakrabortty, 2020).

Pupils can also be psychologically scarred from the neglect experienced in school. Dealing with regular microaggressions and overt acts of racism can cause pain, trauma and stress, which can lead to anxiety, emotional withdrawal, and behavioural difficulties (Macedo et al, 2019). Additionally, stress caused by racism is linked to underachievement due to this anxiety as well as some devaluing academic success as a coping mechanism (Anderson, 2016). There are numerous shocking recounts of racism in school, which demonstrate their life-long implications. Chakrabortty (2020) provides a powerful insight into these experiences including one from a young girl who explained how racist bullying made her feel ugly and how she prayed daily not to be black anymore. Asthana and Chakrabortty (2020) also shared a young, black girl's recount of perceiving "toning down her blackness" as the only way to be successful. This emphasises the deep, emotional impact racism can have on a person's self-esteem and self-worth and how we as teachers are responsible for change.

What can we do?

There are many actions we can take to improve the experiences of our pupils in the education system. One key strategy would be to create a more inclusive, accessible curriculum for our future generations. This is demonstrated by Hack (2020) who encourages an accessible curriculum where students can see themselves as pupils who will have better engagement once they are more curious and can recognise a purpose in learning the content. This is supported through its application, which demonstrated a large decrease in the global majority attainment gap. Evidently, this would also allow us to meet Teachers' Standard 1 (DfE, 2011), through considering the needs of pupils to make lessons more engaging and effective. If children are considered when deciding the content of topics, we can ensure they feel included and want to interact, which can improve attainment and emotions in school. Furthermore, we can meet Teachers' Standard 5 (DFE, 2011) by acknowledging a key barrier in pupils' progression and adapt to address it effectively. The importance of this is further supported by The Black Curriculum blog (2020) and report (2021), which emphasises the importance of knowing black history for all backgrounds as it allows us to understand the emotions and past of the people around us which is essential in society. The increasing rise of awareness around the Black Lives Matter movement in 2020 demonstrated this as many people from a white background had educated themselves and were able to become allies to raise attention to the matter.

However, this is not an easy strategy to implement. Subject leaders have explained how they have fought for an inclusive curriculum for decades and how difficult this has been to cope with (BAMEed, 2020). The difficulties are discussed by Marlon and Harris (2020) who explain that the requirement of self-reflection, understanding the truth of others and teaching so all students can appreciate perspectives is challenging as it requires immense determination, time and skill. However, the ease of accessing information online shows the importance of delivering

correct information as mistakes will make you seem unreliable. We need to dedicate time to this as we hold such a key role in children's understanding. It is also crucial in our careers (DfE, 2011), so spreading this knowledge should not be optional. The BAMEed Courageous Conversations webinar (2020) shared how limited knowledge and incorrect racial language is doing a disservice to our children as well as many staff members were exhausted from educating colleagues and they were responsible for self-educating. The National Curriculum (DFE, 2013) explains how we aim to promote life-long learners but cannot implement this if we are unwilling ourselves.

Additionally, a universal idea is difficult to achieve. Parents may want to share ideas towards the curriculum so creating a universal aim becomes more challenging and the long journey is further lengthened (BAMEed, 2020). Staff may have different topics they perceive as more beneficial for pupils and so debates across the team may arise as demonstrated in the BAMEed webinar (2020) where two staff disagreed on whether knowledge on slavery empowered black children or not. This potentially creates further battles and can impact whether the curriculum is truly inclusive due to leader bias. It is difficult to create an accessible curriculum for all in such a diverse society. Leaving anyone out can be more noticeable and harmful to their confidence, which is counterproductive in raising wellbeing and attainment (BAMEed, 2020). However, creating this curriculum will take time and we must begin somewhere. There are small things we can do to ensure children feel important and engaged whilst fighting for this curriculum (BAMEed network, 2020). From my experience, as previously discussed, simply incorporating books, which represent their background as the class read, is highly effective. The BAMEed network (2020) provides several books where main characters have a variety of ethnic backgrounds.

We can also emphasise the importance of talk. The importance of honest conversations is crucial in promoting intolerance to racism. This includes parents, teachers and students. For children to feel like they have a place in school they require a positive relationship with the staff around them. Being this friendly, safe figure for them allows you to have these important, intimate discussions, which can support their wellbeing (BBC Own it, 2020). This also promotes Part two of the Teachers' Standard (DfE, 2011), which reinforces our responsibility for treating pupils with dignity and building relationships rooted in mutual respect. Childline (2020) explains how ignoring instead of discussing demonstrates that the school accepts racism, which makes pupils feel further isolated. They explain it is crucial that we understand the beliefs and attitudes of our pupils to make this effective. Without discussion, this becomes very challenging. Further supported by Raceconcious (2020) and Simmons (2019) who both discourage shying away from open conversations about race with young people as this sows the seeds of prejudice by inadvertently sending the message that something is wrong with people from another race.

However, building these relationships can be very difficult, especially for those experiencing this negative environment. Students' trust is not gained overnight and once built, it is extremely fragile so anything can impact it. Glowach (2020) reinforces this explaining if students see teachers as over/under confident, the epistemic trust is faltered and we are no longer perceived as credible sources of information. He acknowledges that we are not perfect, but mistakes must be paired with a willingness to acknowledge, reflect and learn to gain respect. It also supports achieving Teachers' Standard 1 (DfE, 2011) by setting the example that we are all willing to learn and adapt, which is key in gaining trust from students who have been hurt in the past.

Additionally, it can be challenging for staff to feel confident in dealing with these issues due to the immense responsibility and risk involved. There are many awful stories from people who experienced this neglect in school, but you may not know what else you would do. For example Chakrabotty (2020) shares numerous recounts including a young boy who had racial slurs chanted at him in the playground. His teacher said they would get bored eventually. This had a detrimental impact on this child but some might feel unsure when something is racist or just 'banter'. Another example shared how a black child was told by senior staff that her hair was against governmental regulations and demanded to cover it. Again, you may feel like you are just "following the rules" and do not mean to be racist. However, having limited experience or knowledge is not a valid excuse to shy away as there are many resources available to support your professional development, such as The Chartered College (2020) website, as well as all articles in this resource. Islam (2020) explains the importance of understanding before speaking to children; it

is crucial we do this and avoid the attitude that it is 'too difficult'. Simmons (2019) suggests the use of literature to support starting these conversations as they enhance empathy and social cognitive skills, which can enable more effective, honest and open conversation that otherwise, can be quite difficult. Simply recognising our limitations is no longer enough.

The importance of talk between staff is also important in spreading this message. It can be very challenging for staff to believe that racism will not be tolerated if they are experiencing it themselves. Therefore, a whole-school approach is crucial. Unfortunately, it is often that staff members make unintentional (or intentional) racial remarks as a joke. This has frequently been accepted as the individual being too sensitive. However, this acceptance is extremely damaging as suggested by Onanda (2020) who reinforced the importance of safe spaces for staff to discuss social prejudices to strengthen community cohesion. Ignoring microaggressions has serious consequences on many staff, some of which have affected their educational journey as supported by Dhanji (2020), who shared how showing tolerance to racial remark by educational leaders allows this to become the norm, which suppresses performance by the vulnerable staff. Evidently, feeling safe to share and interact is paired with a safe environment embodied in support and trust.

Emphasising conversation between the school and parents is another key strategy. It is illogical to not include children's families in our message especially as they are an integral aspect of pupils' wellbeing and attainment. Therefore, raising opportunities to speak to parents and creating this network can be very effective. This includes parent workshops, interactions on social media, sharing the school's ethos in the newsletter or even setting research projects for the parents and children to work together focussed on topics such as influential leaders from different backgrounds. These are just a few strategies which encourage open conversations between the staff, pupils and parents, where all can share their ideas and ask any questions. This interaction is supported by The Anti-Racist Practitioner (2020) who stated anti-racist assemblies including parents are effective in supporting children as they encourage solidarity. It also promotes Teachers' Standard 8 (DfE, 2011), as building effective relationships with parents, carers and families can improve pupils' motivation, behaviour and academic success.

However, not all parents will engage and the parents that interact with anti-racism workshops are often the ones who are passionate about the topic. Reaching out to busy parents who do not see it as a priority can be more challenging. They can often be the people who grow up in an environment where racist views and jokes are expressed so would believe that racism is normal and acceptable (Childline, 2020). Additionally, if these parents do attend any workshops and share their views, it can spread the message that the school agrees and make pupils feel more isolated. Therefore, it is important to ensure anti-racism is embedded in the school's foundation to avoid the excuse of missing a workshop which justifies sharing racist views. This includes:

- Adding ideas and positive messages in the school newsletter
- Frequently sharing links to anti-racism articles on social media
- Having school policies in place which clearly explain the school's thoughts and the steps that are taken if policies are broken can help to ensure all parents and pupils have received this message and understand the consequences.
- Using the end of parent's evenings to briefly discuss these views can also be effective as it ensures that conversation can be had with all parents.

The message needs to be a big part of the school's culture so any parent that attends the school understand they cannot spread alternate ideas which could offend or disrespect any member of the school.

As we have seen, tackling racism is not a simple issue we can address easily. We want to do whatever we can to be meaningful in this change, no matter how long it takes. Just this past year has shown such enthusiasm and

dedication in the spread of anti-racism, but we still have a way to go. Overall, we have understood the importance for being proactive, consistent, and committed to the issue. As an environment where children are constantly learning and spending such a large portion of their lives, schools are an integral part of a child's understanding of what is tolerated. This issue has such an impact on their progression and wellbeing through what is experienced, observed, heard and spread. A whole school approach with the message that it will not be tolerated is the most effective in achieving our goal and ensuring pupils can thrive mentally in a safe and supportive environment. Racism might always exist, we need to make school a safe space. Do not consider it as a 'once a month' focus. Aim to embed it into your daily teaching, engage in opportunities to raise your awareness and knowledge, spread what you learn, be confident in speaking to influential members of staff to improve policies and be proactive in arranging workshops or assemblies.

It is understandable to feel unequipped to fulfil this responsibility, but it is our responsibility to self-educate. To improve poor subject knowledge and experience delivering an inclusive curriculum I would recommend looking into the following resources:

Further Reading:

•The BAMED website (2020), and their webinar (BAMEed, 2020). This provided me with immense support through discussions which have given me an insight into the debate. I have learnt about key events in history which I have researched, and think would have a great impact in the curriculum.

•Hack (2020) who demonstrates different experiences of teaching a decolonised curriculum and shares what was effective which aids my perception in developing an accessible curriculum.

•BERA (2020) who encourages using social media to broaden networks to connect with people who share different experiences. I have and will continue to do this to support my development and knowledge.

•Take any opportunity to have discussions to increase knowledge. During a school placement, my class teacher and I often discussed the decolonised curriculum so I regularly considered the benefits and implications of an accessible curriculum as it was a great passion for us both. Having read Islam's ideas (2020) I shared strategies to implement in schools to consider their effectiveness and ease in executing. These often led to changes in class, for example we discussed representation which allowed me to choose a more representative book as the class read, and making cross-curricular links where we decided to share with pupils that zero was an Indian invention and was banned as people believed it could be a secret code in maths.

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A critical analysis of the aims of the English Baccalaureate, and its implications for professional practice and student learning: a conference paper.

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In fact the kind of music [the Patrician] really liked was the kind that *never got played*. ... It ought to stay written down, on the page … Only there was it pure. It was when people started doing things with it that the rot set in. *Soul Music* (Pratchett, 1995, p.193)

Introduction

The above quote could represent, in tongue-in-cheek fashion, the shift in aims and philosophy introduced by the policy of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc). The EBacc, like the Patrician's lionisation of the purity of the theory of written music, exists to promote a set of "core academic subjects" that emphasise tradition and theory within education, and excludes subjects with stronger leanings towards vocation and practice (see Department for Education (DFE), 2017: 6; DFE, 2010: 44). Criticism of the EBacc, conversely, is often focused on issues of student choice and creativity. These criticisms stem not only from the preferences of teaching professionals and interest groups, but also from the context of the emphasis on choice in older education policy, where key legislation sought to eliminate prejudice against vocational alternatives to traditional qualifications and to promote "options, more suited to the individual student's needs" (Moulton et al., 2018: 94; see also Armitage and Lau, 2020).

This paper examines the impact of the EBacc within this shift of emphasis in policy, beginning with a discussion of the EBacc's primary aims, followed by an analysis of its implications for professional practice and student learning. This paper is written from the author's context as a teacher of music (a subject more controversially impacted by the EBacc as one of the Creative Arts excluded from the policy's 'pillars') but with an aim towards impartial analysis in all areas, including this personal context.

Aims of the EBacc policy: a critical analysis

According to the 2010 White Paper which paved the way for the EBacc policy, a major aim was to ensure that schools "offer a broad set of academic subjects to age 16", and to "reform performance tables so that they set out our high expectations" (DFE, 2010: 11). This initial statement of intent indicates two essential aims of the policy: breadth of core academic subjects, and the measurement of performance, with the former being particularly emphasised in the policy documentation (see DFE, 2010 and DFE, 2017).

This statement of intent is fleshed out by a government addendum later in 2010, the House of Commons Education Committee report, and a later consultation on the EBacc's implementation (see House of Commons (HOC), 2011; DFE, 2015-16; DFE, 2017), which define the EBacc in more detail, setting out the subjects to be recognised by the policy:

To achieve the EBacc, a student would need GCSEs (at grades A*–C) in English, mathematics, at least two sciences: history or geography, and a modern or classical language (HOC, 2011, p.3)

Alongside these statements of intent, the 2010 White Paper and the Wolf Review both draw particular attention to two concerns that the policy was subsequently designed to alleviate: first, that there exist "perverse incentives" which "encourage schools … to steer young people into easy options, rather than ones which will help them

progress", with students insufficiently empowered to achieve their full potential within a range of priority subjects; second, the benefits of following international education practice by responding to "a changed labour market" by "delay[ing] specialisation" for students, and encouraging them to study a broad academic curriculum (DFE, 2011: 40, see also DFE, 2010: 40).

The EBacc, therefore, was designed primarily to ensure a broader core academic curriculum, and as a means of removing perverse incentives for young people to prematurely specialise, of assessing the performance of schools and students, and of learning from changes in international education. Since its introduction, a number of commentaries and critiques have emerged from various sources, including many perspectives which are included in the government's response to the *Consultation on implementing the English Baccalaureate* (DFE, 2017; see also Adams, 2013; Neumann et al., 2020; and Armitage & Lau, 2018). Three recurring themes in particular emerge from analysis of these critiques of the EBacc: the exclusion of various subjects, a binary and loosely defined use of the term 'academic', and a reduction in student choice at GCSE.

These critiques frequently question the exclusion of the Creative Arts, Physical Education, and Religious Education from the EBacc's group of priority academic subjects, arguing that this represents a "downgrad[ing]" of these subjects (see NATRE, 2011: 14; see also DFE, 2017; Maguire et al., 2019). This impression is reinforced by the way the term 'academic' appears to be defined in the early policy documentation, with comments in the original White Paper distinguishing it with the term 'vocational':

Even in those countries such as the Netherlands where students divide between academic and vocational routes all young people are expected, whatever their ultimate destiny, to study a wide range of traditional subjects (DFE, 2010, p. 44)

Here and in other places (see DFE, 2017), a binary form of classifying subjects can be seen, where some are regarded as more vocational, while others are regarded as more academic. Under this, it is easy to see how those with a large enough leaning towards vocation and practical work, such as Music, Art, and Drama, could be excluded from the category of core academic subjects, even if, like music, they can be shown to include academic skills such as "perceptual and language skills, literacy, numeracy, intellectual development attainment" (Incorporated Society of Musicians, cited in HOC, 2011: 26-27). Underpinning these issues are deeper problems of definition. In spite of the frequent usage of the term "academic", explicit definition of the term is absent within the relevant policy documents (see DFE, 2010; HOC, 2011; DFE, 2017), forcing those interpreting the policy to arrive at implicit definitions that may differ from person to person (see also Armitage and Lau, 2020: 232).

Given the focus of these critiques, it is not surprising that student choice is a recurring theme of criticism of the policy, with Armitage and Lau (2020: 110) commenting that "Pursuing social justice via a core curriculum represents a marked departure from the freedom of choice model"; the reduction of student choice at GCSE also features heavily in responses to the government consultation (see DFE, 2017). This criticism of the policy is perhaps one more of emphasis than of fundamentals, as the government response also indicates a recognition of the importance of student choice:

We have considered suggestions to include additional subjects or pillars within the EBacc but have decided that this could reduce pupil choice at GCSE to the point where no other subjects can be studied (DFE, 2017, p.21)

This response goes some way to countering the argument that the EBacc is unfairly exclusive, given that a significant level of subject exclusion is necessary to leave room for additional choices at GCSE. The response leaves open, however, the question of whether more subjects could be included in the EBacc's final pillar, currently restricted to history and geography, as this would not necessarily reduce student choice further.

It should be noted that the critiques of the policy explored above tend not to speak against its primary aim of widening student access to "academic subjects at GCSE" (DFE, 2010). One of these, Armitage & Lau (2018:) acknowledges the concerns underlying the 2010 White Paper and the Wolf Review, commenting that "providing

students with clear parameters on subject choice might mitigate against the risk of them choosing subjects which prematurely narrow their future options", whilst also addressing potential shortcomings and risks in such an approach. Comments such as these recognise the existence of a trade-off between the interests of student choice and the benefits that limiting choices may bring to long-term professional practice and student learning. Indeed, the implications of the EBacc on the teaching profession are potentially legion and only poorly understood, and it is to a few of these implications that this paper will briefly turn in its conclusion.

Implications for my professional practice and for student learning

The above discussion of the EBacc's aims and critiques raises a number of implications for professional practice in secondary teaching, particularly in the areas of student behaviour and long-term planning, both in general and in my own practice as a music teacher. According to one consultation submission, "there will be some students whose interests and aptitudes lie outside the Ebacc subjects", which will likely contribute negatively to classroom behaviour for these students (SSAT, 2015-16: 2). Similarly, the reduced number of student choices at GCSE may have the effect of causing some students to decide earlier which subjects they are dropping, leading to a further challenge to the engagement of these students at Key Stage 3. As a teacher of a non-EBacc subject, I will need to plan towards these potential pressures on student behaviour, investing more in potential points of engagement such as students' musical interests and productive relationships with parents. Conversely, I will also need to be aware of positive impacts the policy may have on student engagement and behaviour, particularly as higher levels of challenge at GCSE may, when managed well, contribute favourably to student learning (see Gervis and Capel, 2019: 148).

The EBacc's impact on subject choices at GCSE will also shape long-term planning across Key Stage 3 and 4. As a performance management measurement for schools and students, it is likely to force "school leaders to prioritise" in which subjects they support most (SSAT, 2015-16: 2). Thus my contribution to the planning of Music GCSE teaching, and the opportunities for enrichment made available to this subject through the resources allocated to it, will need to respond to a potentially lower prioritisation of resources for the subject. This prioritisation of subjects would also affect the way I plan for cross-curricular links with other subjects in my teaching.

Conclusion

The above represent a selection from many potential impacts, both lesser and greater, that the EBacc may be making to the teaching of secondary music, and these are likely to change and shift as schools adjust to plans for 90% enrolment in the EBacc, meaning that teachers may be adapting their practice for some time to come (see DFE, 2017: 5). This is not to cast the situation in a negative light, as there are potential benefits to the climate of change and reinvention that this will bring to professional practice. Changing circumstances and new challenges may act as a catalyst for the discovery of new ways of teaching subjects and new avenues of appeal. One example of this which may already be emerging from the consultation responses of *Bacc to the Future* and others, is that the EBacc may result in deeper attention to, and promotion of, the academic value and rigor that Creative Arts subjects have to offer.

The EBacc is still young, yet has had significant effects on the professional practice of teachers and the choices, learning, and well-being of students, generating considerable discussion and criticism, particularly showcased in the DFE consultation (DFE, 2017). As explored above, this discussion has often revolved around the tensions between the EBacc's primary aim and issues of student choice. The policy's aim of widening access to a range of academic subjects, along with the concerns which informed its design, emerge in this paper's brief critical discussion as areas of continued importance, with the potential to positively impact practitioners and students in the longer-term. Future and fuller critical assessment, along with the impact of more time, will shine more light on the policy's potential and value – if education policy changes slowly enough to allow this to be meaningfully examined.

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Being a Gay Male PE teacher: a biographical insight

Andrew Prestidge – Teacher of PE at Waterhead Academy (Guest Article)

Introduction

Throughout my time at college and university, all I ever wanted to become was a physical education (PE) teacher. Naturally the day I was accepted onto a teacher training course at a university in the North West, I was absolutely elated.

However, prior to being offered a place I had certain dilemmas regarding my sexuality which I outlined in my undergraduate dissertation:

> "I am not necessarily worried, more apprehensive to start the PGCE course because I do not know how other people on the course are going to react to having a gay male within the heteronormative norms"

> (McCullick, Belcher, Hardin and Hardin, 2003)

Now as a more experienced teacher, those dilemmas are still prevalent in my mind. Although with experience comes more confidence, it does not mean that I am 'ready' to come out to some colleagues and ultimately pupils. There are various reasons for this, the main one being that in general I am a very private person and believe that work and personal lives are different from each other and although I am close to a lot of teachers at my school, not all know about my sexuality. According to Griffin (1991), lots of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people live a 'duel existence,' how they behave, or act, when in a professional work setting and how they behave when with their friends or in the confinements of their own home. Although this is something that I agree with, as I have, and still, do this, I would also argue that, to some extent, everyone does this. How you behave with your friends, is not the same as when you are in professional work setting therefore you live a duel existence – just not to the same extent.

I do not conform to the stereotypical gay person and because of this; it is assumed that I am straight (assumed heteronormativity) (Jagose, 1996; Kulick, 2005), and they will continue to think like this unless I tell them otherwise or display typically gay male 'traits' such as being camp or feminine. Therefore, keeping my sexuality concealed is generally quite easy for me should that ever be my aim. At work, I generally try and do this. Firstly, it's 'easier'; no one really asks too many questions (staff and pupils). Although saying that, pupils naturally are inquisitive; they want to know about your personal lives – 'Ae you married?' 'Do you have a girlfriend?' Due to the way society is, their go to questions automatically assume that you're straight (unless, of course, you have 'gay traits').

The literature

It is important to mention what is available in terms of literature. Currently, articles on gay male PE teaching are scarce, with only a handful of studies published. The silences, fears and phobias that surround homosexuality make it difficult, if not impossible, to locate gay male teachers in the macho masculine world of PE (Clarke, 1998). Despite being written over 20 years ago, this statement still rings true as shown by the very limited research. That being said, those choosing to come out in professional sport is increasing [despite sport and PE being on a different path, a lot of people see it as the same]. Even those who do not see it as the same thing may be able to appreciate that sport is also seen as a macho masculine world. Youdell (2005, p251) states that schools and sexuality have an 'uncomfortable relationship'. This could have been as a result of 'Section 28' [or Clause 28] of the Local Government Act 1988 which

was introduced in the late 1980s by Margaret Thatcher's Conservative Government. Prior to this becoming law, Thatcher speaking at a conference, said:

> Children who need to be taught to respect traditional moral values are being taught that they have an inalienable right to be gay. All of those children are being cheated of a sound start in life. Yes, *cheated*.

'Section 28' stated that a local authority 'shall not intentionally promote homosexuality or publish material with the intention of promoting homosexuality'. Although this has been repealed, some people may, and ultimately do, hold the view that homosexuality is not 'normal' or that somehow, they deserve comments aimed at them for being different.

In order to create some literature on the topic, Sparkes (1997) created a fictional character called Alexander. Alexander was a gay male PE teacher, and within the article, Sparkes notes a few issues that Alexander faces (although based on assumptions as he is not a gay male). Sparkes mentions something called 'career suicide'. The assumption was if Alexander was to come out to his colleagues and pupils his career would be over, or he would think that his career would be over. I personally do not believe that coming out to pupils would be career suicide anymore, but I do believe it can make teaching a lot harder than it is already - it has the potential to increase homophobic incidents by pupils. On the other hand, it could also mean that LGBT pupils feel more comfortable to approach me (or other LGBT teachers) to disclose information, or for specific advice that heterosexual teachers may not be able to give and I can truly be the role model that so many pupils need.

PE departments are heteronormative environments with heteronormative attitudes (McCullick, Belcher, Hardin and Hardin, 2003) which has the potential to make them homophobic. Being involved in various departments, there have been moments of homophobia within them, although not aimed at myself. Robinson and Ferfolja, (2001) state that if a teacher tries to focus on sexuality and deconstructing and problematising heterosexuality in the process is often read by some pupils and colleagues as a means of pushing one's own personal agenda (see also Ferfolja, 1998). Or, in addition to this, pupils or other staff may see that as the teacher challenging it as LGBT, whereas they could be heterosexual who want to challenge homophobia.

Personal experiences

In my newly qualified teacher (NQT) year, I worked in a religious school; this, for me, added even more dilemmas. If I were to come out to staff and or pupils, how well would this go down in the eyes of the school? If something were to happen (a homophobic incident for example) would this be dealt with properly or would it be dismissed? I did in this school what I do in all others; kept my sexuality quiet in order to try and minimise incidents of homophobia. But also, as I have mentioned previously, I am generally a private person so I only tell people that I am personally close to. Luckily, throughout my NQT year, I didn't encounter, nor was made aware of, any incidents of this nature so I cannot testify how the school would handle it.

Unfortunately, that cannot be said about all schools that I have worked in. I am going to outline two specific incidents of homophobia, how I felt about it at the time and what I/ the school did about it (consequences).

- ➢ A pupil in year 11 shouted 'gay boy' down the corridor at me. This was the first proper experience that I have encountered where a pupil has been actively homophobic towards me. As soon as she said it, she ran off down the staircase and the incident had not been brought up since, by me, the pupil or the school. I appreciate that it was handled quite poorly on my behalf. I did not do anything about it; whether that be to punish her or pass it on to her Head of Year (HOY) or Senior Leadership Team (SLT); or even phone home and inform her parents. On reflection, I regret this; although, for some reason, it did not bother me that she had

said it; after all, it is true. However, it should never happen in a school. No teacher comes to work to get verbally abused by a pupil, nor do/should they expect to be subject to homophobia. The aspect that probably shocked me the most is that it took over a year of working there for this to happen. This, to some, might be a slightly odd way of thinking. Nevertheless, I have always thought it would 'happen at some point,' which is something that our heterosexual counterparts do not have to think about, nor encounter.

> The second and more severe (for me) took place whilst I was working in my office. Three Year 9 girls were having a discussion when one of the girls said to her friends, 'oh he is a faggot, him.' What she did not know was that a teacher was walking behind them and heard the whole conversation. The teacher entered my office and told me what the pupil had said. After thinking it over for a minute (to avoid any rash decisions), I went and spoke to her HOY, as well as the Head of Behaviour (HOB - a behaviour management role in this particular school). I was subsequently told to log it on the system, send it in an email to the pair of them (HOY and HOB) and it would be dealt with once we came back from the half-term holiday (it happened on the last day of the term). Once I had logged it on the system and sent the email, a phone call was made by me to her parents to explain what had happened and to ask them to speak to her once she had got home about her inappropriate language and how she spoke to me. They agreed it was inappropriate and her parents would be speaking to her about her behaviour. In terms of everything that I did, I believe that I handled this a lot better than the first incident above.

Sadly, and frustratingly for myself, the second incident also resulted in no punishment for her actions; no detention, no isolation or fixed-term exclusion. From a school perspective, I think that this is extremely poor and I felt very let down with regards to protecting me as a member of staff. There was no clear message that this behaviour was unacceptable, and no restorative justice conversation took place between us to try and correct this behaviour. To this day, I still teach her in various lessons, so there is nothing, in theory, stopping her from repeating this behaviour again – although, she hasn't thus far.

I often wonder if these incidents would have been dealt with seriously if the school knew that I was gay? I cannot answer this with any degree of certainty, but I would also argue that it shouldn't matter if she said it to an openly gay member of staff or someone who was gay, but the school was unaware, or a straight member of staff? The fact that she was homophobic towards a member of staff should have meant some form of punishment. In a study by Larsson et al (2011, p73), a quote from a schoolboy who was interviewed said "calling someone 'effeminate', 'poof', or 'gay' should, just like other sexual innuendos, be regarded as harmless 'jokes'". Some may see it this way and from my experience, in general it would be mostly boys who have this view, however, when it is a pupil calling a teacher those words, there is a malice that comes with it which would exclude any incidents of that nature as a joke.

Social responsibility and action

In order to deal with any form of discrimination, there needs to be a number of strategies in place. The first being a clear and concise behaviour or discrimination policy that all staff are aware of and that they follow. There is no point having a policy in which only certain members of staff follow and others do not; if pupils see that some staff do not challenge them when they are using discriminatory language, then there is the potential for them to carry it on, or even say worse terms to see where that individual teacher's boundaries are. This also applies to teachers; if they see members of SLT (who write the policies) not following the policy, then they may think if they are not following it, then I won't either because it is not worth the abuse/attitude from the pupils. Therefore, a clear and concise policy is paramount in tackling it. This also links with SLT giving staff the confidence to tackle it, knowing that they will be backed by the school. Some teachers may be afraid to tackle it because they do not know how the school will react to them dealing with these incidents.

Secondly, homophobia should be discussed during assembly or form time – especially after any incidents. Highlighting it, and having honest conversations about it can also help to curb incidents as when you talk about things, it helps to normalise it.

Thirdly, ITE (Initial Teacher Education) providers need to do more to train teachers on how to deal with these incidents as and when they arise. I cannot remember being given any information on this throughout my teacher training (although, it may have changed since then – and of course, every provider is different any may already deliver lectures on it). However, this training will only come to fruition if that school has a policy that everyone follows.

Recommendations towards a brighter future
- More literature/research needs to be completed to ensure that everyone is represented in academic studies.
- ITE providers need to provide specific content on how to deal with discrimination in the classroom
- SLT need to tackle homophobia effectively through implementing a policy that everyone adheres to from the Headteacher down to all staff
- All staff need to have the confidence to challenge any incidents of homophobia that they hear from 'that's so gay' to other, more severe, incidents. This will come from being backed by their SLT.

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How much do you really know about eating disorders?

Carolina Mountford – Mental Health Advocate, Speaker and Writer (Guest Article)

Introduction

If I said "eating disorders", I wonder what your first thought would be. In all probability, your attention would likely turn to an image of a white, middle class, severely underweight, teenage girl. And I wouldn't blame you. For decades, that is the stereotype that has been most perpetuated and the eating disorder that is most talked about. That image would be of girl suffering with anorexia nervosa. However, 85% of people with an eating disorder are not underweight and anorexia is one of the least common eating disorders

In the UK, over 1.6 million people (Anorexia and Bulimia Care, 2019) are estimated to be suffering with an eating disorder but in reality, there will be many thousands more who are suffering but are not included in the data due to under reporting, particularly amongst men and many ethnic groups. They too are suffering. In silence.

The following gives you a brief insight into the current landscape of eating disorders.

Four in ten people will personally be suffering or have suffered from an eating disorder or know someone who is. (Eating Disorder Hope, 2021)

During the course of the pandemic, in Oxford alone, urgent referrals shot up from 20% to 80% and in the private health sector, the Priory saw an 87% rise in people seeking help for anorexia and Binge Eating Disorder (BED) (The Guardian, 2021).

Urgent referrals for children with eating disorders have almost doubled during the pandemic with urgency being determined by the risk to the patient's health and safety (The Guardian, 2020).

Beat (the UKs largest eating disorder charity) saw a year on year increase of calls to its helpline of 97% between March-August 2020 (The Independent, 2020)

It goes without saying then, that we are facing an even bigger crisis in this area than ever before and there are no signs of it abating. We need to be better informed and better resourced, as a matter of urgency. In the words of Dr Agnes Ayton, chair of the Eating Disorder Faculty at the Royal College of Psychiatrists "people are dying of eating disorders and these deaths are preventable".

What are eating disorders?

Eating disorders are complex and serious psychiatric illnesses that may sometimes manifest physically, so you cannot possibly know, except in a few cases, if someone is struggling just by looking at them. Eating disorders do not have a sole cause but develop as a coping mechanism in response to difficult emotions, situations or trauma. It is thought that bingeing is used to escape or avoid feelings and restriction may be used more for numbness or the suppression of emotions and memories.

What are the main eating disorders?

The main three are:

1. *Binge Eating Disorder (BED)*: characterised by the consumption of large quantities of food in a very short space of time and with a feeling of being out of control. Binges are not usually followed by purging but a period of restriction may ensue. In between binges, the person may also eat regular meals. Binges do not feel like a choice nor is it enjoyable and they can be planned like a ritual or be more spontaneous. It is not about someone being greedy or uneducated about food. Binge eating is enormously distressing for the sufferer and invariably brings about intense feelings of shame, guilt, self-loathing and unworthiness.

2. *Bulimia Nervosa*: a cycle of bingeing and purging (compensatory behaviours such as over exercise, vomiting, fasting, use of laxatives or diuretics). The food eaten during a binge will often be food that the person typically avoids and, as in BED, will be eaten quickly; frequently with a sense of disconnect to what is actually happening. Binges are deeply upsetting and the feelings that follow a binge are very similar to those in BED. Sufferers also have an intense preoccupation with weight and shape as well as a distorted view of their own appearance often believing themselves to be larger than they are.

3. *Anorexia Nervosa*: characterised by self-starvation and severe weight loss. It is frequently accompanied by over exercising and the person will be unable or unwilling to stop when they are tired, sick or injured. They will often feel extremely guilty if they miss a workout or take time out for recovery. Strict self-imposed rules around what, where and when they eat is also common. People with anorexia may also purge; some may binge as well, then purge. Sufferers will often have a deep-seated fear of weight gain and will react when challenged by those around them that that is what they need. They will likely also have a distorted view of their body.

The "lesser-known" eating disorders:

4. *ARFID (Avoidant / Restrictive Food Intake Disorder)*: people with ARFID may avoid an entire food group, food of a certain type or they may restrict the overall amount of food eaten. In some cases they may avoid and restrict. Sensory-based avoidance is all about appearance, taste and texture. However, it's possible they associate that particular food with a very difficult incident e.g. choking or vomiting and have developed an intense fear of the consequence of eating that food again. In this case people will often impose rules on what they deem to be 'safe' foods. Some people with ARFID struggle to recognise their hunger cues and eating is a chore rather than something to be enjoyed. A low interest in food often results in a low intake of food.

5. *SFED (Other Specified Feeding or Eating Disorder)*: this essentially covers the eating disorders that do not necessarily tick all the diagnostic boxes of the main three eating disorders. It could mean that someone has all the symptoms of anorexia but is not severely underweight (atypical anorexia), they could have all the symptoms and behaviours of bulimia or binge eating but in lesser frequency and shorter duration (atypical bulimia).

Relatively little is known about other eating problems such as orthorexia, rumination disorder and pica but are nevertheless serious conditions and help should be sought for these too. Orthorexia, whilst not a recognised eating disorder in its own right, has been on the rise in recent years thanks to the interest and emphasis on 'clean' food and bears great resemblance to anorexia.
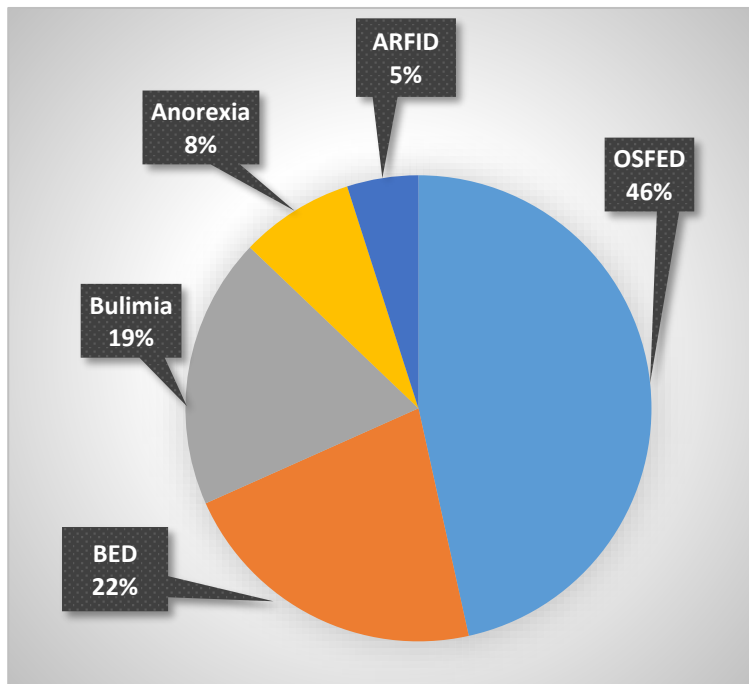
Figure 1 shows the prevalence of the different eating disorders – you may be surprised!

True or False? Busting some common myths surrounding Eating Disorders

Eating disorders mainly affect a particular group of people FALSE

➢ Eating disorders do not discriminate and can affect anyone. Of any age, race, gender or background.

You can tell if someone has an eating disorder by looking at them FALSE

➢ Eating disorders are mental illnesses and you cannot know what is going on inside someone's mind just by looking at them

People with eating disorders do not like food FALSE

➢ Eating disorders are someone's response trauma and difficult emotions. It is not about food although that is how it plays out.

You can recover from an eating disorder TRUE

➢ Yes recovery is possible! Early intervention is always preferable but it's important to know that if even if someone has been suffering for many years, freedom is still possible. Neuroplasticity is a wonderful thing and it means we can rewire and retrain our brains. There is hope for everyone.

Symptoms can vary from person to person TRUE

➢ Different people suffering from the same eating disorder may experience different symptoms. So, not everyone with anorexia nervosa will over exercise. Also, symptoms will change as someone begins to recover. So again, you cannot tell how well or unwell someone is by their behaviour. The battle in mind continues long after physical and behavioural changes occur.

Some Early Signs & Symptoms

- ➢ Changes in behaviour around food
- ➢ Changes in levels of activity or exercise
- ➢ Changes in mood
- ➢ Preoccupation with food
- ➢ Preoccupation with appearance
- ➢ Hiding or hoarding food
- ➢ Tiredness or difficulty concentrating
- ➢ Social withdrawal or isolation

If you see several of the signs outlined above, be alert. Notice many of them are about changes in behaviour so if someone who was previously easy going, happy, outgoing is now irritable, grumpy, withdrawn, obsessing over food then do take note. Eating disorders thrive in darkness, secrecy & isolation so you may well notice someone going out less, engaging less or making last minute excuses to avoid a social situation.

What Can I Do If I Am Worried About Someone?

The most important thing is not to panic. There is a lot of help and support available.

DO:

- ➢ Talk to them gently remembering it's primarily not about food, it's about feelings. This is complex though as a starved brain needs renourishing, sometimes urgently.
- ➢ Reassure them that you are there for them and will support them in whichever way they need
- ➢ Send them cards or messages, or leave voice notes letting them know you're thinking of them
- ➢ Listen
- ➢ Be prepared for a reaction. They will likely not take kindly to being challenged and remember, the truth hurts. You may be the first person to raise the issue or you may be the fifth. At some point, they will realise that the people who care about them are speaking the truth and they will recognise their need for help.

DON'T:

- ➢ Blame or shame them
- ➢ Threaten them
- ➢ Let your fear of their response stop you from talking to them
- ➢ Give up
- ➢ Take their responses personally. Many people with eating disorders are frightened of rejection and of what lies ahead (and much more besides)

What may have started off as an 'innocent' diet to just lose a few pounds, before long becomes something all-consuming and we find ourselves with an insatiable monster living in our heads that cannot be silenced. Sometimes it whispers its lies to us and sometimes it shouts vitriol at us. Incessantly. It is crippling and soul destroying.

Eating disorders truly rob us of all joy, identity, self-worth and much more. It affects every single aspect of life.

We must all do more to learn about these serious mental illnesses, understand what is and isn't helpful (top tip: never tell someone to "just eat" or "move more") and be so much more mindful of the language that we use and the narrative that we subscribe to, perhaps at times, unknowingly.

Carolina is a Mental Health Speaker and Writer with lived experience of eating disorders and depression. With a background in psychology and counselling, Carolina has helped run several eating disorder recovery courses and delivers talks and workshops in different settings from schools to universities to faith groups to businesses. She is also a signee of the Mental Health Media Charter.

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Too blessed to be stressed: What are the implications of work related stress on teacher retention?

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Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, in combination with an economic depression, the United Kingdom (UK) saw a rise in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) applications along with an increase in teacher retention (Worth and McClean, 2020). However, in the years leading up the pandemic, applications to study a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) were drastically decreasing and the UK saw a "shortage of secondary school teachers" (See and Gorard, 2019: 1). Many postgraduates can be persuaded into studying a PGCE, convinced that becoming a teacher will be a gratifying career to venture into and that there are fewer jobs more rewarding than inspiring future generations (Liquorish, 2020; Manno, 2012; Hindley; 2017; Rickard, 2014, Williams, 2020). However, new studies show that many teachers feel that inspiring pupils is no longer a necessary teaching goal; instead, they feel pressured into prioritising academic achievements and positive exam results, expressing that "it's not about the children, it's about the data" (NEU, 2018: 1; Shelley, 2020; Strauss, 2014).

Several reasons suggest why teacher attrition and teacher retention rates worsen year by year (Bahtilla, 2019; Harrell et al, 2004). In 2020, The Department for Education (DfE) released the School Workforce Statistics from 2019. The results confirmed a rise in teacher retention amongst newly qualified teachers, showing that 85.5% are still in service after just one year of teaching, indicating a slight improvement from 85.1% the previous year. However, the statistics also showed that only 67.4% are still teaching after being in the profession for five years, demonstrating a further decrease from 2018, where the statistics showed 68.0% (DfE, 2020; Lough, 2020). There are numerous reasons to suggest why teacher retention rates are worsening throughout the UK (Foster, 2019). Many studies imply that "most of teacher attrition is a result of factors such as inadequate pay, administrative support, workplace conditions, student related issues, and collegiality with peers." (Harrell et al, 2004: 3).

Contrastingly, however, in 2018, the DfE published the research report 'Factors affecting teacher retention: qualitative investigation'. The document expressed that "workload remains the most important factor influencing teachers' decisions to leave the profession" (DfE, 2018). A similar study carried out by the National Education Union in 2018, found similar results, stating that many of the participants involved "had considered leaving teaching as a result of unmanageable workload issues" (NEU, 2018: 1). Studies suggest that people who do not work in the education sector are not aware of the demanding workload teachers cope with daily and seem to have "a popular misconception that teachers have a short working day" (NEU, 2018: 1).

Teachers are expected to successfully balance an excessive workload in conjunction with teaching several hours a day (Walker et al, 2019). Many non-educators may presume that teacher workload consists mainly of marking written work and planning lessons (NEU, 2019). Most people are unaware that teacher retention rates are decreasing due to the multifaceted profession (Lindquist et al, 2014). When first starting their PGCE studies, many trainees can be unprepared for the extra layers of a teaching role. Trainees may have simplistic expectations regarding teaching as a career (Hobson et al, 2006). Unaware that "they are expected to be social workers, terrorist prevention police, mental health professionals, dieticians, psychologists, child psychiatrists" (Williams, 2017: 1).

Evidence indicates that many teachers love their jobs, feeling satisfied and fulfilled by their work (Daniels, 2020). In 2019, The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) released the report 'Teacher well-being at work in schools and further education providers'. The document stated that numerous teachers "overwhelmingly enjoy teaching" and "love their profession" (Ofsted, 2019: 5). However, Ofsted also argues that

many educators "believe that the advantages of their profession do not outweigh the disadvantages" (Ofsted, 2019: 5). Therefore, this suggests that although teachers enjoy their jobs, there are too many negative factors that make them unsatisfied and feel underappreciated. Workload and the connection with stress appears to be a common reason for a decline in teacher retention. Consequently, this may indicate why mental health issues are rising amongst teachers leading to more educators leaving the profession.

The definition of teacher stress links to the psychological and emotional impacts teachers face at work (Kyriacou, 2006; Prilleltensky et al, 2016). Teacher stress is on the rise, and according to several studies, teachers feel more anxious and overwhelmed by workload than Doctors and Nurses. Research also suggests that the Covid-19 pandemic has further affected teacher well-being and the impact threatens to leave a lasting legacy of stress and depression amongst teachers. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural organization (UNESCO) stress is just one of the adverse consequences that teachers are dealing with due to school closures (Arnett, 2016; Busby, 2019; Penshaw, 2020; TGN, 2020; UNESCO, 2020 cited in Kim et al, 2020).

Contrary to this however, research from the National Health Service (NHS) states that doctors and nurses are 50 per cent more likely to suffer from "debilitating levels of work stress compared with the general working population" (Rhodes, 2021:1), which has been drastically intensified since the pandemic struck (Rhodes, 2019). A study by the British Medical Association, also states that the number of medical staff seeking psychiatric help has doubled since the covid-19 outbreak and the NHS staff working in intensive care units are more than likely to suffer from post-traumatic-stress disorder (PTSD) from their job (Lovett, 2021).

In 2018, YouGov, created the study 'Teachers: stressed and undervalued- but satisfied with their job'. The research determined that the three leading causes teachers highlighted for creating stress were, constant changes to education policies, Ofsted inspections and the most common answer, workload (Neale, 2018). Teacher workload has been linked to creating stress-related mental health issues for several years (Harmsen, 2018). Teachers "have a high risk of becoming stressed out because of changes and demands in the profession" (Hanson, 2013: 50). In 2019, 'Education Support' a charity that provides a helpline to teachers and educators, published a research paper exploring teacher wellbeing. The analysis showed that "72% of all educational professionals described themselves as stressed" (Smith, 2019: 26) and 57% considered leaving their jobs due to health and wellbeing issues. The data also stated that out "of those who had considered leaving" stress was a significant factor in their decision making (Smith, 2019; 45).

Various research suggests that motivating and encouraging teachers are hugely influential to children and can have massive impacts on students' futures (Cotnoir etal, 2014; Grichland, 2017). Nonetheless, the repercussions that materialise from educators lacking motivation due to teacher stress may severely affect students (Loeb, 2012). Research also acknowledges that teacher stress affects teachers "ability to meet students' needs" (Naylor, 2001: 1). Teachers leaving the profession may impact trainee teachers and newly qualified teachers (NQTs) during their teaching practice. Witnessing the effect of stress may influence them to discontinue their chosen career (Sawchuk, 2012).

Teacher turnover is classified as the yearly rate in which teachers arrive and depart from schools (Sorensen and Ladd, 2019). Evidence indicates that teacher turnover has primarily negative effects, and high turnover rates are disruptive for teachers and pupils. When teachers leave suddenly, and schools are continually dealing with teacher turnover, the impacts may be harmful to teaching staff (Adnot et al, 2017; Gibbons et al, 2018; Ronfeldt, 2012, TGN, 2018). Constant staff changes due to turnover may cause tensions amongst faculty members and the "time required for the new teachers to acclimatise and assimilate into a school" (Telhaj, 2017: 1) may create a considerably larger workload for existing staff. Suggesting that frequent turnover could be a cause for poor mental health among teachers due to increased workloads.

Teacher turnover and teachers leaving the education sector due to stress have also been connected to disrupting students learning. Students whose studies are affected by teacher turnover, seem to achieve weaker final year exam results (Rondfeldt, 2012). However, some reports suggest that teacher turnover may actually benefit students and "is not always detrimental" (Sims, 2016: 4). Positive effects might be that new teachers bring fresh, productive ideas to classes (Loeb, 2013). Therefore, suggesting that although teacher retention rates are decreasing, students may experience both positive and negative teacher turnover outcomes.

Research indicates that changes to help teachers cope with workload related stress should additionally prevent teacher retention rates from declining further (Thomson, 2019). According to the Department for Education, teacher retention rates could increase if Senior Leadership Teams (SLT) "provide support for teachers dealing with stress, illness and performance issues", (DfE, 2018). The Department for Education is also aware that teacher stress due to persistent workload is causing retention rates to decline. In order to support educational staff, the DfE released a 'School workload reduction toolkit'. The guidance included practical resources to help identify and reduce teacher workload (DfE, 2018). The toolkits provided strategies to help teachers cope with feedback and marking, curriculum planning and behaviour management (DfE, 2018), with the intention of reducing workload stress. However, the guidance gives little support for teachers suffering mental health issues. On the other hand, the British Council and Education Support, the education charity, have both released guidance on how to reduce workload and for coping with workload-related stress, advice that seems to be missing from the Department for Education toolkits (Thomson, 2019; ES, 2018; Smith, 2019).

It is clear from research that teaching is still considered a positive career choice for Graduates. Evidence does suggest that teachers still feel rewarded by what they do and are fulfilled by their occupation (Stewart and Roberts, 2018). However, many feel the disadvantages of teaching are increasing with the pressures of prioritising academic achievements over pupil and teacher wellbeing (Shelley, 2020; Strauss, 2014). The stress caused by excessive workload is a primary factor in the decision of many to leave the profession (Pundurov, 2020; Smith, 2019). Constant changes in educational policies, Ofsted inspections and inordinate workload can lead to teachers feeling overwhelmed and underappreciated (Cipriano and Brackett, 2020). Data demonstrates that although retention rates for newly qualified teachers are improving, many then leave the profession only a few years later. The most common factor driving their decision to leave the industry is stress due to demanding workload (Edwards, 2019; Hess, 2019). The constant teacher turnover and declining rates of teacher retention suggest that more help needs to be provided to teachers to alleviate workload stress (Bromley, 2020).

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Be Wary of Hattie's Use of Meta-Analyses and Effect Sizes

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INTRODUCTION

John Hattie's (2009) first *Visible Learning* publication was hailed by the *Times Educational Supplement* as 'teaching's Holy Grail' (Mansell, 2008, n.p.). Since then, the terms "meta-analysis" and "effect size" have become increasingly common place in many schools with some senior leadership teams prioritising certain pedagogical interventions in their school development plan because of their apparent large effect size. This method of school development, however, is problematic; while meta-analytic research can be considered a well-established approach within the sciences the same cannot be said for education. As such, to support teachers and school leaders in understanding meta-analyses and effect sizes a little better, this article unpicks what these terms mean, why they are problematic in education (using feedback meta-analyses as an example), and what needs to be considered when reading any meta-analytic research.

WHAT ARE META-ANALYSES AND EFFECT SIZES?

The term "meta-analysis" seems to have been first introduced by Glass (1976) who defined it as:

> … the analysis of analyses. I use it to refer to the statistical analysis of a large collection of analysis results from individual studies for the purpose of integrating findings (Glass, 1976: 3).

In other words, it is an approach which combines a number of studies in a specific area (for example, feedback) and quantifies its effect on outcomes.

An "effect size", therefore, is a statistical calculation which, as the name suggests, indicates the overall effect of an intervention. The larger the effect size, the more impact the intervention has been found to have. The most common method to find an effect size in meta-analytic research is, in technical jargon, "Cohen's *d*" (Cohen, 1969). Wiliam (2016) gives us a useful explanation as to how this works in practice:

> [T]he most common method is to find the difference in measure of the outcome of interest between the experimental group and the control group and then divide that by how spread out the data are. … researchers in education and psychology tend to use the standard deviation, which is a measure of how far, on average, the data in the set are from the average (Wiliam, 2016: 79).

According to Hattie and his *Visible Learning* team, feedback significantly increases student learning. Of course, there would be very few in education who would disagree with this claim. However, the *Visible Learning* research goes on to report that feedback has a current, average effect size (based on meta-analyses conducted to date) of +0.73 (Hattie, 2015). To contextualise this result, introducing an intervention with an effect size of around +0.6 would increase student outcomes by approximately one whole GCSE grade (Coe, 2002). So, at face value, feedback can be considered a very high-impact, low-cost intervention strategy that can significantly increase students' outcomes. This figure, and others like it, though, are in need of much pondering.

A GENERIC PROBLEM WITH META-ANALYTIC RESEARCH

Much meta-analysis research can be said to suffer from the "file-draw problem" (Rosenthal, 1979). This refers to unpublished research papers which have been unsuccessful in providing significant results. For example, in clinical trials research, Dickerson and Min (1993) found that if the results studies produced were statistically significant, researchers were twelve-times more likely to get their work published than those whose results were not statistically significant. What is important to note is that when the file-drawer problem has been explored, and meta-analyses included both published and unpublished papers in medicine (Goldacre, 2012) and social sciences (Franco, Malhotra and Simonovits, 2014), there were substantial differences in effect sizes compared to those solely focused on published papers. What this means is that the more papers, both published and unpublished, that go into a meta-analysis, the more accurate the overall average effect size will be (Coe, 2002). That said, it is important to note that just because there are more studies included in a meta-analysis, this does not necessarily guarantee that the analysis itself is of a better quality. This is discussed further later in the article.

ISSUES WITH HATTIE'S APPROACH TO "WHAT WORKS" IN EDUCATION

There are several problems with Hattie's meta-analytic research. The first relates to his understanding of how to interpret effect sizes. For example, in his original, and oft-cited, *Visible Learning* publication (Hattie, 2009), Hattie presents readers with a simple-to-understand, coded barometer to clarify what the overall average effect size is for a particular intervention. As stated previously, the most recent meta-analysis publication shows feedback to have an overall, average effect size of +0.73 (Hattie, 2015).

In his research, Hattie (2009, 2012, 2015) states that an effect size below +0.3 should be thought of as small, those around +0.4 to +0.7 as medium, and those greater than +0.8 as large. Although Hattie (2009, 2012, 2015) states that his methodological approach follows Cohen's *d* (this is described above), his understanding of effect sizes is problematic because this is not what Cohen (1988) said; he was actually giving advice on how to make estimates of statistical power for a *proposed* experiment:

> Thus, if the investigator thinks that the effect of his treatment method … is small, he might posit a d value such as 0.2 or 0.3. If he anticipates it to be large, he might posit d as 0.8 or 1.0. If he expects it to be medium … he might select some value as d=0.5 (Cohen, 1988: 25).

In other words, the way Cohen (1988) was actually talking about an effect size was to report it *prior* to the research study, in anticipation a research study would yield a statistically significantly result, not after it as is the case with Hattie's (2009, 2012, 2015) research.

The second issue surrounds Hattie's methodology in conducting his meta-analyses. For example, Hattie (2009) states that there is 'no reason to throw out studies automatically because of lower [methodological] quality' (2009: 11). For some (for instance, Slavin, 2018), this is an issue; in order to fully understand the results from any single meta-analysis (or collection of meta-analyses) it is important to look into each of the individual studies. This is important when considering meta-analysis results on whether a research intervention produces a sufficient effect size to be considered worthy; it is crucial to understand the exact focus, context, and conditions in which the individual research study took place. These variables are important because the same focus conducted by different researchers, in a different context, and under different conditions may, in fact, produce completely different results.

Third, it has been revealed that many of Hattie's *Visible Learning* meta-analyses include effect sizes based pre- and post-tests (Slavin, 2018). This is an issue for two reasons: first, students typically do better anyway in a post-test than a pre-test because they have been exposed to more content (Slavin, 2018); and second, this methodological approach does not follow actually the conditions of Cohen's *d* because the comparison is made between the pre-test

and the post-test and not a control group with an experimental group where starting points have been appropriately controlled for (Bergeron and Rivard, 2017).

The major methodological flaw here is that these meta-analyses do not compare studies which are like-for-like, nor does Hattie make suitable adaptations to control for differences so that meaningful comparisons can be made (Slavin, 2018). To do so would be important because if one feedback intervention lasted considerably longer than another, or if there were significantly different numbers of participants between studies, then the 'effect sizes would have to be suitably adjusted before meaningful comparisons could be made' (Wiliam, 2016: 84). Such controls have not been carried out in Hattie's meta-analysis research. Therefore, given that consistent standards and quality controls have not been observed, it can be argued strongly that these meta-analyses of feedback research (and others in the *Visible Learning* publications) are highly problematic and report effect sizes that are statistically incorrect.

WHAT SHOULD TEACHERS AND SCHOOL LEADERS CONSIDER AND DO WHEN READING META-ANALYTIC RESEARCH?

In general terms, it is clear that whilst a meta-analysis methodology can indeed be a useful way of synthesising results, they also have their limitations. As Wiliam (2016) comments:

> … right now, meta-analysis is simply not a suitable technique for summarizing the relative effectiveness of different approaches to improving students learning, and any leader who relies on meta-analysis to determine priorities for the development of the teachers they lead is likely to spend a great deal of time helping their teachers improve aspects of their practice that do not benefit students (Wiliam, 2016: 97).

So, if results from meta-analytic research can be considered problematic, what should teachers and leaders consider when reading such reports?

Recommendations

First, when reading any meta-analytic report (the most common being, for example, the *Visible Learning* publications and the Education Endowment Fund research reports), it would be highly recommended to read, wherever possible, the individual research studies that support the conclusions being made. This would be particularly important if meta-analysis results are intended to be used to make decisions about pedagogical or policy changes.

Second, to support the recommendation above, it is important to understand the conditions on which the individual studies within the meta-analysis took place and what it would mean if it was being implemented in another context. In relation to Hattie's (2009, 2012, and 2015) research on feedback, for example, what none of these meta-analyses reported was the type on which the feedback was given or received. For instance:

- Was it the teacher, student, peer or another person who provided the feedback?
- Was it delivered to an individual student, a group of leaners, whole class, or was it feedback from the student(s) to the teacher?
- What type of feedback was given (for example; scores, grades, comments that fed back, comments that fed forward)?
- Was the feedback given in written form, oral, video or audio recorded?
- How often was the modality of feedback given during the study? For example, was it once, twice, multiple times? Was the feedback used formatively by the teacher?

These are much more relevant questions for teachers and school leaders to consider; questions which meta-analyses cannot explore in depth.

Therefore, in short, although meta-analyses and effect sizes have become increasingly common terms used in schools, readers of any meta-analytic research should, indeed, be wary of their results.

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UK Education and the Covid-19 Pandemic 2020-21

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Part 1 - The Impact of UK School Closures on the Attainment Gap during the 2020-21 Pandemic

During the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic (March – July 2020), all schools in the UK closed in compliance with national lockdown regulations, moving to remote teaching and learning at home (Adams and Stewart, 2020). Though schools reopened in September 2020, emergency quarantine and lockdown measures remained in place, forcing school closures and remote learning to continue over the academic year. Research by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2014) suggests the attainment gap of pupils based on income in the UK is comparatively larger than that of other countries. However, this has been gradually narrowing in recent years (Education Endowment Foundation, 2020). In June 2020, the Educational Endowment Foundation (EEF) completed a rapid analysis of the effect of the initial school closures in March on the attainment gap. Based on a systematic review of the limited literature available on the consequences of school closures, their research predicted the attainment gap would widen significantly between March and September 2020 and effectively undo the progress made over the last decade (EEF, 2020). Professor Becky Francis, Chief Executive of the EEF, suggests this is due to disadvantaged pupils being less likely to have good access to the appropriate resources at home and less likely to have parents who can help them with their school work (Francis, 2020). To support disadvantaged pupils effectively, it is important for teachers to have a thorough understanding of the existing causes of the attainment gap and the repercussions of these factors during challenging times such as a global pandemic.

When schools moved online in order to continue operating during the first lockdown, the majority of pupils became dependent on the internet to access their education from home. As approximately 1.9 million households are without Wi-Fi connection (Kelly, 2020), this proved an impossibility for many children. MP Christian Wakeford argues inadequate access to equipment was the fundamental barrier to effective remote learning for pupils (Pearson UK Learning, 2020). This is backed by research confirming school closures disproportionately impact disadvantaged pupils as they are less likely to have access to internet connectivity, laptops, and space in their home to work effectively (Andrew et al., 2020)

The solution for this is ensuring all pupils have access to the technology they require. The Department for Education (DfE) began providing laptops to disadvantaged pupils to address these inequalities in technology access and continue to provide support to enable internet access (DfE, 2020). However, they have been criticised for supplying this equipment too late and failing to meet targets, and pupils faced additional problems once the laptops were received (Whittaker, 2020). The DfE is now facing criticism from Headteachers for limiting the amount of equipment they are supplying as the pandemic continues (Dickens, 2020). As this technology is necessary for pupils to have contact with schools during ongoing isolation periods and school closures, this is a crucial issue that the government must resolve to ensure equal access for all pupils to an education during this time.

The correlation over time between the provision of Pupil Premium Funding to schools and the narrowing of the attainment gap (DfE, 2015, p.18) suggests that targeted government funding for disadvantaged pupils is an effective method to combat attainment inequality. Schools often use this funding on Teaching Assistants (TAs), literacy and

mathematics support, increased staffing and training, and educational visits or other broader non-academic uses (Winstanley, 2019). As disadvantaged pupils are currently more vulnerable to losing out even more in their educational attainment, this targeted funding arguably must be increased to provide the necessary support. Moreover, as continued school closures oblige pupils to pursue their education outside of school, this funding must be used not only to provide focused support within schools but also in alternative ways to support disadvantaged pupils to learn effectively at home.

Evidence suggests the remedy for the widening attainment gap lies in immediate and long-term catch-up tuition for those pupils who need it most: an "urgent need for policies that not only support catch-up for pupils which have fallen behind but also streamline provision of school support over the course of the disrupted school year" (Andrew et al., 2020, p.681) While pupils currently in examination year groups need urgent targeted support, younger pupils will require sustained, long-term support to account for the enduring impact of these disruptions. The government claim disadvantaged schools will gain the most targeted additional funding from their £1bn Covid catch-up plan. However, analysis reveals poorer schools will receive funding three to four per cent less than those in wealthier areas due to the funding being spread impartially across all schools (Sibieta, 2020). Meanwhile, reports show that nearly 40 per cent of government catch-up funding remains unspent (Dickens, 2020). The Education Policy Institute (EPI, 2020) expressed disappointment at the government's 2021/22 Spending Review, which provides no additional funding for catch-up beyond this academic year. If the distribution of catch-up funding remains unchanged, disadvantaged pupils will not receive what they need to compensate for their lost learning.

Additionally, research reveals the negative economic and health impact of the pandemic hits disadvantaged communities the hardest, exacerbating existing inequalities (Blundell et al., 2020). Not only will wealthier parents be more likely to have higher education levels to support their children's studies, but they are also more likely to be able to work from home and cover unforeseen expenditures created by the crisis (Blundell et al., 2020 p.293). As MP David Laws argues, these are economic issues beyond the narrow control of the DfE and require intervention at a wider government level to address inequality in the UK (Pearson UK Learning, 2020). However, it is not only economic and material inequality that produces the attainment gap between wealthier and poorer pupils. Drawing on Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital (1974) and a number of qualitative studies exploring the relationship between class, culture, and educational attainment, Simone Scherger and Mike Savage (2010, p.409) argue that middle class parents possess a more comprehensive understanding of the education system and can use their cultural capital as well as their economic capital to improve the attainment of their children.

Furthermore, parental attitudes can frame how children perceive education, impacting the pupil's self-perception as a learner (Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003, p.35). As teachers are in significantly less contact with their pupils during the pandemic (Sharp et al., 2020: 15), parents and pupils need to take responsibility to structure the school day when learning from home and manage independent additional catch-up work. Even with the appropriate technology, internet access, and educational materials at home, if parents lack the confidence and experience in what is necessary for educational achievement, a disparity of attainment will still emerge between households.

In conclusion, school closures are predicted to reverse recent improvements in the attainment gap and disproportionately affect disadvantaged pupils, primarily due to the nature of their home environment. The crucial factors of an effective home learning environment include access to equipment such as laptops, space in the home to work, and support from family members to complete school work. Though the DfE has provided equipment to disadvantaged pupils, they have been criticised for not providing this support quickly, effectively, and sustainably enough to truly support pupils and match the pace of the detrimental impacts of school closures on attainment.

Urgent and focused catch-up tuition has been prioritised as a solution for the widening attainment gap, and the government has pledged £1bn in funding. Unfortunately, this funding has not been distributed to provide disadvantaged pupils with the additional support they require. Besides economic disadvantages, the attainment gap is also widened by the home environment and parental attitudes towards education. As children are spending exceptional amounts of time learning at home, schools must understand how pupils are affected by the outlook towards education held by parents and guardians. Moreover, inequality is being exacerbated by the economic impact of the pandemic, which has been proven to more negatively impact poorer households. As we move forward through this crisis, it is vital for educators to understand the realities of our most disadvantaged pupils and advocate for policies, funding, and teaching and assessment methods that acknowledge these experiences.

Part 2 – The Transformative Potential for Education amidst and Following Covid-19 Disruptions 2020-21

As secondary schools in the UK continue to deliver lessons remotely and in-person during the Covid-19 pandemic, teachers are experiencing a lack of pupils' motivation and a loss of curriculum coverage. Early studies revealed a substantial deficit in curriculum coverage due to the disruptions (Lucas et al., 2020), while surveys of teachers and parents in England show many pupils are not engaging with remote learning (Andrew et al., 2020). Additionally, disadvantaged pupils seem to be learning less than their peers, resulting in growing concerns about the widening attainment gap (EEF, 2020). Leaders in the sector suggest technology must be used intelligently by educators to encourage engagement (Pearson Learning UK, 2020) and effective remote teaching is the best way to compensate for these losses (EEF, 2020 p.4). Unfortunately, emergency remote teaching and learning on this scale is unprecedented, and there is little evidence for guidance on what it looks like when implemented effectively. As delays to schools reopening commence this January, and unions launch legal action in their battle for additional closures (Cowburn, 2021), remote teaching is no longer an emergency measure but a necessary part of education for the foreseeable future. Therefore, we must begin to seriously consider ways to make remote teaching meaningful and impactful for young people.

It is argued that the principles at the core of good teaching and learning in the classroom should not alter when moved online, for example, differentiation, scaffolding, and formative assessment (EEF, 2020; OECD, 2020). While this may be true in theory, there are some limitations to the remote learning environment, meaning these principles aren't easily put into practice. For example, many schools require pupils to have their cameras turned off according to the school's safeguarding or behaviour management policy. Not being able to see the work pupils are producing inhibits the teacher from providing support and feedback. There is also an 'affective' issue in the use of technology, referring to the varying attitudes both teachers and pupils hold towards working online (Jones and Issroff, 2006: 190). Live teaching via video conference has been proven to be more effective than autonomous learning packs (Andrew et al., 2020: 670). However, is five hours of teacher-led video conference lessons per day an effective way for pupils to spend two weeks of home learning during self-isolation? 'Zoom fatigue' is an acknowledged phenomenon (Lee, 2020), and arguably even the most driven pupils would struggle to maintain engagement. "We know in class that the best model for learning is not when kids are sitting and listening to a lesson for 45 minutes straight," says Education Technology specialist Carla Aerts, an, "And when you do that online through Zoom or Google Classrooms, that's not going to work either." (Mohta, 2020).

One way to address this is by recreating in-class grouping within video conference lessons, an effective classroom teaching method (Department for Education, 2006). Teachers can utilise the available features of remote learning technology to enable collaboration between pupils, for example, the 'breakout room' feature available in Microsoft

Teams. These features can improve the quality of remote teaching and compensate for the lack of group work in education due to social distancing. However, training must be readily available for teachers to understand the functions of technology and implement them effectively, as studies reveal some teachers lack the confidence and understanding to use digital technology in sophisticated ways (Ferri, Grifoni and Guzzo, 2020).

Using technology and collaboration to improve teaching

While the priority is the re-engagement of pupils, there has also been a call for a 'renewal' (UNESCO, 2020: 8) or a 'rewire' (OECD, 2020: 4) of education during this crisis. Before the pandemic, research found teachers' workload to be disproportionately burdened with lesson and resource planning (Independent Teacher Workload Review Group, 2016), a burden that has only increased during the pandemic (Lough, 2020). Recent reports suggest there could be substantial benefits to sharing resources across schools (Sharp et al., 2020). One example of this in practice is Oak National Academy, an online hub providing free resources and lessons for classes from KS1-4. Created in response to school closures during the first lockdown, Oak National Academy has been utilised by teachers across the country far more than first envisioned (Whittaker, 2020). Through resource sharing, teachers can lighten the burden of lesson preparation while ensuring pupils can access high-quality resources at home and during cover lessons. This allows teachers more time to give pupils the individualised support that studies show is crucial to raising attainment (EEF, 2020).

Furthermore, a sustained exchange of resources could offer a meaningful development within subject pedagogy and best teaching practices. Transparency and collaboration between educators nationally and internationally could lead to the 'renewal' and 'rewire' being called for, as it works in opposition to the current competitive performance culture of schools, which focuses on league tables as the measure of educational success (Facer, 2011: 20-21). As exams are cancelled again this year (Lough, 2020), the framework of the school experience for young people is being transformed. Could this mark a shift towards a more collective and less individualised stance on education?

"Change is now a constant condition in our education system… We have to ask ourselves whether we want a mere 'retooling' of teacher competencies for specific purposes, or an approach that supports a Renaissance in teacher development for an uncertain future."

(Futurelab, 2006: 39)

As this pertinent quote reveals, a new approach to education that is contemporaneous with a globalised society has been long advocated for before now. In a recent article, UNESCO argue that the pandemic offers the opportunity for 'deep reflection on the curriculum' and, post-Covid, education must be broadened to meet the "changing contexts of contemporary society" (UNESCO, 2020: 18). Published in January 2020 on the brink of the pandemic, the World Economic Forum advocated for interactive teaching and digital literacy: "Many education systems still rely heavily on passive forms of learning focused on direct instruction and memorisation, rather than interactive methods that promote the critical and individual thinking needed in today's innovation-driven economy." (World Economic Forum, 2020: 5-6).

From this perspective, this current requirement for remote learning could update how we educate young people in ways suitable for the digital world around them. Furthermore, technology can offer the opportunity to take a cross-curriculum approach to education. Keri Facer argues that, as digitisation allows the integration of multiple phenomena, communication in the digital landscape requires us to be fluent in 'multiple literacies', and contemporary education for young people must break out of subject isolation (2011: 70-71). Educating young people via interactive and integrated engagements with technology has been an endeavour long before this crisis, and arguably the pandemic has offered educators the opportunity to achieve this.

Fautley and Savage (2011: 111) argue technology has the potential to act as a bridge between subject cultures and advocate for teachers to foster a 'playful engagement' with the possibilities technology can offer to challenge and enrich traditional teaching and learning approaches. This resonates with Jones and Issroff (2006: 191), who argue that computer-supported, collaborative learning focusing on play can 'deschool' education by bridging home and school life, allowing pupils to develop a sense of intrinsic motivation. They come to this conclusion firstly by drawing on Crook (2000), who argues that collaboration and motivation are strongly related due to the distinct emotional facet of shared meaning (Jones and Issroff, 2006, p. 194). When pupils are in school, this sense of shared meaning manifests in the classroom, a physical space with the intended purpose of learning. Through innovative use of technology while remote learning, play, and collaboration are combined to produce the shared meaning and autonomy critical for motivation while pupils are isolating at home.

In conclusion, remote teaching should uphold the fundamental principles of good teaching practice, such as differentiation, scaffolding, and feedback. While there are limitations to the remote teaching environment that can impede this, features of video conference apps to make lessons more personalised and interactive can be utilised effectively. Additionally, many educators and institutions are sharing resources free for use internationally, and teachers should capitalise on this to lighten the burden of their increased workload. Moreover, we must not view this period as a temporary inconvenience but should embrace the transformative opportunity remote teaching offers by exploring the creative potential within multifunctional, digital technologies. As established forms of examination and grading cease to exist during these times, building intrinsic motivation and a holistic approach to learning is essential for our young people. Some teachers may be concerned that an innovative approach to remote teaching education could result in a loss in subject curriculum, but this is already an existing limitation in the current approach. By updating and integrating the curriculum through technology, we may motivate our pupils to engage and produce digitally literate young people and innovate pedagogical practices within our subjects. However, the crucial issue remains that many pupils in the UK do not have access to the necessary space and resources at home (Andrew et al., 2020), and remote teaching is no substitute for pupils being in school. As UNESCO (2020: 15) state, the 'collective living' of schools cannot be replaced. Nevertheless, post-Covid, we must expect 'increasingly hybridised' forms of teaching and learning. Ultimately, this is an unpredictable time that offers great challenge, but may also be a catalyst for necessary change.

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From mathematician to all-rounder - an autoethnographic account of training to teach and evolving identities

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I am a qualified Primary school teacher currently studying for an MA in Education. My journey to get here was not straight forward; this contribution will offer an autoethnographic account of how my own experiences contributed to the development and growth of my teacher identity. It draws from the findings of my dissertation and reflection on my own experiences of learning to teach.

Autoethnography is a biographic methodology which seeks to explore personal experiences by placing the writer at the heart of the research (Cohen et al., 2018, p.297). I aim to offer a holistic account of events which are personal and subjective. It is said that autoethnography promotes a process of self-exploration; this is helpful in the context of teacher training as it enables teacher trainers to understand the factors which impact the preparation of teachers most significantly (Starr, 2010, p.1).

The experiences I had along the way and the lessons I learnt shaped both my personal identity and professional identity as a teacher. I initially chose to study mathematics (maths) with the intention of training to teach on completion. After one year I made the decision to move from training to teach secondary maths to primary teaching. I needed to adjust to teaching primary-aged children and a curriculum that was much broader than a single-subject curriculum and featured several subjects that I was less confident with. During my course I continued to identify as a mathematician and would choose to teach maths over other subjects. I was curious as to why this was still the case; as a result, I chose to research teacher identity and what influences it has for my undergraduate dissertation – with a specific focus on the teaching of maths.

I have wanted to be a teacher since I was at primary school. My personality was one that very much suited the school environment and teaching. I was enthused by education and learning and was often labelled at school as a 'teacher's pet' or 'nerd'. I had strong relationships with many of my teachers, perhaps because I was interested in what they were teaching, or perhaps because they appreciated my enthusiasm. My peers perceived me as 'the smart one' and someone who would always know the answers (although that assumption was not quite as accurate as they may have liked to believe). In a stereotypical sense, I was almost the ideal candidate for teaching – I enjoyed school, I liked helping people, I achieved good grades and I loved stationary! However, teaching and the identity of a teacher is not quite so simple.

Identity has, for many years, been a concept which has intrigued me. When growing up, it is common for young children and teenagers to experiences many shifts in their identity and they continue growing, learning and figuring out the type of person they would like to be (McLean and Pasupathi, 2012, p.9). The definition of identity is contested, and researchers are yet to distinguish a universally agreed definition. Simply put, 'identity' refers to how an individual perceives themselves, or is perceived by others (Pollard, 2014, p.99). Wenger's (1998) definition of identity highlights that social experiences with others are a vital element of identity formation. Furthermore, it is important to recognise how social constructs relating to aspects such as gender, ethnicity and class shape an individuals' self-perceptions (Sirna *et al.*, 2010, p.72)

In my school, I considered many of my teachers as role models and learnt, both academically and socially from the behaviours they displayed. In particular, I had two maths teachers who I was very fond of. They realised that I had potential to achieve very well in maths and praised my effort and enthusiasm for the subject. This appealed to my inner-child who craved the positive attention, and was motivated to work harder to receive it. Behavioural learning

theories suggests learning occurs through rewarding desired behaviours, such as active engagement in lessons or good test scores (Wray, 2010, p.42). In my case, the attention and praise I received from my teachers, as well as my own satisfaction from achieving good grades continued to positively reinforce my relationship with maths.

In the latter years of secondary school, I began volunteering at a local infant school and helping with maths interventions. This enabled me to observe more lessons and consciously understand common approaches and methods to teaching maths. I volunteered in one teacher's class, following her as she moved around the year groups – for six years. During this time, we established a very strong professional relationship and mutual respect. This teacher provided me with opportunities to increase my responsibilities and provided me with a safe environment and the support to experiment with teaching and take on more responsibility, whilst still being available should I need more support (Whewell, 2020, p.3).

Whilst I was studying for my A Levels, I began tutoring children aged 4-16 years in maths and English. I learnt that talk, reasoning and problem solving are essential to successful teaching and learning of maths and tutoring provided me with the opportunity to develop these skills beyond that which had been enabled by the curriculum (Hansen and Ahir, 2014, p.185). The children I tutored were diverse in their age, attainment and individual needs and there were many for whom maths was extremely challenging. I needed to be able to break down methods into chunks that the children could understand and that would make the learning accessible to them. In many cases this involved making use of concrete and pictorial resources – later in my teaching journey I discovered the theory behind why this approach aid learning by supporting children through concrete, pictorial and abstract methods (Hansen and Ahir, 2014, p.179).

During my sixth form years, the maths department in my school were fully supportive of my prospective career as a secondary maths teacher and provided me with a myriad of extra-curricular opportunities including taking part in national maths challenges and becoming a subject ambassador for maths. Maths became a significant aspect of my identity and I became known by teachers, friends and family as a 'maths person' and as maths being 'my subject'. I took pride in my mathematical achievements – obtaining A*s in GCSE maths and further maths, and A* in A level maths and an A in A level further maths as well as the only gold certificate in my year group for the secondary maths challenge. My passion for learning and teaching very much narrowed to maths and I wanted to learn more and more maths. In retrospect, this was proved consequential when I later drifted away from teaching maths as my areas of expertise were less broad which resulted in a lot of cognitive conflict and turmoil in my identity which had been very secure until that point (Whewell, 2020, p.3).

After one year of my degree, I decided that I could no longer continue with the course. I was devastated to be leaving maths behind and looked for alternative courses. This was unsettling, particularly for my identity, and I felt like I had failed my journey to teaching. I made the decision to train to teach in primary education ages 5-11 and use my experiences gained from volunteering. Unlike secondary maths teaching, primary education requires teachers to have subject and curriculum knowledge for all fourteen subject areas and primary teachers are likely to have sub-identities that relate to each subject (Whewell, 2020). The transition from secondary maths to primary teaching created cognitive conflict between the identity that I had, and the identity that primary teaching required (Waxer and Morton, 2012). Postmodernist views recognise identity as 'dynamic', 'fluid' and 'interchangeable', which is understandable if it is assumed that social environments and interactions, which are ever-changing, influence identity (Akkerman and Meijer, 2011, p.310). During this period of significant change, I was able to notice how much my identity was evolving.

As I progressed through my teacher training, I began to understand that I not only had a personal identity but also a teacher identity. Beijaard *et al*. (2000) postulate teacher identity is an amalgamation of the professional knowledge teachers require, including subject knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and curriculum knowledge. Teacher identity

is thought to impact trainees' resilience, confidence and their adaptability and openness to new approaches (Lamote and Engels, 2010, p.4). Mullen alludes to the affective nature of teacher identity construction, suggesting emotional components are highly influential (2007). Literature indicates teachers' personal and professional experiences influence teacher identity and can inform their values and approaches (Lamote and Engels, 2010, p.7). This can stem from childhood, where interactions with significant figures such as parents and teachers can hold substantial influential on individuals (Whewell, 2020).

Literature pertaining to maths teaching indicates that strong subject knowledge is key to trainee teachers achieving secure conceptual understanding by enabling them to explain *why* methods work as well as *how* (Ofsted, 2013, p.2). Despite this, Grigg suggests that too many trainee teachers continue to lack the knowledge and confidence to teach maths effectively (2015, p.168). Maths is characterised by a 'strong, disciplinary focus' and socioeconomic importance (de Freitas, 2008, p.50). In many cases, this conceptualisation has resulted in the belief that those who are good at maths are 'clever' and people either understand it or they do not. Hodgen and Askew found that negative experiences of maths stimulated a shift in teacher identity as trainees become more motivated to overcome their experiences and become more effective maths teachers (2007, p.484). Boaler and Greeno (2000) suggest that teachers who find maths 'easier' are more likely to employ procedural and didactic approaches to teaching which can reinforce the perception of maths as 'boring' and 'irrelevant'.

The aim of my dissertation research was to ascertain the main factors that influence trainee teachers' identity and find the words and images most commonly used by trainees to describe their identities as maths teachers. The sample consisted of third year BA Primary Education students who were selected using a purposive sampling strategy, which is a non-random method that targets participants based on desired characteristics (Robinson, 2014, p.32). The research adhered to BERA ethical guidelines and ethically approved by my dissertation supervisor; all participants provided their informed consent and data was stored securely (BERA, 2018).

The study employed qualitative methods which produce more detailed data from the participants (Walliman, 2011, p.192). Interviews, which focused on investigating trainees' perceptions of teacher identity, were conducted with a small number of students. During the interviews, the trainees were asked to draw an annotated image of a model maths teacher – following an approach like the 'Draw a Scientist' studies (Chambers, 1983). Trainees were also questioned on their understanding of teacher identity and asked to identify factors which influence it.

The transcripts were analysed using open-coding, whereby the first round of coding sought to identify broader themes from which the specific codes were determined. Subsequent rounds of coding sought to delve deeper into each theme (Bergin, 2018, p.156). The content of the interviews was condensed into 'trainee stories' which were composed by selecting quotes from the interviews and synthesising these into a narrative about the trainee. The stories provide a holistic, first-hand account of how different factors impact trainees, both personally and professionally (de Freitas, 2008, p.50). The trainee stories are accompanied by images of a maths teacher, which were drawn by trainees at the beginning of the interviews.

Interview 1 – Trainee 1's story

I am a 21-year-old, female, third-year Primary Education student with a specialism in PE.

I've drawn what I think is a model maths teacher. I think that maths teachers are 'organised', 'intelligent', 'passionate', 'engaging' and also have a 'sound knowledge of maths'. I have drawn the maths teacher as 'both male and female', as they can be either. My maths teacher 'looks very smart', they are wearing a shirt and 'have glasses' .

In regards to my own teacher identity, 'I wouldn't class myself as being that intelligent' and whilst I have a 'good level of skill' to teach maths, 'I'm a PE specialist so I'm stronger with PE and a lot more confident'. In my own experience of maths I've always been 'in the mid-range' an I've never been 'smart' at maths, which was the case 'all the way through my schooling'. I think all of these factors impact my identity as a teacher. In regards to consistency of my teacher identity, I would like it to be consistent across subjects but I don't think it is - I am 'less confident' in teaching maths.

I think that my teacher identity and self-efficacy have 'changed completely' during my teacher training. in maths, I've been able to 'get a feel for what I should be doing' in teaching maths and develop my understanding of maths-specific pedagogy 'which I wouldn't have known before'. My confidence has 'definitely gone up'.
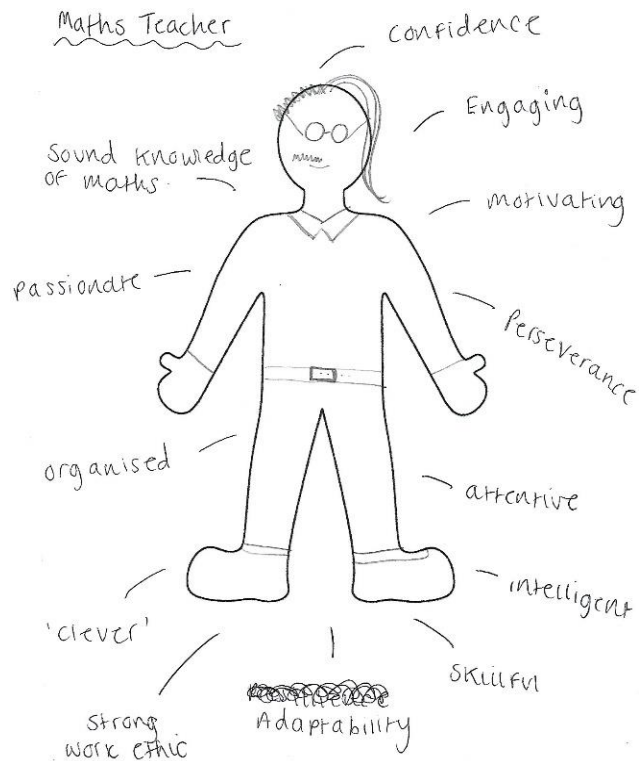

Figure 1: Trainee 1's story

Interview 2 – Trainee 2's story

I am a 23-year-old, female, third-year Primary Education student with a specialism in English.

I have drawn a maths teacher, who is 'a lady'; I think part of the reason I envision female teachers is 'because I've always had female teachers'. I have identified that a model maths teacher should 'demonstrate good subject knowledge' and should be able to plan lessons well to ensure they are 'engaging' and show 'clear progression'. It is important that a maths teacher can 'plan for misconceptions' and use regular 'formative assessment' and feedback to support children's learning. Another important feature of maths teachers is their use of a range of 'concrete, pictorial and abstract approaches'.

I do feel that I relate to the image of the maths teacher. I've always had a 'positive perception' of maths and 'always enjoyed maths'. I have more knowledge of what makes an 'outstanding maths teacher' than I do for many other subjects and I've had 'a lot more experience teaching maths'. In terms of my teacher identity, I think it's important to 'celebrat[e] mistakes' children make to reassure them. Teacher training has 'really improved' my ability to teach maths and I feel like I especially improved on my last school placement.
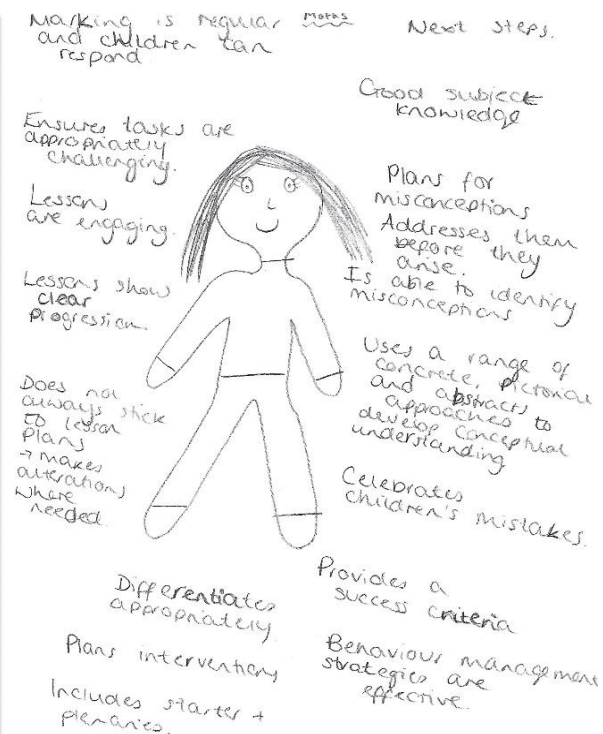

Figure 2: Trainee 2's story

Trainees discussed the elements which they believe contribute to teacher identity. Subject knowledge (which includes pedagogical knowledge, in the context of this research) was the most frequently occurring code in the transcripts, suggesting it is one of the most important influences. Two trainees refer to the generalist nature of primary teaching, confidence in different subjects, and one's attitude towards them. This is what would be called one's '*teacher identity'.* The two other frequent codes referred to personal experience and teaching experience. Several trainees described negative educational experiences and pressures they felt in school. These experiences resulted in lower self-efficacy in the subjects and negative maths teacher identities.

In the drawings of maths teachers, Trainee 1 visualised their maths teacher wearing glasses and a shirt (Figure 1). This was a visual identity which I, myself, related too – I was very much the smartly dressed student with glasses at school. However, it would be inaccurate and inappropriate to conceptualise the identity of a maths teacher purely on their appearance. Trainee 2 focused more on the personality traits of maths teachers, describing their teachers as '*organised'* and '*intelligent'* and placing more emphasis on the teacher's pedagogical approaches (Figure 2). It was evident that their negative experiences of maths at school had resulted in a disconnect with the subject. Regarding their own teacher identities, Trainee 1 affirmed they would not class themselves as '*intelligent'* and had been in the '*mid-range'* in maths at school, this perception continued through to how they felt when teaching maths (Figure 1). Trainee 2 presented a contrasting profile, describing their '*positive perception'* and enjoyment of maths. Their preference for maths is evident in the detail in which they discuss it and (Figure 2) in both cases, the trainees' dialogue conformed in many ways to the maths identities they described.

A significant influence on identity which was alluded to by the trainees was self-efficacy. Trainees noted that their personal traits were significant in their perceived ability to teach certain subjects; one trainee identified '*creativity'* as a prominent element of their identity, perceiving themselves to be less confident in teaching subjects which were viewed as more structured, such as maths. Furthermore, trainees identified factors which influence self-efficacy, many of which were similar to those which affect teacher identity. The factors included subject knowledge, personal experience and teaching experience, and trainees referred, on multiple occasions, to the impact of their own experiences on their self-efficacy. With these factors being similar to those that were said to influence identity, they suggested that the two concepts are intrinsically linked – a finding corroborated by Lamote and Engels who suggest trainees' self-perception impacts their resilience as a teacher (2010, p.4)

This journey has been significant for myself in growing comfortable with my identity as a teacher, a mathematician and currently a researcher. Like myself, my participant's relationship with maths and their subsequent maths teacher identities had impacted by their own school experience of maths. Those who had enjoyed maths described having strong subject knowledge which contributed to the effectiveness of their teaching; conversely, those who had negative experiences of the subject retained the negative emotions and were less motivated to engage with improving their curriculum and pedagogical knowledge. This experience is not unique to maths and maths education and a consideration for trainees and teacher training providers is the deep-rooted impact that prior experiences (both positive and negative) can have on subsequent identity and efficacy.

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