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WELCOME FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the third volume of the Birmingham City University (BCU) Education Journal Magazine (EJM) and the second edition of this academic year. This edition contains several articles from a variety of sources, ranging from students, ex-students, academics and teaching professionals.

In this edition, to celebrate the start of our third year, you will find a brand new design, courtesy of one of our design technicians, Paul Atkinson. We hope you find this new design more appealing and engaging when reading or sharing the journal.

As for all winter editions, it can often be a challenge to gain inputs from authors; so I'm pleased to write that we have had a fantastic choice of articles submitted for this edition. The articles submitted vary widely in theme and topic, but also regarding who the author is. We have articles from our student population – namely our postgraduate courses (including a brilliant article from one of our international students based in Bangalore), plus also teaching colleagues within our partnership and also fellow higher education colleagues from institutions across the country.

Best wishes

Grant Huddleston

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

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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/school – 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" (including references lists).
- 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 receive a copy back if any major changes have been made for you to proofread.

RESEARCH PAPERS

ENQUIRY AND SUPPORT WITHIN THE PARTNERSHIP

"Education and reading are circular – the more a person has of one, the better the development of the other": An Investigation into how poetry can nurture and develop students' falling relationship with Reading for Pleasure

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Research is vastly accumulating that suggests a growing number of young people do not read for pleasure – specifically children from lower socio-economic backgrounds read less for enjoyment than children from more privileged social classes – and they especially do not read poetry (Clark, 2006). Yet the OECD (2002) reported that reading for pleasure was a "greater predictor of academic attainment than family socio-economic status". A survey from Nestle (2003) reported that only 16% of pupils read daily. Specifically, in disadvantaged schools, when pupils struggle to read, this can lead to strong negative feelings about reading and create a vicious circle in which poor readers remain poor readers whilst the educational gap remains intact (Baker, 2002). Studies have shown how almost a third of Black, Asian or minority ethnic young people believed that 'the books I study in English Literature make me feel like I don't belong', as opposed to 14.5% of White students (Lit in Colour, 2020:18). Representation – or lack of it – in schools' curriculums is felt on a personal level by our young people. Kneen et al (2021) is completing a UKLA funded research auditing KS3 reading in 170 schools, related to their location, background and thus, their "community". Kneen has already highlighted how only 2 poets of colour appeared across the 170 schools (Maya Angelou and John Agard). Additionally, when asked to name "six good poets" many teachers in his research were unable to name six – suggesting a level of discomfort among teachers when reading poetry. Indeed, studies have found that teachers of children in the U.K. do not read poetry for themselves and know only a tiny number of poems/poets, leading to a lack of confidence teaching poetry (Certo, 2019). The value of poetry within the wider community is severely lacking – even for teachers, as Kneen's research has already begun to hint at. But where does this ignorance towards the pleasure of poetry come from, and how can teachers instil a love of reading if they do not hold that love themselves? Well, they can reach out to those who do for support, guidance, and resources.

The Reading Connects Survey (2005) asked students which activities they would like to do to help themselves read more; and among the answers, meeting authors and reading games were the two most frequently chosen activities. Guest poets have been found to highly influence children's relationship with poetry: Wolf (2006) found that when children participated in a workshop with a visiting poet, children began to enjoy poetry more fully. Bernadine Evaristo (2020), the first black woman to win the booker prize in its 50-year history, believes that for too long, the voices in English Literature were "predominantly male, mostly middle-class, and almost entirely white [...] this demographic was considered more important than any other and their voices were prioritised". Therefore, she implores that to rescind this injustice, we must offer students voices that reflect their own multiple, rich, communities and cultures to truly inspire, engage and foster enjoyment of reading poetry. As Lit in Colour reminds us, students have never been "given the opportunity to see their lived experiences reflected in the stories we share with them" (2020:9).

There is, currently, a critical underrepresentation of writers of colour in the English curriculum. Ramdarshan (2019) has noted that young Black and Asian students often feel they can only write about White characters because that was all they had been exposed to in school. Similarly, the Missing Pages report (TF, 2020:7) emphasised the importance of students seeing themselves represented in their curriculum through "literature written by ethnic minority authors". And how better to "see themselves" than to be taught how to enjoy poetry by someone from their own, rich culture and community. Lemov (2015:314) reminds us that it is our job as teachers to choose activities that are not "just food, but whether [they're] best" in particular best for "that moment, that group of students, and that lesson". For teachers then, creating an opportunity within our classroom for visiting poets/authors is a uniquely effective opportunity to engage our students in poetry, and provide them with space to find their own voice and identity within poetry and the community within which they each belong – we must empower students and allow them to gain confidence by seeing poets like themselves.

Through my research, I found several notable Black and Asian British writers who have published successful memoirs, which include significant reflections on their school lives and educational experiences: including Akala, 2019; Hirsch, 2018; and Eddo-Lodge, 2017. The consensus across these memoirs is a sense of feeling unrepresented by what is read in school – even feeling "subjected to erasure" (Olufemi, 2019:56). Kara (2017:15) reflects on the moment in school where she realised she "didn't fit into the narrative of England" and yet as a student of literature she was "desperate" to find a place she belonged. With careful consideration, I began to consider how I could address this injustice in what my students are reading – because how can I promote reading for pleasure if I chose only poems that alienate and erase. Indeed, the Moving English Forward (2012) report believes that "too few schools gave enough thought to ways of encouraging the love of reading".

Certo (2019) tells us often that pleasure is absolutely the way into poetry. Yet so much of poetry in school is read only to be analysed, to identify devices and features and be able to write comparative essays – nothing about enjoyment. Pullman

(2003) observed that when reading through the National Curriculum for English:

I was struck by something about the verbs. They included "reinforce", "predict", "check", "discuss" ... and so on: 71 different verbs, by my count, for the activities that come under the heading of "reading". And the word "enjoy" didn't appear once.

When we examine the possible causes of a decline in reading enjoyment, it seems this is an emerging answer. Children's author Chris Powling argues strongly against the rigid way in we teach poetry in schools that discourages children from reading for pleasure at all (2003). Dymoke (2015:89) similarly sees "a tension between appropriate poetry pedagogy and the high stakes assessment focus that many schools use to underpin poetry teaching". However, the current National Curriculum for English is not the only factor in declining reading enjoyment. Sainsbury and Schagen (2004) concede that modern advances in technology may have caused this change in reading attitudes – reminding us that many young people's households have more televisions than books.

When choosing which poems to use in the classroom, Certo argues that the choice of poem is of critical importance: poetry too complex or too abstract could turn students off (2017). Indeed, Webb (2019:96) believes that poetry is notoriously difficult for children, especially when open to a wide range of interpretations – thus refusing a "right" answer – they are often designed to be "complex and challenging". However, Bleiman (2020:44) opposingly states that challenging poems are key, and poems which deal with "momentous issues [...] can open up in pupils a spring of emotional, intellectual, and cultural excitement." Indeed, in the 2015 Ofsted survey (KS3: The Wasted Years), it was noted that schools need to do more to "ensure that the curriculum provides sufficient challenge for the most able" – echoing Bleiman's words. Clearly, there is a narrow tightrope teachers must traverse between selecting poems momentous enough to be enjoyed, but not too momentous as to "turn students off". Whilst agreeing with Bleiman's ethos of using challenging poems to increase enjoyment, Certo's warning prompted me to provide scaffolding for my students to use (if needed) as I was crucially aware of the potential for struggling readers in my class to gain "strong negative feelings towards reading if the poems were inaccessible" – the opposite of my intentions (Baker, 2002:12).

Considering this research, it was time to reintroduce students to reading poetry purely for pleasure. For the poem selected – Search for My Tongue – I shared printed copies as poets often have very particular reasons for the way the lines, stanzas and overall poem looks on the page (Bhatt, 2017). At the start of each lesson students started to slip easily into a routine where after reading the poem, I said to the students: "I want you to turn and talk to your partner, tell them what you liked about this poem", as influenced by Brighten Lines (TLAC) – significantly, there was no expectation for the poem to be analysed at any point.

Research consistently indicates that one of the most effective strategies for fostering reading for pleasure is the creation of a classroom library (Neuman, 2001). However, I had noticed there was a sense of "shame" surrounding reading with older students. Baker (2003:525) believes that students left with "low aspirations" in disadvantaged areas is one of the biggest barriers to closing the "educational attainment gaps", and these low aspirations lead to low self-esteem and this sense of "shame" around their learning. Merga et al (2018:37) believes that simply "providing opportunities for discussion around reading could raise the social status of reading". When creating a classroom library, many of my students had noticed the bookshelf, but not a single student had commented on it. After I opened the conversations and told them they were my books I had brought in for them, many of them started to look intrigued – and in the last term four students have taken a book home, with one student on her third book. Alongside the poetry books on the bookshelf, I did also include fiction texts as other options, as a classroom library filled with only poetry books would be a highly ambitious endeavour. When choosing which poems and books to include, I was overtly aware that diversity was key – as poetry should not or alienate by placing any student's culture as "other". Rogers (2015) explains how before 2015, our curriculum framed many of our students' cultures as "other", ensuring a systematic alienation and erasure of many students' sense of belonging when their defining feature becomes being "other". This stance systematically perpetuates the "deficit model" – the belief that what students' bring from their own communities and culture is "less" that the cultures they study, suggesting that these children have no culture, or alternatively the culture they bring is inferior. The main concern from this lack of diversity and deficit curriculum is what it does to our students' sense of identity and their relationship with their own culture and their education. Students who feel like their culture and identity is not valued in comparison to canonical culture have a detrimental effect on their sense of self and worth. Therefore, it is my core ambition in this intervention to do the complete opposite: to enrich, nurture, develop and support. Johnstone (2011) believes a correctly chosen selection of poems in the classroom can come to represent 'our' culture, not 'others' in enabling students to consider them in the context of multiracial, multicultural Britain. Research has shown that addressing the barrier of reading poetry for pleasure starts with what poems are chosen. Correctly chosen poems can create a sense of belonging and shared community regardless of different cultures ('our'). Whilst incorrectly chosen poems create a binary of 'self' and 'other' where many of my students would be isolated as 'other'. Knowing my choice of poems was crucial, I turned to Lit in Colour (2020) which offers a selection of 100 texts by writers of colour – including novels, short stories, poetry, and more.

To finish with on important note, whilst critics like Elster and Hanauer (2002) find poetry particularly well-suited to spark children's reading enjoyment; I am conscious that only ever studying BAME writers through poetry gives a particular view of what authors of colour write – insofar as to narrow their achievements and prescribe a pigeonhole to these multi-faceted, successful writers. Full novels and plays by writers of colour deserve to be awarded just as much value in the curriculum, not only poetry. I absolutely agree with Certo's desire for poetry to become a more central part of the landscape of our children's worlds (2017). However, I would also like to offer my students the chance to read more wider texts outside of the canon by BAME authors. Figures show that out of half a million students that studied English literature, only 36,920 students continued to study A level English Literature (TF, 2019:23). When investigating the sharp decline, TF found that 57.4% students surveyed agreed that "More diversity in the writers and stories we study" would inspire them to continue with English after GCSE. It is my belief that moving forward, offering a more diverse national curriculum where writers of colour – not just poets – are celebrated and

valued, will inspire more students' passion of reading and of English Literature long-term.

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Article to the government addressing the safeguarding of young Muslim students in schools

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Ever since the 9/11 attacks in the USA, there has been an increased blame culture against Muslims in the USA and the UK. This blame culture has only exponentially increased since the "trojan horse" scandal affecting several schools in Birmingham in 2014, with young Muslim students bearing the brunt of the effects (Shackle, 2017). As a result, there has been a marked rise in "Islamophobia" in the school environment especially, with research showing that Muslim children are more likely to be bullied than children of other faiths in the same schools (Ochieng, 2017).

In this article, I will delve into the safeguarding of Muslim students in schools, analysing the effects current measures have on students' learning and wellbeing.

Fundamental British values (FBVs)

One way of looking at FBVs is through Crawford's analysis of FBVs in schools (Crawford, 2017). Crawford argued that these values in schools are racially coded, create an environment that promotes white native superiority and lead to the creation of spaces that are unsafe for non-natives, particularly young

Muslims (Crawford, 2017). While this publication is rather one-sided against the use of the FBVs, it does, however, shed a light on the negative effects these values have on schools. This is to say that the implementation of FBVs has only created a divide between natives and non-natives, where young Muslims are being segregated from other students due to their faith. Safeguarding involves the protection of all students, but the integration of FBVs has led to the isolation of young Muslims.

This approach taken by Crawford focuses on the hegemonic nature of these FBVs. A consequence of these authoritarian values integrated into schools has led to the inappropriate judgment of young Muslims in schools as a "potential terrorist". The stereotypical nature of these values has done little to counter the threat of terrorism in schools and has only made young Muslim students vulnerable. This critical perspective from Crawford suggests that care must be taken when these values are implemented in schools, because it could lead to the further oppression of young Muslims, rather than creating an environment that is equal and safe for all.

In the Government's 2010 Equalities Act, duties are placed upon bodies, like schools, to eliminate discrimination and harassment but the implementation of FBVs creates an environment that is discriminatory towards Muslims, and its thereby harassment and oppression towards young Muslim students stems from it (Department for Education, 2014).

On the other hand, Pattison's analytical reflection supports the integration of FBVs into everyday practice in schools, with him deeming that schools are a good place to instil these values (Pattison, 2020). Albeit a personalised piece with little specific focus on schools themselves, Pattison's contradictory views to Crawford show that there is some positivity about FBVs.

Caution must be used when implementing FBVs in schools due to the segregation it could create. Although my personal experiences in the classroom have not seen this separation of "natives" and "non-natives" via the use of FBVs, there is a chance that divide could be seen if a cautious approach is not taken, leading to the possible oppression of a protected group. As a result, young Muslims will not have been adequately safeguarded in schools.

Language in schools

Another instance where the safeguarding and protection of Muslim students in schools come to the fore is via Islamophobic language utilised in school. Islamophobia is defined as "indiscriminate negative attitudes or emotions directed at Islam or Muslims" (Bleich, 2011). This definition was echoed by Chakraborti and Zempi where a fear of Islam that "translates into ideological and material forms of cultural racism" (Chakraborti and Zempi, 2012). For instance, the picturing of a male Asian or Arab person dressed in Islamic attire and students may jump to ideas such as the calling of this person as a "bomber" or "terrorist" as a way of feeling threatened by their presence.

Over the years, schools, particularly secondary schools, have incorporated changes to their school-wide curriculum and school policies to flush out this hatred and dislike towards Muslims via Islamophobic means. For example, a workshop by 2020 Dreams focused on challenging misconceptions regarding young Muslims and Islam itself (2020 Dreams, n.d.). In most cases, secondary schools have revamped their curriculum to incorporate this. But is the implementation of changes at the secondary school level appropriate? Is it too 'late' at this point? Research from Aboud and Fenwick has detailed that children can exhibit racist attitudes as early as preschool, from ages as early as nine (Aboud and Fenwick, 1999). Although research in this study was only conducted for 11 weeks, conclusive results were seen about the reduction in prejudice in the high prejudice group following this program. This research conflicts with current practice seen in schools, where the integration of specific education about racism usually begins at the age of 11 in year 7, two years later than the preadolescent period indicated by Aboud and Fenwick (Aboud and Fenwick, 1999). Between the ages of eight and ten, children learn and develop multiple life skills such as mentally being able to separate, order, and transform and it is ultimately a key step in the development into teenagers (Anthony, n.d.). Therefore, greater emphasis on education and training needs to be put on during this period to challenge and correct misinformation.

Correcting and countering misinformation is common in schools, where students are taught concepts that oppose their beliefs during development as a child. Aoudeh and Saleh argue that this is not enough to challenge Islamophobia (Aoudeh and Saleh, 2021). The point of view taken by Aoudeh and Saleh is that education about Islam in schools is performed, but little is done about "discussion routed in faith and spirituality as part of identity and lived experience" (Aoudeh and Saleh, 2021). This is to say that schools do not target the root cause of the problem at hand, and instead, brush over the problem and make it seem as so they are addressing a critical issue, when in fact, merely teaching about religion does little to flush out the deeply engraved hatred towards Muslims in this case. From my personal experiences as a secondary school student, very little was actually challenged regarding Islamophobia. School assemblies took place with the Headteacher speaking about the issue, Islamophobia awareness week was integrated into the school's yearly calendar, but nothing of note was actually done to flush out the deep grown hatred that students had towards Muslims.

Teachers' behaviour towards Islamophobia

A common response by headteachers or governors of schools in England is that their schools are well-equipped and prepared with dealing with racism, with Islamophobia falling under this category.

This claim from leading figures in school bodies is contradicted by research from the British Youth Council in 2016 and ODIHR in 2011 (British Youth Council, 2016; ODIHR, 2011). The British Youth Council found that "teachers often dismiss incidents or are unsure how to respond effectively" while ODIHR found that "many teachers feel ill-equipped to tackle issues of Islamophobia in the classroom" (British Youth Council, 2016; ODIHR, 2011). The evidence from both studies showed the lack of teacher training and awareness of the severity of the Islamophobia in schools. The report from the British Youth Council argues that the incorporation of FBVs and tolerance of other faiths and beliefs into the teaching standards is limited in focus (British Youth Council, 2016; Department for Education, 2011). This is to say that the requirements stated in the personal and professional responsibilities of teachers are inherently individualistic, with no training on "their ability to handle issues or teach young people about the issues of racism and religious discrimination" (British Youth Council,

2016). This argument shows that the lack of teacher training and development to handle delicate but important issues like Islamophobia, detrimentally affects the safeguarding of Muslims in schools. Furthermore, the lack of training stems from the beginning, therefore greater emphasis on educating teachers must be made at the initial level, during their training years. As a result of this, there is a greater chance of oppression against Muslim students which will have effects on their physical and mental well-being (Malak, 2019).

This lack of training is contradicted by Gibb in response to a question to parliament, stating that due to teachers' requirement to meet the teaching standards, their training and development should support them in meeting part two of the standards (Gibb, 2020). While this response should be used with caution due to its opinionated nature, it does show the contrasting view that adequate training has been put into effect for teachers to have the training they need to combat important issues like islamophobia.

Clare and Knight via Brighton & Hove City Council agree with the British Youth Council and ODIHR in that their proposition to council in 2020 led to the agreement that all training offered to schools will include training on discrimination, white privilege, and institutional racism (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2020). This opposes Gibb's views since the government has been forced to step in to provide this necessary training to teachers, with Gibb deeming that current measures put in place were sufficient. From my personal experience as a student, I feel that more does need to be done in terms of increasing the quality and availability of training to tackle racism, to create a safer environment for all students.

Conclusion

Research has shown that the safeguarding and protection of young Muslims, particularly in UK schools, is paramount with not enough being done nor put in place to establish a safe, learning environment for all. Amidst the rising rates of mental health issues in the classroom combined with the lack of teacher training in dealing with issues of racism such as islamophobia, the isolation of Muslims in schools is increasing. The embedding of adequate training to teachers as well as education to all can create a positive, calm learning atmosphere that will benefit student well-being and learning. Students will feel safer and less segregated if deployed correctly. As a result, increased academic performance and reduced psychological distress will be seen (Oberoi and Trickett, 2018).

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A reflective dissertation that tailored the Continuous Professional Development required to educate early years teaching staff about formative assessment using a socio-emotional perspective.

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This article describes a qualitative research study that was conducted and helped me understand the difficulties faced by my teacher participants and the various elements that affected early years online formative assessment. In the hopes that my observations would increase teachers' understanding of assessment for learning in early years practise, I connected myself with a functional socio-emotional communicative model and used it to assure the best strategy to make professional development changes.

Background

School leaders still tend to train teachers using methods from the Industrial Age such as a workshop that is completely lecture based without any instructional support from the workshop presenter and mostly without any participation from the audience group, even though we live in a time of knowledge and invention, and we want teachers to innovate for their students. According to Geurkink-Coats and Regina (2019), school leaders can modernise teacher development by developing a professional development model that moves away from traditional educator development, which treats the application of new knowledge as an afterthought, and in the direction of a model that promotes applicability and rewards the transfer of new knowledge from the start. Taylor (2013) cites Wall Street Journal research that claims that businesses are searching for individuals with a combination of critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and the potential for independent thought.

Context

Singh and Quraishi (2021), who assert that students' academic performance is being hampered by their inability to adapt to the new ways of learning, fear of COVID-19 spreading, disciplinary lockdowns, and delays in regular school schedules, highlight the pandemic's impact on India's educational system. According to Barkur et al (2020), the Indian government declared a state-wide lockdown in March 2020 to stop the COVID-19 virus from spreading throughout the nation. The lockdown was a significant step at the time, but according to Brooks et al (2020), it has put the economy, work, and daily routine in jeopardy. Assessment is one of the major components of any learning process. Chigonga (2020) says that using classroom assessment to improve both teaching and student learning is not a new concept. However, a large part of teaching mathematics in the early years is basically infusing critical thinking skills into didactic activities, so teachers need to consciously integrate new knowledge with existing knowledge of mathematical content. Ginsburg (2009) believes formative assessment is more of an approach to assessment designed to obtain information that can feed into the teaching and learning process.

Critical thinking and reflection are the main competencies that were inspiring outcomes gained during the course of my master's level qualitative research-based dissertation. Professional development is meant to sharpen pedagogical knowledge and key skills such as critical thinking and reflection aid teachers in evolving in a constantly changing environment, despite the fact that school educators receive qualifications and accreditation through a university. According to Geurkink-Coats and Regina (2019), the environment is altering due to factors like technology, generational demands, or broader cultural interests.

I view my duty as Head of Centre as maintaining the Early Years Curriculum Program through extensive learning and experience in order to establish excellent early years' pedagogical approaches. Developing a critical thinking mindset is important and the dissertation study experience really benefitted me in this regard. The creation of opportunities for meaningful professional participation within my teaching staff is the next area of focus. This requirement evolved into a strategic vision that was supported by a desire to comprehend the online formative assessment environment and to also create a socially, emotionally, and sensitive approach to the professional development of teachers under my supervision.

Role of teachers

Curtis and James (2021), Moore (2002), and Froebel (1889), brought the concept of kindergarten, or children's garden, to the world. They believed that young children needed to grow naturally, stating that the best way to educate a child in the early years was through the methods of observation and active discussions held in classrooms.

Johnson (2017) asserts that there is growing demand on schools to make teachers responsible for students' academic success in order to achieve student success. This objective is still important, but McCrea (2013) asserts that the teacher's job has become more pronounced as being a sharp observer, monitor, and facilitator. Within the institution where I work, the preschool curriculum follows the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) (2007, 2009) founded curriculum, and the IB assessment policy outlines the quality standards of the early education classroom practises and principles. Moreover, the International Baccalaureate Organisation (2018) explains the Vygotskian (1978) principle by taking into consideration that a teacher functions as a facilitator who designs the learning task based on the zone of proximal development. Despite being forty-six years old, research by Wood et al (1976). emphasises the idea of scaffolding as the primary support that directs the student to learn efficiently. According to Timmis et al (2016) and Pepper (2013), the new challenges of online learning environments against traditional face-to-face instruction in the classroom are preventing full-scale application of formative assessment at educational levels. Timmis et al (2016) and Pepper (2013) state that formative assessment is limiting all-out implementation at educational levels because of the new challenges of online teaching and learning environments versus physical face-to-face teaching in class.

Role of Formative Assessment

Trumbull and Lash (2013) clarified that the purpose of formative assessment is to inform the teacher about what students are thinking and how that information can help to make the necessary changes required to attain learning goals and outcomes. Redecker and Johannessen (2013) define

formative assessment as an essential component in learning and believe that teachers need to provide students with consistent and regular detailed feedback that helps in strengthening the process of learning.

According to Beatty and Egan (2020), time spent online is impacted by external influences such as parental engagement, and therefore, teachers must strive to ensure that the content maintains its quality. Furthermore, Han and Neuharth-Pritchett (2021) hold the viewpoint that, over the years, the kindergarten curriculum serves the purpose of helping a child get ready for primary grades.

Vogt et al (2018) state that mathematics skills in pre-primary years are found to the greatest predictors for future school achievements. Even though programmes have expanded, there are limited opportunities for content areas like mathematics. Therefore, new assessment approaches are going to be required to set new information priorities to develop students' competencies. Baleni (2015) states that a good formative assessment is not easy to achieve online, possibly due to the teacher's lack of confidence in using technology-based strategies.

Liberman et al (2020) specify the importance of assessment, especially formative assessment, given the fact that students are learning online and no longer in a physical class. Therefore, school leaders can help teachers understand that assessment is not just strategies that need to be adopted, but instead teachers must explore what strategies suit their particular group of students and then explore them in order to personalise them for the students in their care. Fox (2004) advises school leaders to consistently support teachers towards making the process of assessment consistent. The main objective is for teachers to get better at what they already do every day, which is teach. When these dialogues start when each participant has a fundamental understanding of formative instructional strategies, they are most effective in class settings. The purpose of the meeting is to support teachers in adapting and developing that specific lesson plan content to suit their students. Checking if the task objectives are being fulfilled and how the pupils are reacting to the material comes next. Teachers are motivated to experiment with new methods, share their triumphs and setbacks, and offer advice to one another in a non-evaluative environment by having talks and casual conversations with the team as part of this ongoing collaborative process.

The research method

Through qualitative methodology, I collected data using semi-structured interviews and questionnaires to explore, through exploratory conversations and dialogue, what challenges the teachers faced while carrying out online formative assessments. I employed a social-experiential lens, supported by Denscombe (2017), who emphasises focusing on people's experiences, thoughts, and feelings rather than articulating the reasons behind an event or condition. The study had significant implications for teachers teaching in my school to bring about solutions and transform the way we collect data about student learning and, thereby, paved the way for other centres and other employees in similar situations.

Kitchener and Kitchener (2009) highlight that ethics in a mall-scale social study often addresses concerns such as the nature of informed consent and the privacy of information obtained. The authors believe that researchers must practice beneficence, which means doing good or benefiting others, stating that the goal of social science research ultimately contributes to the welfare of others by increasing our knowledge and, for this reason, carrying out the following confidentiality requirements. Using this framework, the current research has ensured that ethical concerns are taken into consideration to the best of the researcher's knowledge. A participation information sheet was provided for all participants and written consent was sought through email. The research topic and study fall within the scope of the teacher's usual job description, which involves continually assessing students formatively in online mathematics classes. Additionally, participation in the study process is entirely voluntary and, hence, the physical and psychological risks are extremely low. To protect the identity of the participants and ensure confidentiality, safeguards were included, such as the fact that the data will be held within a secure BCU one-drive facility that is encrypted and will be shared only with the supervisor. Howe and Moses (1999) back this up by mentioning individual privacy, which is a basic need that ought to be honoured.

Key observations and findings

As a researcher, I now realise that mathematics pedagogy for early years is not a judgement-based programme but a problem-solving skills-based process inclusive of consistent feedback, as cited by Kay (2018), who agrees that feedback for young children can be simple and intuitive. For example, a conversation with EY students on how a particular teaching strategy, lesson, or unit worked can reveal the success of a pedagogic choice. Not only does this kind of feedback impact teaching-learning decisions, but it also gives valuable input on what the students learned and how they learnt it. One common factor that bound the process was an innate desire on the part of the EY teachers to assist students in the best way possible and overcome online challenges.

A reflective summary

While there is no shortage of technological tools and applications that support assessment for learning in K–12 learning – which can be overwhelming in and of itself – teachers learned that there is a need to carefully select the tool that best aligns with our assessment's purpose, process, and use. Adaptations for our youngest students may be designed in such a way that they include phone and virtual conferencing, art projects, and communication with families and caregivers.

As a leader, I must communicate to teachers the importance of distinguishing between a resource and a formative assessment strategy. This distinction can only happen over time, as Fox (2004) advises school administrators to constantly assist teachers in their attempts to make the formative assessment process consistent. The teacher participants mentioned working with students in small groups and how the students engaged in formative assessment activities quizzes, practice task cards drag and drop games, multiple choice worksheets, Kahoot, 'show and tell' and questioning. Personalisation of learning is about giving feedback and analysing continuous performance of the child. However, this study did not identify more specific ways that students were involved in improving their own learning.

Future professional development format for early years teachers

At the school level, professional development is needed to advance how teachers use formative assessments. The

research has had a profound impact on my profession and my personal reflective capabilities. I always aspired to become critically reflective, and I have gained a fair sense of it by changing the way I conduct professional development now for my teachers. The findings of my research have led me to identify areas for improvement through my regular reflections such as how best can I provide opportunities for teachers to learn on-the-job rather than the usual workshop format. I have taken active steps to change the scope of professional development at my preschool by taking into consideration the teacher's profile. The profile comprises of simple information of whether they are new or experienced, workshops and trainings attended, qualifications and their interests and levels of motivation that help me to customise professional development plans. In addition to this personalised approach of providing continuous professional development I have found the following four strategies, outlined below, are also working well as it is not the usual hierarchical top-down approach but rather an empathetic, social, sensitive collaborative effort.

Professional development through:

1 Role modelling

The aim of role modelling is to be specific about which skill or skills teachers are focusing upon. Kampen (2019) agrees stating that specificity is crucial to competency building because many professional development opportunities for teachers are too broad and not relevant to most, or even many, of the teachers attending.

I have explicitly decided to take a class so that when I teach, I have a teacher observe me and then I engage with her in a dialogue. I have started taking a mathematics class so that when teachers see me as a role model, they feel less intimidated. And instead of a top-down approach, I am building a collaborative environment by allowing teachers a new opportunity to take part in professional development within their own lesson time. The observation and dialogue between the researcher and the individual teachers motivate them to replicate the same strategies in their class that I am developing.

2 Peer observation

Bi-monthly arrangements have been made for peers and colleagues or experienced colleagues to then observe each other and continue collaboratively, and I take on the role of monitoring the process. The new teachers observe their more experienced peers and my classes as well. Being available to the teachers will help improve and impact the use of formative assessment strategies within the school. It will have a long-term lasting effect so it is worth providing the time and attention now. After I have conducted the role modelling once or twice with each new teacher, the process is to continue developing a cyclic coaching model where colleagues of varying years of experience can work in pairs: two experienced teachers work in pairs where one lead teacher directs subject knowledge and the other observes and gives feedback. To ensure that new teachers do not feel daunted by the more experienced teachers, they can work individually with me from time to time in the classroom and practice. I now see a strong connection between observation, assessment, and feedback; they form an interconnected web. Providing training in assessment alone is meaningless without giving my team of teachers' supportive developmental pillars such as observation and feedback techniques.

3 Personalised training

In addition to opportunities for growth I recognise that professional development also needs to be personalised based on the number of years of teaching experience, personal goals, job descriptions and role and responsibility. Every teacher sets her own professional learning goal, and an individual goal plan is then set up. Canlé (2020) strongly recommends a personalised approach as it aims to make a teacher find her voice and be encouraged to learn with intrinsic motivation. School leaders can breathe new life into professional development (PD). Acting as catalysts for teachers to create their own opportunities for learning can help leaders and reinvigorate PD through a process that augments relevancy and highlights different avenues to pursue growth.

4 Collaborative dialogue

Assessment conversations are a common informal formative assessment exercise, and it is crucial for teachers to spot potential obstacles that could prevent students from achieving their learning goals. Shah (2019) explains that assessment conversations help students make their thinking explicit in a non-intrusive way, and once it is explicit, it can be examined, questioned, and shaped as an active object of constructive learning. Focusing just on benchmarks is one-sided, so teachers will need to use a variety of informal and formal strategies going forward. Attention needs to be paid to how informal formative assessments are viewed as valuable sources of information and what can be done to promote them.

Conclusion

Another way that the research experience has impacted on me is through learning from the interactions that I have had with my dissertation supervisor during the research study. One thing I have learnt is that my dissertation supervisor gave me feedback by making me think about my thinking through guided questioning. When I started the dissertation programme, I expected answers, but the way in which the programme approached the discussions and feedback has made me develop reflection, thinking, and self-confidence. I found this particular practice of asking questions and guiding is a great mentoring tool, which is a big take away for me when I approach my teachers to discuss their professional development. I thank my dissertation supervisor, who inspires me to have a similar model in my school where I can indulge in conversations to strengthen our collective understanding of Early Years assessment and contribute towards strengthening our reflective practice collaboratively.

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Concept based Learning: an alternate mode of practice in Education? Crafting a learning experience using Bakhtin's Dialogic Pedagogy

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The following poster is an exploration of a learning experience focusing on concepts and the process of meaning-making in dialogue with peers, material and teacher. The model encourages both student interaction and intra-action to develop an imaginative cognition presented as emerging learning, rather than fixed outcomes or mono-logic.

Concept-based Learning: An alternate mode of practice in Education?

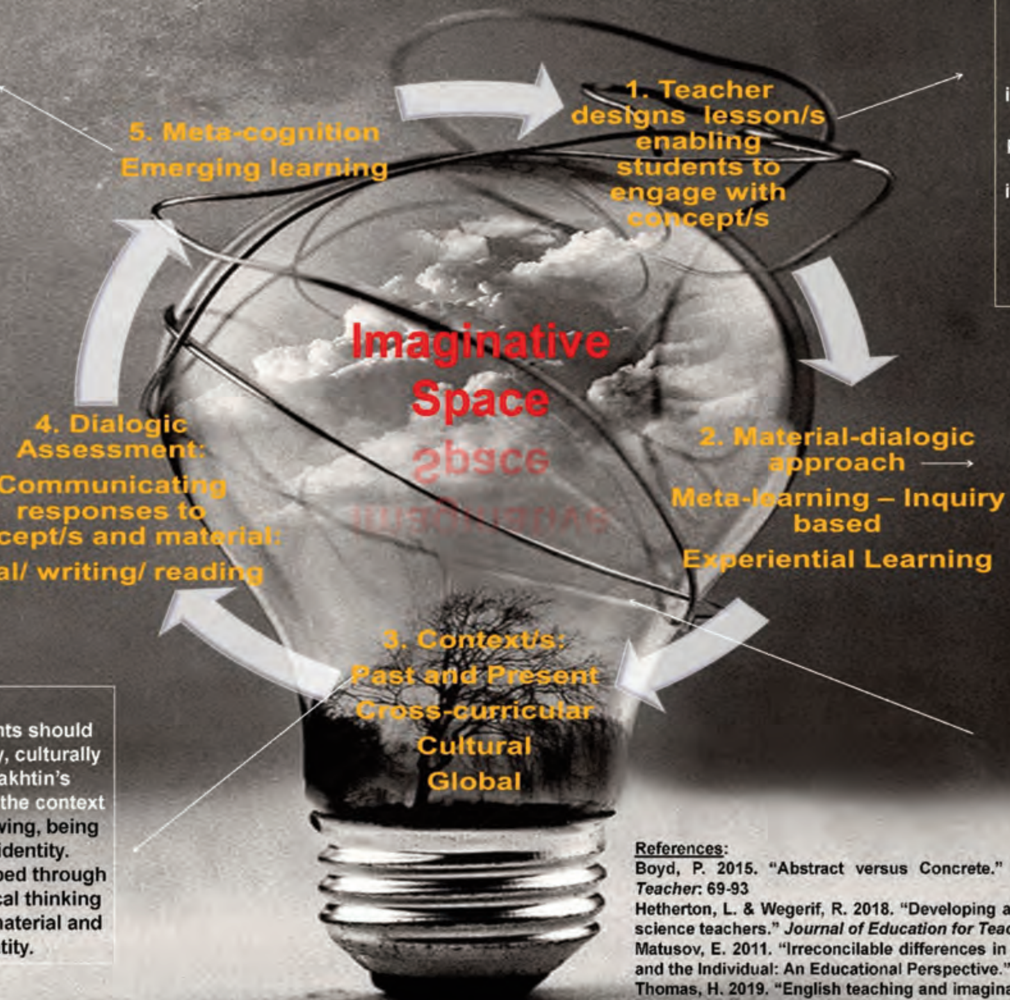
Crafting a learning experience using Bakhtin's Dialogic Pedagogy:

Imagine a learning experience where concepts are explored through continuous dialogue between Teacher, Students and Material/s (multiple voices) to develop individual cognition… Education as freedom or restriction? *The Schoolboy* – William Blake

Emerging Learning:
Emerging subjective outcomes evolve from the learning process, taking into account difference, according to Bakhtin, and moving away from Vygotsky's view of a collective 'mono-logic', which asserts certainty/ mastery (White 2014).

Meta-cognition for student and teacher to further develop ways of knowing (Boyd 2015).

Assessment considerations:
Dialogue/ discourse continued in the replies of students, in response to the multiple voices within the classroom, through their own voice and perspective (Matusav 2011) .
An interactive process of feedback, reflection and evaluation further develops the learning experience. Focusing on clarity of expression and conviction, could be another way of enabling students to meet formative/ summative criterion, with a consideration of alternative viewpoints.



Contextual Factors:
To develop a global outlook/ perspective, students should engage with and 'become familiar with historically, culturally and socially important voices', according to Bakhtin's dialogism (Maustav 2011).'Cultural dialogues…within the context of contemporary culture' – 'multiple ways of knowing, being and becoming' (White 2014), makes reference to identity.
The process of meaning-making is further developed through 'cognitive imagination' (Thomas, 2019), whereby critical thinking is developed, in response to contextual factors, material and concept/s, while negotiating personal identity.

Role of the Teacher:
In the age of neo-liberalism, the role of the teacher is as Expert (Vygotsky's dialectic) or technician.
An alternative view is 'Teacher as artist' (Thomas 2019) - 'author' of 'moral and aesthetic responsibilities' (White 2014).
A Concept is to be used as a starting point (Boyd 2015) and explored through Dialogic Pedagogy (Bakhtin) to 'design possibilities for interaddressivity and interproblematicity' - all participants to engage in a 'joint problem' (Matusov 2011), taking into account the difference of opinion, in relation to individual experience and view of truth. A way of learning that is in contrast to Vygotsky's 'Intersubjectivity', where a collaborative approach results in a 'mono-logic' (Matusov 2011).

'Material-dialogic' approach and findings:
The Material 'other', used to explore concept/s, acquires a voice in the process of 'dialogic switching' (Hetherington & Wegerif 2018), which is to explore possibilities, and develops an agency (Agential Realism) in the learning process, along with the teacher.
'Intra-action' (Barad 2007) assists the process of meaning-making through 'enactment' in the 'Dialogic space' (Wegerif 2011), creating 'agential cuts' that can 'enable and constrain learning' (Hetherington & Wegerif 2018).
I would argue that these cuts/ gaps open up an Imaginative Space, for the individual. A space that is unique and shapes alternate perspectives.

Challenges:
- A strategy that involves risk– an emerging learning process with no fixed outcomes, unlike constructive alignment which is most influential in contemporary Education and places value on measurability/ accountability.
- Institutions/Schools have their own pedagogical approaches and trainees are expected to adopt these, unless autonomy is encouraged.
- Imaginative space requires further research – it is an abstract space and not concrete so difficult to define/ measure.

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Academic paper for an online audience regarding an approach to behaviour management.

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Based on my host school's recent Ofsted inspection, the number of permanent exclusions is too high (Ofsted, 2020). The successful implementation of restorative practice could lead to fewer incidents escalating to that level with matters being dealt with efficiently and effectively immediately.

The use of restorative practice is one method of behaviour management. This baseline method mirrors restorative justice whereby the main ideas of repairing, reconciling, and reassuring are favoured compared to punitive measures of punishment (Varnham, 2005). The use of this method has been seen in my current school where it is a part of the school policy and a period of time at the end of the school day has been dedicated to restorative practice. I will delve into this behavioural management approach and dissect its effectiveness throughout this paper, focusing on its effects on the learning and wellbeing of students.

Restorative practice is a relatively new approach being taken in response to dealing with disruptive or negative social behaviour seen in the classroom. Previously, only punitive modes of punishment were seen in the classroom, and while these strategies may have proven to be effective in the past, the greater and increased research into mental health and wellbeing in the present day has shown the inefficacy, at times, of this mode of behaviour management (Golding, 2018). Golding argues that the use of strict and stern language commonly used in punitive modes of punishment causes the release of stress hormones, resulting in the shutting down of frontal lobes, key for learning (Golding, 2018). If what Golding says is true, the use of punitive punishment could have detrimental effects on students in the long term since this reaction to the disciplinary measure could have knock-on effects in other lessons and importantly, on other teachers. My personal experience leads me to strongly believe this research, even though Golding's research is generalised and written in a blog pose. From my personal experience, the approach to misbehaviour has always been in the least punitive manner, unless a very serious scenario is posed where the utmost strict action must be taken. Students feel calmer by stepping outside of the lesson to catch their thoughts for a few minutes, as opposed to immediate detention or meeting with the head of the year.

It could be argued that this behaviour management technique is both a good and bad method compared to perceived old-fashioned punitive punishments. Support for this approach comes from research conducted by McCluskey et al in Scottish schools which found that students prefer this approach due to its inherent focus on "fair hearing" (McCluskey et al, 2008). Students on the whole felt that there was a greater emphasis on equality, with positive conversations taking place with the headteacher. This student response was mirrored by Drewery and Winslade which also stated that this strategy was fairer than judging (Drewery and Winslade, 2005). The principle idea of creating and sustaining positive relationships between students and teachers was mirrored in both reports and leads to the creation of a positive, calmer learning environment where students can progress and where they feel happier and safer to be. From my personal experience, this type of learning environment is key for students and has been a central focus of mine in the classroom, allowing all students to progress.

This finding does support the use of restorative practices since the strategy combats the problem, reducing punitive punishments and creating a calm, positive learning environment for all as Morrison and Vaandering state "a calmer, more positive atmosphere" (Morrison and Vaandering, 2012). But the implementation of positive will be different to different teachers and personnel. Is the positivity judged on a quieter learning environment in the classroom where fewer behaviour disruptions are seen but is learning happening? The idea of "golden silence" comes to the fore here whereby a well-behaved climate may be seen in the classroom, but is learning taking place with that behaviour, or is the behaviour response to being unable to access the material? (Coplan et al, 2011).

There are some issues with the research from McCluskey et al. This research only interviewed 93 secondary school pupils, which equates to under half of one year group at my host school. These few numbers of participants could have huge implications on conclusions drawn from the study since different age groups may react differently to the implementation of this behaviour management strategy but at the same time, these results must not be easily dismissed. For example, students will start puberty at different ages which will affect their regulation of risk-taking and behaviours as a whole due to the change their bodies are experiencing which will skew the results of this study in a certain direction (de Macks et al, 2016). As well as this, McCluskey et al conducted this research over two years. Is this time long enough to draw definite conclusions off? In some cases, newer students may react in a completely different manner than students which have had this strategy in place for two years and also the long term effects of the extended use of restorative practice in these Scottish schools is unknown.

Punitive modes of punishment tend to target students from marginalised backgrounds where disadvantaged students are affected most (Velez et al, 2020). This does not go hand in hand with the Government's Equalities Act 2010 where these individuals typically form the protected groups who are not being treated equally, as per the law (Department for Education, 2014). The use of restorative practice has been shown to help close discipline and achievement gaps between students of colour and their white counterparts (Gomez et al, 2021). Research from Morris and Perry has shown the effects of differential suspension between protected groups and their white counterparts, with there being a 20% achievement gap between black and white students (Morris and Perry, 2016). This shows that the application of punitive modes of punishment, exclusion, in this case, promotes disparities between students of differing backgrounds. The use of the restorative practice as well as the decreased reliance on punitive modes of punishment may show positive changes in students' performance and decrease the achievement gap (Gomez et al, 2021).

If schools were to embed this behaviour management strategy into the school policies, it needs to have a school-wide effect on school ethos. McCluskey's two-year research showed that, in some schools, the application of restorative practice along-side other 'tools' such as direct punishment had a limited impact in transforming the school ethos (McCluskey et al,

2008). This is to say that its utilisation alongside other authoritarian techniques led to fewer students and teachers committing to this practice, preventing its flourishment and success on a school-wide basis. If McCluskey et al are correct, schools must invest heavily into staff development and a greater buy-in to restorative practices as the primary method of behaviour management because otherwise, that positive learning and calm environment will not be created in the classroom or school corridors, to allow students to progress.

Conclusion

Research has shown the efficacy of using restorative practice in the classroom with positive effects on students' mental health and performance seen (Mirsky, 2007). McMorris et al have shown that an increase is seen in students' grade point average for the year following the implementation of restorative practice (McMorris et al, 2013). Although only a small sample size of 83 students was utilised in this research, evidence is present for the effect restorative practice can have on the school ethos. From the research I have conducted, the implementation of restorative practice in serious scenarios is an ambiguous area mirrored in all. What quantifies a 'serious' incident? Where is the line drawn between where restorative practice is appropriate and where the next step must be taken?

On the whole, the positive impacts of restorative practice far outweigh the disadvantages. Long term, the effects of punitive punishment can cause detrimental effects on students. The utilisation of restorative practice in schools has been seen to create a positive, calm learning atmosphere which ultimately benefits students' mental health and well-being. From my personal experience of restorative practice, the healing of relationships between students and staff is a far better practice than the harm seen via punitive modes of punishment.

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CURRENT ENQUIRY AND PRACTICE

An introduction to research for leaders – Part one: carrying out your research

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"Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose" Hurston (1997, pp. 43)

This paper overviews the intent, implementation, and impact of carrying out research. It is hoped that you can gain ideas for becoming research-informed and begin to carry out evidence-informed research initiatives within your institutions. Once completed, you can then share your research beyond your school, working in partnership with the professional teaching community beyond the four walls of your institution.

Research Intent

In our view, we define research as a systematic investigation used to answer a question through the collection and analysis of data. Such a definition provides a simple explanation of a process that requires various considerations to produce relevant and effective research. Essentially, the end goal of research is to add new knowledge to the discipline that you are concerned with. Thus, your intent must be clear to your potential audience. How you can work to develop your intent for your research will be explored within this section.

The first step is considering your view towards research:

Paradigms of research

The term paradigm can be used to describe the researcher's 'worldview'. This worldview provides a lens through which your perspectives, beliefs or thoughts ultimately influence your research (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). Within education research, there are three prominent paradigms: positivist, interpretive and critical.

1 Positivist
The positivist attempts to examine the social environment using the same methods used within the scientific environment. Through the development of a hypothesis, quantitative measures are collated to observe the cause and effect of the variables measured. The data that is produced as a result of this type of study are presumed as factual because the methods used to attain the data are objective. The positivist accepts a single truth; there is only one reality that applies to all with no consideration of individual differences.

2 Interpretive
In contrast, the interpretive does not believe that the social environment can be measured in the same way as the scientific. Researchers aim to gain an understanding of the participants' lived experiences, through the collection of qualitative data. The use of more than one form of data collection is typical as this helps to gain an in-depth understanding. Thus, this type of research is considered subjective and inherently biased. To try and counterbalance this, researchers will often state their positionality; how their thoughts and beliefs may influence their findings and the research process. The interpretive consensus is that there is no single reality.

3 Critical
The critical paradigm shares some commonalities with the interpretive; through interacting with participants to gather qualitative data. Therefore, this data would also be considered as subjective. The research, however, differs as it focuses on the power structures observed within society and how these work to oppress some members of society. Researchers using this paradigm seek to create social change by addressing social justice issues. The critical researcher accepts that knowledge is socially constructed.

The second step to address is your 'why' for the research:

Answer a question and solve a problem

What do you want to know? What are your research questions?

When you have decided on your research questions, which do not have to be set in stone, you will have an idea of what it is you want to achieve. Preliminary questions are likely to be refined as you engage with various literature and become more specific as you move through the process. For example, you may initially be interested in what strengths your governing body has. Then as you read research, you may decide that you are interested in knowing 'What strengths the governing body can bring to support the school in overall school improvement towards the strategic vision' with a sub-question of 'What areas do my governing body need training on so that they can effectively support our school?'. Importantly, at the end of the research, you should always come back to the question(s) that you sought to answer and check they were addressed.

As a school leader (defined as anyone who wants to make change), engaging in research has the potential to be useful for solving problems within your school. The following is an example of research in action; you may have observed that your team is experiencing burnout symptoms, which is a problem as it affects team productivity. You could create a rotation system which gives each member an early finish once a week and record the outcomes of your intervention. Research should solve issues and provide answers moving forward for overall school improvement.

Hypothesis

Answering a question may be in the form of a hypothesis; a predictive statement of the relationship between two variables. For example, you may want to see if removing sugary snacks from the cafeteria (independent variable), affects the amount of fruit purchased (dependent variable). The hypothesis method is often used when completing quantitative research. This will be explained in more detail within the data section.

During the early stages of your research, initially, you will likely be accessing a broad range of literature which will provide you with a hypothesis that you will begin to develop. Literature from journal articles, books, white papers, and

other texts from reliable sources will provide a good starting point. Beyond the content, it will give you a feel of how your research can be presented and the processes that the author(s) have followed. For any literature that you choose to read, consider the 'why'; this will not only help to shape your work but also to support you in maintaining relevance. The more you read and develop different hypotheses you will also become familiar with leading researchers in the field whose work you should be engaging with. This will help with understanding the development of this area of research. As an example, researching curriculum development and policy change in English schools without reading Meg Maguire and Stephen Ball's research would be a rookie mistake!

School leaders ensure that their practices are fully research informed and evidence-based, not only do they engage in research within their communities but ensure that the decisions they make are led by sound research. Their choices are fully informed by a wide range of research practices, and in this way, they can take others with them. As part of a leadership approach, leaders engage fully in research for a variety of purposes to inform their practice, to do the right thing, and not just to do things right (Covey, 2010).

The next step to consider is how you can measure your why

Data: Qualitative, Quantitative or both?

In its most simplistic form (see Figure 1 for an explanation), the difference between qualitative and quantitative methods is that qualitative studies primarily collect non-numerical data. For example, thoughts and feelings as data points. Whereas quantitative studies use numerical data. As the researcher, the method you implement should be largely influenced by your intent; what type of data do you need to collect to generate reliable results to answer your question(s)? There are advantages and limitations to both methods, which should also be taken into consideration, but methods are largely influenced by your research paradigm. Some researchers opt for a mixed-method (using both qualitative and quantitative) approach, which has been said to be useful for reducing the impact of the limitations of either method. The previous example from the hypothesis section, regarding sugary snacks and fruit purchases, would need a numerical measure such as the current sales figures of both items and then for the fruit during the intervention. This could then be complemented by focus groups to gain insight into the pupils' thoughts on the impact of the intervention.

The third and final step aims to present what is happening from your data

Analysis and interpretation of data

Will you run your data through any software? What does your data show? Do you have enough data? How can you present it? What impact will it have within your field?

These are just a few questions to consider as you work through analysing and interpreting your data. The analysis section of your research should prove/disprove your hypothesis and conceptualise what is happening. Ultimately, it should prepare you for discussing and drawing conclusions linking back to the original idea. Most frequently, data is displayed by exploring what is similar or what is different. In many cases, the initial data will be compared with the results of the study to demonstrate whether progress was made. Some researchers prefer to use graphs, and tables to present their quantitative data, while qualitative researchers prefer rich text drawing on key themes or commonalities. The key is to make sure that your research type, methods, tools, and data presentation, fits the purpose of the research that you undertake.

Depending on the time available and the scale of your study you may wish to complete a pilot study. This is a small-scale pre-test to see whether your method will produce accurate, reliable, and valid results. Participants of your research can only answer the questions that you ask once, thus, the right questions must be asked.

	Qualitative	Quantitative
Summary	Qualitative research produces data that is highly descriptive and conceptual.	Quantitative research produces numerical data that can be statistically tested.
Methods	• Interviews • Focus groups • Observations • Visual materials • Atrefacts • Case studies	• Surveys • Questionnaires • Participant anthropometric measures • Experiments
Data analysis	• Thematic	• Statistical
Paradigm	• Interpretive • Critical	• Positivist
Advantages	• Results subjective • Descriptive data allows for a greater understanding • Encourages participant input • Visual materials • Flexible	• Results objective • Validity can be measured • Reliability can be measured • Large sets of data can be analysed
Limitations	• Data can be perceived as anecdotal • Time-consuming • May use a smaller sample size	• Produces rigid results • Does not explain the results • Statistical knowledge is necessary

Figure 1: Breakdown of qualitative and quantitative components

Action research

Action research is a common method used within education research because it looks at everyday practice, working to improve systems and practice (Lambert, 2012). As a school leader, this may help to develop well informed practical solutions within the context of your environment. This form of research can work in a cyclical nature; initial data gathered may produce further questions to be researched thus, the process starts again. This ultimately creates a continuous learning process which is a naturally occurring feature within education.

Summary

The overarching intent for engaging with research is to add new knowledge to your area of study. It is with the hope that the three steps; (1) answering a question, (2) data collection and (3) analysis of data has provided you with the tools to begin your research. As a school leader, engaging in research can provide a great learning opportunity whilst improving practices and creating informed change.

Key takeaway: always refer to your 'why' as you progress through the steps in the research process (see Figure 2). The next section will build on this concept by presenting how you can begin to implement your research.

Figure 2: The research process

Figure 3: Beginning the research process: What can be researched

What can be researched?
What (research focus)
Behaviour
Statistics
Environment
Sanctions
Praise
Wider responsibilities
Subject knowledge
Assessment
Types
Formal
Informal
Continued professional development
Teaching
Classroom resources
Research Link
Lesson planning
Types of pedagogy
Classroom layout
Expectations
Student grouping
Teaching standards
Who (sample)
Whole school
Support staff
Teaching staff
Professional staff
Students
Department
Senior leadership team
Governers
Stakeholders
Parents/ guardians
Community
Where (setting)
Staff room
Classroom
Break time/ Playground
Extracurricular

Implementation

Operationalising your intentions of research can initially be a daunting process, especially as a leader who might feel they already have enough work at managerial level. However, research is a highly valuable endeavour for schools and highlights the school's willingness to improve on a day-to-day basis. The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) typically carry out the largest data collection on their visits to schools and rather than their findings come as a surprise to school leaders, if it is done consistently then findings are rather reaffirmed, and you will be able to discuss with Ofsted the impact of your research and potential solutions to any areas of improvement needed.

Planning the research

Before any research is carried out and you have understood research traditions as covered in the 'intentions' section then you can begin to consider what research can be implemented. Figure 3 identifies three main areas of consideration, 1. What is the research focus? 2. Who are the sample/participants of the research? and 3. Where is the setting that the research will be carried out? Of course, as a school leader, you can research within the four walls of your organisation and share findings outside the four walls of your organisation, or you can research your local school community and their needs.

As research-orientated individuals working in education, we (the authors of this paper) have often found that issues in school are presented to us, and it is our responsibility to act of the needs of the community. For example, you may have had several complaints from parents and students about the number of afterschool clubs. An easy and quick research project would establish, how many and what clubs there are, the type of clubs' students want, what clubs' staff can facilitate, and the scope of extracurricular provision in its entirety. Alternatively, you may have noticed that the local park is not fit for use and the nearest sports facilities for community members isn't for two miles. Thus, you might want to investigate if a parents/guardians would like a physical activity programme to be implemented on the school grounds after the school day. Moreover, the entire school community (parents, staff, students, etc.) should have a voice and be consulted on what the school needs to do to improve to you as their leader.

When an idea has presented itself to you as a worthy venture benefitting the school community, you will want to create a research plan. Figure 4 presents a simplistic research plan template that you could use.

What needs to be researched? This can be an issue in school or something you are doing well.	
What research is there around this topic?	
Who is the research with?	
How long will you research this for?	
What are the research questions?	
How will you carry out the research/What methods are you going to use?	
Where will the research be carried out?	
How will you analyse the data you have collected?	
How and who will you share the findings of the data you have collected?	

Figure 4: Basic research plan template

As you begin your plan you will notice that you will need to establish what it is that needs to be researched then you will consult current research around this topic to understand the literature and current debates in the field. This is a particularly important element; you do not want to waste your time researching something that educational researchers have done for years and proven. As an example, research has indicated that ability groupings (streaming students so that all low/high ability learners work together) is not advantageous and not encouraged in schools (Clarke, 2014; Wilkinson an Penney, 2014). However, as educationalists, we are aware that typically schools lag this research-informed perspective. During your research planning stage, you will come to new understandings and often at the end of research papers there will be suggestions for future research endeavours. For example, in the last paragraph of Saiz-Linares, Rodríguez-Hoyos and Susinos-Rada (2019) study on democratic student participation and teachers' discourses suggested that future research would be beneficial on delving into deeper meanings of participation that go beyond the scope of questioning, organising, and debating in the classroom, which teachers seemed to direct as democratic forms of engagement. As an example, we have created a research study that could link to this in Figure 5.

As you move through the questions, you can consult Figure 3, especially to establish where and who your research will be with. Sometimes, research might last the entire school year. For example, if you are researching staff wellbeing, this would be more suited to looking at how this is affected through longer terms, parents/open evenings, and exam periods. Thus, as a researcher, you must consider the breadth and depth of your research rather than it being surface level 'quick fix' approach. Research questions and the research methodology (how you will carry out the research) needs to be well-thought-out and specific. On the topic of staff well-being, it shouldn't put unnecessary work or additional pressures on staff or students in school, instead, you should seek to implement research ideas that are part of everyday practice and obligated duties. This is because your position as a leader comes with a level of superiority.

Positionality and subjectivity

As a school leader, you are positioned hierarchically towards the top of the school structures. You may have a position of authority and accountability to monitor all staff. When you become a researcher (in any setting), it is imperative that you are aware of your position and how this will affect the research. You might be viewed as an intruder, especially if

What needs to be researched? This can be an issue in school or something you are doing well.	• Amount of opportunity for student voice within curriculum design. • Who and what subjects are using student voice? • What teachers are seen as excelling in this area?
What research is there around this topic?	• Majority of research papers suggest that student voice increases responsibility, ownership, and participation within class. However, how it is operationalised per subject is limited and the notion of participation is questioned.
Who is the research with?	• Students and teachers
How long will you research this for?	• The entire of the summer term
What are the research questions?	• To what extent are students given voice and choice over their curriculum in all key stage three subjects. • What suggestions do students have to increase their subject ownership?
How will you carry out the research/What methods are you going to use?	• Collection of teachers schemes of work and lesson plans. Open ended questionnaires to students and staff, informal lesson studies. Informal conversations with heads of department.
Where will the research be carried out?	• During the school day, on site, during lesson time and break time in class spaces and during the whole staff meeting.
How will you analyse the data you have collected?	• Largely qualitative data will be gathered. Data will be split by subject and we will establish common themes. Senior leaders will take responsibility for certain subject areas during meetings.
How and who will you share the findings of the data you have collected?	• Create a visual display in reception for visitors.Through presentations: staff during a whole school training, students during year group assemblies, parents through the newsletter, governors at curriculum and pedagogy committee and full governors briefing. Share to the profession by writing a blog for the British Education Research Association and sharing on social media outlets.

Figure 5: Research plan

you are researching the staff room dynamics but you never enter the staff room, as someone in a position of power, this is also likely to affect the dynamics of the staff room.

Problematic research positionality situation:

You are a headteacher of the school. You have heard a rumour at lunchtime that people in the school don't like you. You begin that day to research this issue. You want to investigate if teachers and students like you. You wait at the end of the school day until students are leaving by the gate and ask them if they like you or not, tallying their response on a clipboard. You then move to the staff car park and wait for staff to leave and ask them if they like you or not. You go back to your office and were shocked that one member of staff and a few students said they didn't like you, so you ignore their data and don't put it in your analysis.

Main issues:

- You have not asked your governor committee to carry out the research or had the permission from the participants
- Participants of research are put in an awkward position to say 'yes' and are forced to answer
- The responses by the staff and students are not anonymous (you know who said yes/no)
- You may unintentionally inflict psychological stress on participants
- You did not complete the research template and rushed into research without reviewing literature on your topic. Your research idea was not going to provide you with any evidence on how to improve as a school leader or if people didn't like you why

Furthermore, your subjectivity is part of your positionality, how you identify, your experiences, your perceptions and world view link to what and how you choose to research and the paradigm you select to research in. There are three things main things that you can do to support this part of the research. The first is being aware of your positionality and subjectivity, which means discussing and sharing it when disseminating the research so that viewers know where you are coming from and how to perceive the research. Secondly, use your school leadership team to come up with areas of research and take a lead on promoting and disseminating research for school improvement, it is not just your responsibility but the responsibility of the community. This works well by leaders that create a community and collegial feel in school where everyone is on a learning journey – not just the students. Lastly, complete ethics forms before taking part in any research.

Ethics

Being organised is essential with research and ensuring your research ideas are shared with all stakeholders is very important so that people are not deceived. If you are new to research and haven't consulted the British Educational Research Association ethical guidelines, we would recommend you do so: https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-2018 before engaging in any research. To support we have created a simple school ethics checklist for you that you can use (see Figure 6).

The answers to each of the research questions in Figure 6 should be yes/true or you have to question whether your research should be carried out. Ethics should be collected when research that is occurring beyond the scope of everyday practice. For example, if students completed an 'exit slip' on what they learnt in a lesson and were doing this regardless of it being researched then it would be unnecessary to gain ethics. We recommend that governors are informed of school-based research as part of whole-school improvement focused plans because governors are accountable for ensuring the strategic direction of schools. Furthermore, they may deem the research unhelpful/ unnecessary for the school. Something that could support senior leaders needing to gain ethical approval or parental consent to do research projects could be to ask parental permission at the beginning of year seven, their responses can be kept on file for the duration of the student's time in the school. If necessary, we also recommend having the ethics checklist signed by another member of the senior leadership team and the school captain and teacher's union representative. In reality, this may not always be appropriate and would be dependent on the research avenue. Once ethical approval has been sought, you may begin to implement your research project!

Tips

- Be organised and transparent about the research.
- Create a Gantt chart so you know what elements of the research happen at which points in the year.
- Liaise with staff to ensure they know their roles in the research.
- Use the research to upskill staff and plan your continued professional development sessions around it.
- Attend British Educational Research methodology events to learn more about research and research-informed practice.
- If you need additional support or want advice, partner with a university with a teacher education department to improve your research literacy.
- Don't just sit on your data once you have collected it, use it to improve and impact your school and community!

Ethics Checklist for a research project entitled:		
xx		
Name of researcher	xx	
Position in school	xx	
Start and end date of the research	xx	
Circle as appropriate		
1 I have read and consulted the BERA ethical guidelines for conducting research.		Yes/No
2 I will protect my participant's anonymity and the name of the school if the research is being shared in the public domain.		Yes/No
3 I will minimise any disruption to normal school life for the staff, students, classes, etc.		Yes/No
4 I will explain the research aims and methods (questionnaires or artefacts such as lesson plans) to all participants wherever relevant.		Yes/No
5 I will inform participants they have the right to withdraw at any time.		Yes/No
6 I will gain the consent of the parents if visual material is going to be used for research.		Yes/No
7 I will gain consent from parents/guardians if the research goes beyond the scope of everyday teaching research linked to school improvement.		Yes/No
8 No one will have any financial incentive to take part in the research.		True/False
9 Students that are most vulnerable will only take part in research with the aid of support and research that is part of everyday practice.		Yes/No
10 The research is intended to support the school in improving its provision.		Yes/No
Signature of researcher	xx	
Signature of the chair of governors	xx	
Signature of a senior leader in school	xx	
If needed: Signature on behalf of students (student leader/school captain)	xx	
If needed: Teachers union representative in the school	xx	

Figure 6: Example of ethics checklist for school research

Editorial Note: For BCU students/staff, please follow these guidelines: https://icity.bcu.ac.uk/hels/Ethics/Index

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An introduction to research for leaders – Part two: publishing and sharing your research

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Publication and sharing of your research

As a school leader, you might want to consider how you want to put your learning to good use to help others, or to influence change. Sharing practice is imperative to ensure that learning is shared, and that teaching and learning communities remain well informed, reflective and strive to be the best they can be for the communities they serve. Depending on the purpose of the research undertaken in a context, the impact of the research can be shared in a variety of different ways, through presenting your work directly to your immediate team and colleagues in your context. Your school might have an internal journal or Teaching and Learning Newsletter in which you can publish your learning and findings in too.

In addition, national conferences can provide you with an ideal opportunity to share your learning with a wider audience. Grassroots organisations are often ideal to provide you with opportunities to share your learning and gain experience as a speaker in a national context. Organisations such as WomenEd, BAMEed and DiversityEd, offer regular events and invite speakers to share their practice. These platforms offer opportunities for leaders to become 'thought leaders' in their different disciplines and areas of expertise.

The Chartered College of Teaching encourages teacher practitioners, and leaders to share their best practice in The Chartered College of Teaching's Impact Journal. However, there is a wide range of platforms that leaders, and in school practitioners as leaders, can share their learning. Academic journals led by subject-specific associations are often a good starting point, if you aim to share best practice across your discipline, for example, the Association for Physical Education, National Association for Teaching English, Royal Society of Chemistry, Royal Society of Biology, Institute of Physics, Mathematics Associations and many more. Other organisations to join and share your learning with are, British Education Research Association (BERA), British Education Leadership, Management and Administration Society (BEL-MAS), InfoTED, CollectiveED, and International Professional Development Association (IPDA).

These organisations offer opportunities where you can share your learning in a shorter piece via their Blogs or publish in their journals. You will find that some organisations offer a practical based journal as well as a more academic journal. It is often good to start developing your writing by aiming to write for the practical based journals first and gradually progress as you develop your skills as a research leader. In your area, you might also work closely with your local university. For example, the University Education Departments, often develop internal journals, and you can also publish your work in these. The University of East London offers opportunities for teacher practitioners to write for Research in Teacher education (RiTE), twice a year, and it is an excellent way to share your impact and outcomes with others beyond your immediate context. It is worth contacting your local university to see if similar journal writing opportunities are available to support you on your journey as a research leader. (Editor's note – This journal is one example of an educational publication that BCU offers).

When you develop your piece, make sure that you are clear on what the journal expects concerning its specifications, and make sure that you adhere fully to the requirements (e.g. word count, font, referencing system). In addition, approach colleagues to work with you on the piece to act as 'critical friends' and provide peer reviews. In this way, you can refine your practice fully before presenting the piece for publication. It is important, as a leader, that you start to contribute to the

body of knowledge and research beyond your context. You can only do this by sharing your learning with your immediate community, and beyond on a variety of different platforms. Apart from publishing your work in journals, sharing it what colleagues in your immediate context, via presentations or on a national platform, you can also develop case studies to share with others during whole school insets and training days. Case studies are extremely helpful for other practitioners to draw on, when they are faced with similar issues, and they can learn from your research, learning and findings to see if they are able to apply your learning in a similar way to their personal contexts.

Case study examples:

As a future or current research leader, we aim to provide you with a few case studies to demonstrate how you can make use of research to inform your decisions and practice in future.

Case study one outlines how a classroom-based practitioner, can contribute to a whole school initiative, and as a research leader, sharing practice within their immediate context and beyond. Two additional case studies are provided to demonstrate who whole school initiatives and beyond can be used to improve practice and share practice across different contexts too. This piece can also be converted into a contribution in a Blog, Teaching and Learning Newsletter, or it can be extended and shared as a journal article.

Case Study 1: Assessment for learning: peer assessment

This study was conducted as part of a whole school initiative, where an in-house Master's programme was developed, to provide enriching staff development opportunities, with a school improvement focus.

The study was conducted in a rural school, with an intake of 1200 students. The study focused on how assessment for learning strategies, with a particular focus on how peer assessment can improve outcomes for learners in an English Classroom. As outlined in Black et al (2003) peer assessment offer learners with the opportunity to reflect on their practice, and to learn from others. Hattie (2010) outlines that feedback is imperative, for learners to make effective progress, and it is even more powerful if learners can inform teachers what they need to do next to refine their practice and to improve.

Black et al (2003) highlighted that assessment for learning needs to be embedded into practice. In addition, their work emphasises that it is important to recognise that learners need to learn how to engage with assessment to ensure that they are able to apply it well in their own practice. The researcher, therefore, decided to first ensure that learners were clear on the expectations and what was required of them through the use of pupil friendly mark schemes. Once learners were clear on what the expectations were, they were also taught how to assess their own work, and how to feedback, with the mark scheme in mind and to outline strengths, and specific areas for improvement. The process was repeated three times as a self-assessment exercise, to ensure that learners were clear on how to engage well with the assessment criteria, and their marking was moderated by the researcher before learners were asked to peer assess others' work. The researcher continued to spot check and moderate marking and feedback to ensure that it was accurate, specific and helpful.

The peer assessment cycle was repeated three times, and after the cycle, learners were invited to share how they felt they were able to move their learning forward. Learners reported, that in other situations they were asked to do peer assessment too, but that the familiarisation process was not put in place where they were able to learn what the criteria were or how to feedback, as an initial step. They felt that by adding this as a first step, they were able to understand what was expected, and where not only able to check their work, but they were able to provide specific and helpful feedback to others too. Learners felt that they had a clearer understanding of how to make progress and learn too. From the outcomes in terms of learners' work, it reflected that they were able to improve their written work and were able to address key requirements outlined in the mark scheme. It was interesting to note that learners were also starting to make use of the pupil friendly mark scheme as a checklist.

The initial study revealed that using assessment for learning, and peer assessment provided learners with a helpful framework to enable them to refine their work. The next steps for this study are to continue to develop pupil friendly mark schemes, feedback templates, and checklists for the rest of the syllabus too. The researcher is keen to vary the activities and is keen to explore further how these can be used, by using creative teaching and learning approaches too.

The study formed part of the whole school focus on assessment or learning. It was initially shared with the researcher's department, and the aim is to present the case study and learning from the research as part of a whole school inset day too. The day will be open to all partnership schools, and the practice will be shared beyond the school context.

Case Study 2: Department and whole school research

Case Study two was conducted as part of a departmental drive to address marking strategies across an English Department in a Secondary Academy. The head of department, served as a member of a whole school working party, to address consistent marking approaches and teacher workload. The Department for Education (DfE) (2016) Eliminating Unnecessary Workload Around Marking, was used as a basis for the research. In the report it makes certain recommendations for example:

- Effective marking is imperative to provide learners with a clear outline of their next steps. It can be achieved without the requirement of unnecessary or excessive amounts of written feedback.
- The quantity of feedback should not be confused with the quality of feedback.
- Marking needs to be "meaningful, manageable and motivating" (DfE, 2016, p.5)

The whole school working party agreed that the final point that marking needs to be 'meaningful, management and motivating' would be the key focus of the project. The head of department developed a departmental working party comprising of the Key Stage 3, 4 and 5 leads, one subject mentor, and two newly qualified teachers. The aim with the working party was to provide the team with ownership to investigate the practice within the department, to reflect on next steps, and ways forward to address key issues, and to work with others in the team to implement the strategies recommended.

The working party sampled books from a range of members in the departments and looked at books and marking across

all the Key Stages, to identify 'meaningful, manageable, and motivating practice'. In addition, the group looked at Black et al (2003) and Hattie (2010) as a group reading to reflect on how to refine practice, and how to move the practice on within the department.

The book review, and audit led to the working party identifying the following issues:

- Although feedback aimed to be supportive and helpful, the written feedback often came across as overwhelming.
- Essays were annotated and final summation feedback was provided at the end of each piece.
- More able learners found the annotations and summative feedback extremely useful. However, less able learners felt criticised and felt that they were not sure what to do next.
- Work was marked weekly, and some colleagues had a wide range of groups which meant that they were marking consistently. The question was – should notes be marked in as much detail as assignments or assessment points?

Key Questions arose from the review:

- Should notes be marked in as much detail as assignments or assessment points?
- Who was the marking for? And how can it be more helpful?
- How can a dialogue be embedded in the feedback process to ensure that learners outline their own targets more clearly and respond to these?

These issues were shared with the department at the fortnightly department meeting to discuss, with the reading in mind. Examples of excessive feedback were shared, and it was discussed how this can become a more meaningful and focused process.

The working party was asked to develop model responses of how they might recommend feedback can be shaped to become more meaningful, aiming to praise, be specific, and provide clear goals. The aim was to embed an element into the work where learners were able to respond to the feedback and goals too. The working party proposed model feedback responses which outlined praise, identify key goals based on the assessment criteria, and next steps which outlined how the learners could move forward. Space was provided where the learner could then either address these points by making corrections or reflect on how to address this in their next piece. It was agreed that learners if they did aim to correct it in the next piece, would need to underline where this took place, and how it was moved forward too to continue to engage in effective dialogue.

The working party's recommendations and examples were piloted with Year 11 groups as it was felt that these learners are often very aware of their needs and how they need to progress. It was understood, as outlined by Black et al (2003) that this drive would need to be embedded into practice not only with the pilot group but also with learners across the department.

The feedback approach was used with Year 11 for six weeks to reflect on how colleagues and learners responded to the initiative. What was found, when reviewing learners' views and the department team in focus groups regarding their experiences, was that 85% of all learners felt more confident about their goals and next steps compared to the initial view where 55% were broadly confident of their next steps. The department team reported a greater insight into what learners needed to make more effective progress, and they felt that learners' reflections and shared feedback provided a helpful dialogue to help them to plan more effectively to meet learners' needs.

The strategy was rolled out to the rest of the department for the remainder of the terms, and similar successes were recorded in the focus groups, 83% of the learners in the group felt that the feedback was motivational and provided clear guidance regarding their goals and next steps. Members of staff continued to report that the continued dialogue enabled them to meet learners' needs more effectively.

The department head shared the results and learning from the project with the whole school working party, and based on the success, other heads of departments looked at the feedback model used and adapted it for their contexts too. Furthermore, the issue of deep marking and other activities were addressed in the whole school marking policy, where the expectations were outlined that deep marking needs to take place every second week which includes a summative feedback section. Other work can be peer-assessed or marked during live marking in lessons. In this way, the department and whole school workload challenges were significantly reduced too. As research leaders the project was shared with the wider community too via an Academy Teaching and Learning Newsletter, and the key principals were shared at the local community school network meeting too, to share the learning with local schools too.

Case Study 3: Leadership

The vision to improve a context was one of the key Ofsted requirements when inspection teams visit schools based on the 2016 Ofsted Framework. However, inspection teams also look at how leadership is layered within contexts, and how the vision of the senior leadership team is rippling through and absorbed within the context. The leadership team of a secondary Academy in the Midlands were challenged to develop the middle leaders within their school to have agency to refine practice within their departments, and to have agency to improve practice to support their teams and learners in their care.

The leadership team met with the middle leadership team of the school, with the aim to discuss how to approach this challenge. What was shared by the middle leadership team was interesting and helped to shape the next steps for how to develop and support middle leadership teams to develop a sense of agency and to lead their areas with drive and conviction.

During the consultation meeting, middle leaders shared that they experienced the leadership approach top-down, and managerial. They did not feel that they have agency to be creative, to shape a vision or to refine practice and develop their teams to meet the needs of their teams.

The middle leadership team was asked, how they want to be developed in an ideal situation, to empower them, to feel that they can have agency and lead. The middle leadership team outlined that they would appreciate guidance on what leadership is and face to face training to provide them with a helpful framework. In addition, they were keen to engage with a specific project to work on their leadership skills in their department that will align with the school's development targets and strategic vision. They were keen to work with a mentor or coach to help develop their practice and thinking around the project.

Furthermore, middle leaders felt that the traditional pathways of leadership development and professional qualifications in school leadership is not currently a direction they wanted to progress into. The six colleagues who engaged with the consultation meeting outlined that they were interested in engaging in masters-level development with a leadership focus.

It was agreed that a local partnership would offer support for an in-house master's programme with a leadership focus whom would lead the project. Participants identified their focus areas in line with their roles and with the school's targets and development foci. Moreover, participants engaged with eight face to face sessions focusing on the different aspects of leadership, which they were encouraged to apply as they rolled out their project. Projects included: Gifted and Talented learners, Special Education Needs, Staff development programmes, Curriculum development in humanities, Mentoring and Coaching programmes for Year 9 learners, and Whole School Reward Systems.

The participants were asked to research their focus areas in detail. Part of that included visiting partnership schools to observe different practice and identify key strategies to lead on specific change they wanted to implement in their chosen area. They were required to reflect on how they would map out the strategy, share the vision, and work with their teams to implement the strategy. In addition, mentoring and coaching were provided with the support of their course leader.

The project ran for 3 months, and participants had to review and assess progress throughout this stage. As part of the project, participants presented the journey and outcomes of their project to senior leaders. The project's success was also recognised by the Ofsted Inspection in the summer, where the partnership engagement and master's programme were mentioned. As a result of the project, the middle leadership team were empowered to learn how to lead effectively, to work well with their teams, and to make a positive impact to contribute to the strategic vision of the school. By empowering this group of leaders, through their personal learning and research, the success of the programme was also recognised by Ofsted as a regulator. However, the intention was not to drive towards positive performative outcomes but to do what was right by the leaders and the learners. By listening to the team's needs a bespoke approach was put in place to provide them with the support they required to progress.

Similar to the previous projects, the project was shared in Teaching and Learning Newsletters and the Multi Academy Trust's best practice briefings and conferences to enable other partnership schools to draw on the best practice. The project was also celebrated with governors and parents. As research leaders, the key was to not only to share best practice within our community but to move initiatives beyond our immediate contexts to help others to become familiar with what research projects are undertaken and how others can contribute and share in the learning.

Beyond the school boundaries

As seen from the above case studies, schools and research leaders can lead on a variety of internal research projects to help them to make research-informed decisions to drive school improvement. In addition, by sharing learning and best practice, it enables others to draw on the body of knowledge developed by like-minded practitioners, to create a community of Collaborative Professionalism (Hargreaves and O'Connor, 2018).

It is important for leaders, to have agency to drive the change needed to impact positively on their contexts and the areas they lead-in. The key is to lead the change and to play an impactful role on how to move forward and influence positive meaningful change. It is imperative to be solutions-focused opposed to waiting for those in power to lead on the change needed.

By giving yourself, the agency to share your practice, to identify key issues to address and to take the initiative to move it forward, will help to lead positive meaningful change to make a difference for children and colleagues.

Next steps

As a leader keen to influence the education community for the better, the first step is to be brave enough not only to identify where there are key issues that need to be addressed or explored. The key is to be proactive, read widely on how to address these issues, remain curious, learn from others, but identify positive ways forward for your own context, unpack your reading and research critically to challenge broad assumptions, and explore how you can address the identified issue effectively. Evidence-based research is a powerful way to try new ideas, make informed decisions that are right for your context, and to drive continuous learning forward. By providing learning case studies as shared in this section, you too can contribute to the body of knowledge and learning to help others to collaboratively learn with you, take agency and make a positive difference for learners. The key with this approach is to continue to develop proactive, reflective leadership approaches with the aim to continue to drive change, make a difference and refine practice.

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The why, how and when of LGBT+ education

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As part of this study Hannah created a glossary of terminology to support teachers and to support the reading of this article, See below:

Binary	A way to describe the contested idea that gender is exclusively male or female.
[1]Biphobia	Fear, dislike or mistreatment of bisexual people resulting in prejudice towards them.
Bisexual	A person who has romantical, emotional and/or physical attraction towards more than one gender.
Cisgender	Someone whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned with at birth.
[2]Gay	A person who identifies as male who is romantically, emotionally and/or physically attracted to another person who identifies as male. Also, a generic term for lesbian and gay sexuality.
[3]Gender Identity	A person's internal sense of their own gender. This could be male, female, or something else.
Heteroactivism	An activism which upholds heterosexual and cisgender identities as superior in society.
Heterosexual	The state of being attracted to the opposite gender within a binary model of gender which understands the existence of male and female only.
[1]Homophobia	Fear, dislike or mistreatment of gay people resulting in prejudice towards them.
Homosexual	Another term for 'gay' or 'lesbian'.
[4]Lesbian	A person who identifies as female who is romantically, emotionally and/or physically attracted to another person who identifies as female.
LGBT	Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender
LGBT+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, plus other associated categories such as queer, questioning, intersex and asexual.
Non-binary	The term used to describe a person who does not identify as exclusively male or female.
[5]Pronoun	Words used to refer to a person's gender, which some people prefer to be in a gender-neutral language. For example, 'he', 'she' or 'they'.
Protected Characteristics	A characteristic which it is unlawful to discriminate a person because of. These include sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity.
Queer	An umbrella term for anyone who identifies within the gender identity or sexual orientation spectrum.
Transgender	The term used to describe a person who identifies as a different gender to the one they were assigned at birth.
[1]Transphobia	Fear, dislike or mistreatment of transgender people resulting in prejudice towards them.

Glossary (based on information drawn from: Department for Education, 2014a, p.8; Barnes and Carlile, 2018, pp.129–134; Nash and Browne, 2021, p.74; Stonewall, 2022, pp.36–40)

Introduction

Despite changes in the National Curriculum, the LGBT+ community and associated laws, it is still not compulsory for LGBT+ content to be taught in primary schools (Department for Education (DfE), 2019a, p.15; DfE, 2019b). This causes conflict for school leaders in deciding how and when to teach LGBT+ education in primary schools and an inconsistent approach regarding LGBT+ content and teaching (DfE, 2019a, p.15; Glazzard and Stones, 2020, p.2). This discordance raises issues regarding what should and should not be taught in primary schools, from the perspectives of both teachers and parents; the matter of an LGBT+ inclusive curriculum is becoming a controversial topic. Opposition includes promoting being LGBT+ as a way of life and that LGBT+ content does not align with certain religious beliefs (Glazzard and Stones, 2020, p.101). Whereas Stonewall (2019) conversely state that an effective LGBT+ inclusive curriculum helps to reduce anti-LGBT+ bullying and encourages pupils to feel confident and comfortable in themselves.

This study aims to contribute to the field of primary education and inclusive practices by discussing when and how LGBT+ education is being taught and what primary school teachers need to feel confident in teaching LGBT+ content.

Research questions

1. What are English primary school teachers' perspectives of the appropriate age for children to be taught LGBT+ content?
2. What factors influence English primary school teachers' confidence in teaching LGBT+ content to their class?
3. If LGBT+ content is taught in a primary school, what are the teachers' perspectives on the most effective strategies used?

Review of literature

According to LGBT+ charity 'Stonewall', almost half of LGBT+ pupils are bullied during their schooling, between 36% and 52% of LGBT+ pupils hear [1]homophobic, [1]biphobic or [1]transphobic language in school, and the majority of LGBT+ pupils regularly hear the word '[2]gay' used as a pejorative term (Stonewall, 2019, p.3). Snapp et al., (2015) found that in schools where LGBT+ content is taught, bullying is less likely, and that pupils feel safer and happier at school.

Approximately ten percent of people in the United Kingdom (UK) identify as LGBT+, in 2016 it was estimated that roughly 20,000 children lived with same-sex parents or carers, and in 2019 there were 212,000 same-sex families in the UK (Barnes and Carlile, 2018, p.66). Therefore, effectively representing LGBT+ families, teachers, and children, who are or may become LGBT+ demonstrates that this is normal and valued, empowering children to make educated choices (Price and Tayler, 2015, p.17). Children will encounter LGBT+ people within society, hear about LGBT+ matters on the news and know of LGBT+ celebrities (Glazzard and Stones, 2020, p.97).

Teachers' sexuality or identity is something that may arise in discussions with pupils, this helps to develop a rapport with their pupils, or the use of their pronouns (Barnes and Carlile, 2018, p.24). For a teacher who identifies as LGBT+, this can create an element of anxiety as to whether it is appropriate for them to have a discussion which discloses their sexuality or identity. Many LGBT+ teachers, particularly those aged over forty, do not feel able to be themselves when in school (Gray, 2013, p.704). However, when schools are LGBT+ inclusive, this creates a much safer and comfortable environment for LGBT+ staff members and enables them to become diverse role models for pupils (Ferfolia and Hopkins, 2013, cited in Neary, 2020, p.19)

Due to sexual orientation and [3]gender identity being controversial topics, schools can often become a battleground for disputes over the LGBT+ content that they include in Relationships, Social and Health Education (RSHE) or other areas of the curriculum or school life (Glazzard and Stones, 2020, p.1; Nash and Browne, 2021, p.87). One of the main oppositions to LGBT+ content being taught in school is from religious organisations, and as seen in the media, many faith groups argue that it is inappropriate, would exploit children's innocence, and would promote ways of life that oppose their beliefs (Glazzard and Stones, 2020, p.104; Nash and Browne, 2021, p.85). However, when the RSHE curriculum was introduced in 2019, stating that primary schools can choose to teach about LGBT matters, it was also stated that they must consider the religious background of pupils. This put schools in a difficult position in deciding what is appropriate to teach (Glazzard and Stones, 2020, p.2).

Despite this, schools have a legal duty to teach pupils about respect and to safeguard pupils and families of protected characteristics under the Equality Act, 2010 (Glazzard and Stones, 2020, p.101) and a legal obligation to consult with parents and carers regarding their curriculum and policies (Jones, 2021). To be able to discuss the curriculum competently and confidently with parents and carers, teachers need to be clear of what they are teaching and why (Glazzard and Stones, 2020, p.101). However, many teachers report that they do not feel confident in teaching LGBT+ content, and in 2019, 47% percent of primary and secondary teachers stated that they did not feel confident delivering the new RSHE curriculum (National Education Union, 2019; Jones, 2021).

This lack of confidence is due to unclear guidance, being unsure which resources are appropriate, and a lack of training, therefore causing a significant barrier to teaching LGBT+ effectively (Barnes and Carlile, 2018, p.33; Jones, 2021). Conversely, when teachers have received specific LGBT+ training and training on managing anti-LGBT+ bullying, they feel much more confident to support pupils (Goodboy and Martin, 2018, p.514).

Using LGBT+ literature is effective in reducing anti-LGBT+ bullying and in eliminating the use of words such as 'gay' and '[4]lesbian' as insults through helping pupils to understand the correct use of them (Page, 2017, p.2; DePalma, 2018, p.9). However, using books as a standalone device to teach LGBT+ content does not specifically address LGBT+ issues or create an inclusive curriculum (Page, 2017, p.11). Stonewall (2019) suggests many ways that schools can embed LGBT+ content into the curriculum: teaching about LGBT+ role models in subjects such as science and art, creating word problems in mathematics that involve LGBT+ people, and including the Pride festival when teaching about festivals in religious education (Barnes and Carlile, 2018, p.33; Stonewall, 2019, pp.14-34).

For a school to be fully LGBT+ inclusive, what is embedded within the curriculum should also be reflected in the school environment and values (Barnes and Carlile, 2018, p.39). Displays are considered an influential way to convey an inclusive message to pupils, staff, parents and visitors, and resources used across the school can provide pupils with a

balanced view of the world (Price and Tayler, 2015, pp.74-80; Barnes and Carlile, 2018, pp.66-83). The language staff use is pertinent in not excluding any identity or family type and not portraying gender stereotypes, and school policy has a significant role in LGBT+ inclusion, as this reflects the values a school upholds regarding LGBT+ inclusion and what they do to manage bullying and discrimination (DfE, 2019a, p.11; Stonewall, 2019, p.10). A common viewpoint among advocates of LGBT+ inclusiveeducation is that children as young as four should learn LGBT+ content as they are likely to know LGBT+ people within some aspect of life, and the National Curriculum is a key document that does not represent LGBT+ people (Glazzard and Stones, 2020, p.2) and school leaders are still not clear on what should and should not be taught at each age (Jones, 2021).

Methodology

This study used an online questionnaire given to all participants via opportunity sampling, in this case – 58 primary school teachers from a range of schools across England and years Reception through to Year 6. Due to the nature of the research, participants were asked to disclose their gender identities and sexualities so that it could be identified whether this influenced their responses. From this, it was identified that twenty-six percent of participants identified as a sexuality that was not heterosexual, and two percent of participants did not identify as the gender they were assigned with at birth.

To also allow for more interpretivist responses, one-to-one semi structured interviews were used. These participants were of a range of ages, worked in different year groups and all identified differently by gender and sexuality. Interviews were transcribed and a process of inductive coding was used, which involved categorising the data into different themes or labels so that patterns can be identified, examined and discussed (Cohen et al., 2018, p.645). The same approach was used to code the qualitative data from the open questionnaire questions (Figure 1). Ethical guidance from BERA (2018) was used and ethical approval given by the University of Northampton and considered aspects such as consent, withdrawal, confidentiality and the safe storage of data (Cohen et al., 2018, p.111). As well as these key ethical considerations, several other ethical aspects were important due to the nature of the topic, such as the sensitivity of the topic, limiting bias alongside actions to be taken in the case of ethical dilemmas.

Primary Coding	Identified themes				
Age appropriateness	EYFS/KS1	KS2	Reflective of children's lives		
Confidence	Confidence	Terminology	Parental/ colleague conflict	Training	
Strategies	School wide practices	Story books	School values	PHSE/RSE	Integrated curriculum

Figure 1: Inductive coding themes from interviews and open questions

Findings

This section will now address the findings linked to the research questions.

RQ1: What are English Primary school teachers' perspectives of the appropriate age for children to be taught LGBT+ content?

66% of schools in this study currently teach LGBT+ content, 16% do not teach LGBT+ content and the remaining 18% of participants were unsure of whether LGBT+ content was taught in their school. Those participants who stated that LGBT+ content was taught in their school then answered a follow-up question, which indicated which year group LGBT+ content begins to be taught in.

The uncertainty that schools have regarding the practice that takes place in their school regarding LGBT+ education is reflected in the data as 38% of participants were unsure of the year group that LGBT+ content begins to be taught. From the remainder of the data, there is a varied spread of the year group where teaching of LGBT+ content begins, however, 24% of teachers stated that LGBT+ content is taught from Reception. As well as being asked about the practice that currently takes place in terms of when LGBT+ is first taught, participants were asked their perspective of when it should first start being taught.

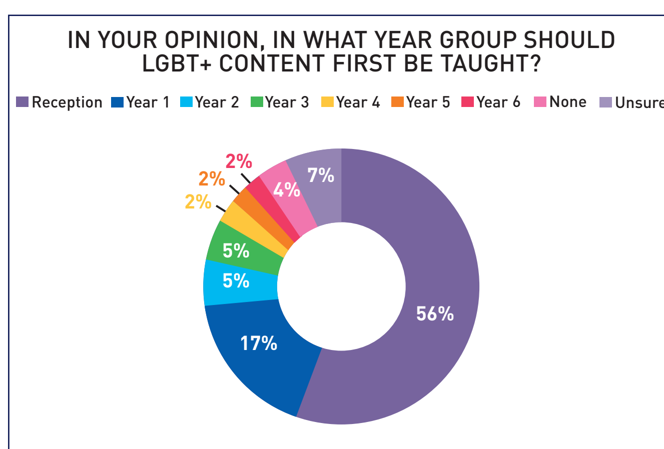

Figure 2: A pie chart depicting the opinions of primary school teachers of the year group that they think LGBT+ content should first be taught.

Almost 75% of participants suggested that LGBT+ content should first be taught from Reception or Year 1 (Figure 2). Two out of three of the interview participants also echoed this opinion, with one participant voicing the term "as early as possible".

Conversely, 16% of participants felt that LGBT+ content should not be taught until an older age, ranging from Year 2 up to Year 6, and 4% felt it should not be taught at all. Interviewee A agreed and felt children should be older, stating that "Year 4 is when pupils begin a greater development of self", therefore this would be a more appropriate age to introduce LGBT+ content.

All interviewees expressed that it was important for LGBT+ content to be taught at some point during primary school as there are pupils who either identify as LGBT+ themselves, or who have parents or family members who are LGBT+, therefore their lives should be reflected in the curriculum.

RQ2: What factors influence English primary school teachers' confidence in teaching LGBT+ content to their class?

There are various barriers to teaching LGBT+ content in primary schools, and these can have an impact on teachers' confidence in delivering LGBT+ education (Barnes and Carlile, 2018, p.33; Jones, 2021). 29% of participants stated they were not confident teaching LGBT+ content to their class. Additionally, when considering participants who identify as LGBT+, 58% LGBT+ participants felt confident in teaching LGBT+ content. Figure 3 suggests that the teachers' identity does not necessarily impact on their teaching confidence in this area.

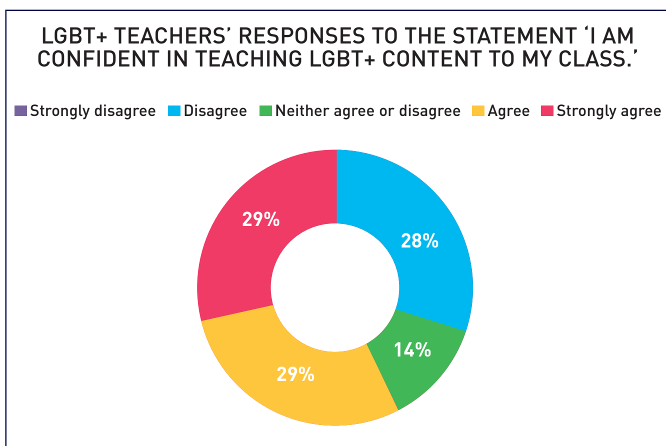

Figure 3: A pie chart illustrating whether LGBT+ teachers' feel confident or not in teaching LGBT+ content to their class.

Participants provided comments on factors that cause them to feel a lack of confidence in teaching LGBT+ content. The most common reasons for this lack of confidence were fearing opposition from parents and carers, being unsure what is age-appropriate, not having adequate subject knowledge (especially of the correct terminology) and having a lack of training and resources. Participants indicated worry that they may offend parents who identify as LGBT+ by saying something incorrect. Fear of parental conflict was a frequent reason for teachers' lack of confidence in teaching LGBT+ content – 75% of participants stated that they feared opposition from parents and carers.

You may find that there's a backlash from the parents that they don't feel comfortable with their children being taught that – Interviewee A

70% of participants stated that they had not received adequate training from the school that they work in to teach LGBT+ content effectively and 69% of participants confirmed that they had not had any training in delivering LGBT+ content. Participants commented that they required more support in delivering LGBT+ content and that training was needed to ensure that all staff knew what to teach and how to teach it. All participants commented that either they personally were not confident in the correct terminology to use, or that they had heard other staff members using language that was not correct or appropriate, which made them aware even more of the need for effective teacher training.

RQ3: If LGBT+ content is taught in a primary school, what are the teachers' perspectives on the most effective strategies used?

Currently in the schools that teach LGBT+ content, 37 participants identified the most common strategy was teaching within specific Personal Social and Health Education (PHSE) or RSHE lessons. 23 schools use assemblies to deliver LGBT+ content and 22 schools use class discussions, debates and circle time. Less common strategies include the use of books involving LGBT+ characters or themes, integration of LGBT+ role models across the curriculum and classroom displays.

The most effective strategies of teaching within PSHE or RSHE were having class discussion, debates or circle time. In response to why teachers felt this was an effective strategy, they commented that a PSHE scheme ensures that teaching is age appropriate, and it is planned and resourced for the teacher using correct subject content and terminology, therefore reducing their worry of misinforming or offending. Additionally, using PSHE or circle time creates a safe place for discussion to take place and clear boundaries are set to ensure respect, and it is a time that allows pupils to ask questions and reflect. Despite this, a frequent point made when discussing teacher confidence was the lack of schemes of work and resources available, highlighting the need for either more in-depth guidance on the delivery of LGBT+ content, or for schools to be made aware of the various schemes and resources that are available from charities and organisations, such as Stonewall (2019).

Another strategy that participants stated was integrating LGBT+ role models into other areas of the curriculum, with 16 participants selecting this strategy. Stonewall (2019) provides ideas every subject area, for example teaching about they/them/their 5pronouns as singular as well as plural pronouns in English or using LGBT+ role models in wider curriculum subjects, such as Alan Turing in History (who is best known breaking the Enigma code during the Second World War and persecuted for his sexuality). Questionnaire participants expressed that embedding LGBT+ content across the curriculum builds a culture of inclusivity and acceptance and normalises LGBT+ matters.

We did a Pride Day last year... We took a colour from the rainbow in each year group and themed our activities around the theme of the colour – Interviewee C

Other effective strategies identified included: assemblies, school or classroom displays, informative videos and school visitors. A range of strategies across the school seemed to be the most effective way to create an inclusive school environment according to the participants in this study (Price and Tayler, 2015, pp.74–80; Barnes and Carlile, 2018, pp.66–83).

Conclusion

This study intended to explore why, how and when to deliver LGBT+ education in English primary schools. Most teachers feel LGBT+ content should be taught at some point within primary education, and most of these feel that it should begin being taught from Reception or Year 1 as this cultivates an environment of respect and acceptance.

When considering strategies to deliver LGBT+ content, this study identified that teachers' feel PSHE lessons or circle time are the most effective strategies to deliver LGBT+ content, however teachers would appreciate a specific scheme of work to support them in delivering this. Furthermore, participants expressed that use of literature and integration of LGBT+ content across the curriculum are also effective strategies as this normalises LGBT+ topics. Half of participants felt confident in teaching LGBT+ content, however, many teachers still felt they need to grow in confidence; the lack of training and resources and a fear of parental opposition being the key factors that concern them (DePalma, 2018, p.9; Barnes and Carlile, 2018, p.33). There is a need for resources to be developed to allow teachers and trainee teachers to build their confidence in teaching age-appropriate activities. Initial teacher training can begin this process by considering the broadness of opportunity to be inclusive and looking for opportunities to build LGBT+ content into their curriculums. Training providers should work closely with school-based mentors to allow trainee teachers the opportunity to experience how content is taught and the culture of the school can be representative of a range of communities.

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Twitter as a Virtual Community of Practice (VCoP): New connections and research collaborations

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Mike Scott - ASD Support Tutor and EdD student

Communities of practice

Lave and Wenger coined the term 'Community of Practice' (CoP) over thirty years ago in their seminal book, *Situated Learning Legitimate Peripheral Participation* (1991). A CoP can be defined as a 'group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do, and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly' (Wenger, 1998:20). In the decades since this initial practice, online spaces have been created where people with similar interests can connect and interact; these can be known as online communities of practice (OCoP), or, as the co-authors of this paper choose to refer to them, virtual communities of practice (VCoP). To qualify as a VCoP, there are certain characteristics that must be met; namely the initial criteria composed for a CoP. A VCoP, therefore, must have:

- Active members i.e., professionals or practitioners in the industry
- Opportunities for collective learning
- Social structures, such as the expert and novice hierarchy, that allow for knowledge creation and sharing

The term VCoP may be met with some resistance, as the key feature of Lave and Wenger's community is that of 'situated learning' (1991) is absent, but recent bounds in integration of the internet into our communications, particularly in light of remote teaching, learning and working as a result of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, has encouraged many to see that VCoP do exist (Delgado et al., 2021). VCoPs, therefore, can then be seen as a 'third space'; this term was created by Soja (1996) who defined third spaces as 'imagined' spaces and lived spaces; the way that people actually live in and experience within that given space. This is action in the real space (First space) and through the digital connections (Second space). Third space can be summarised as where everything then comes together into a transdisciplinary space between places; interactions between physical and digital spaces (Soja, 1996).

One critique of VCoPs, however, is that many practitioners who are busy in the 'real world' with teaching and meeting commitments often claim that they do not have the time to spend in such communities (Haas et al., 2021), which supports the idea that a CoP needs to be locally situated to successfully function. The co-authors of this paper met through the VCoP of Twitter, and advocate that solely virtual CoPs can exist and be proactive, productive and successful. This think-piece explores recommendations for using Twitter to develop spaces for research collaboration and output. Figure 1 (below) shows how we see Twitter as part of our professional third space.

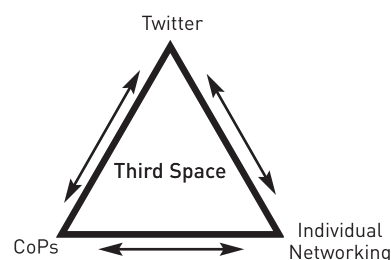

Figure 1: The third space zones

Using VCoPs to transcend time and geographical boundaries

Traditional forms of professional learning have the usual constraints of space and time and therefore lack the continuing support needs for professional development. These models of professional learning typically happen over a singular day and do not meet the individual needs and are often 'inadequate, fragmented and superficial' (Thacker, 2015: 38). This is where educators in the UK have been turning to social media platforms such as Twitter for informal communities of practice for professional learning in which the educator can create their own personal networks. Social media platforms such as Twitter enable educators to break down boundaries through real-time availability in different geo-locations and time zones.

Twitter is a platform that facilitates microblogging and hashtags as a way of communicating globally, with 330 million active accounts and this has led to a 'significant uptake of educators for various professional uses' Carpenter et al. (2020: 1). Although Twitter is being used as a platform for professional learning, the educator' social media presence varies; this is similar to more traditional models of learning as it depends on the user input and their willingness to share ideas. There are some educators that will just 'lurk' without engaging in any forms of dialogue. Researchers have found that the majority of educators' tweets came from likes and retweets, rather than original content (Greenhalgh & Koehler, 2017).

However, one method of professional learning has been through 'chats' that are held at various times which are planned dialogues of communication from responses including hashtags that are around a particular community of practice or organizations. Twitter chats can be identified as VCoPs that users can participate and interact with using the #hashtags i.e., #UKFECHAT is one example for educators in Further Education within the UK.

On a smaller scale, Twitter is just one way that we can encourage and boost professional learning in virtual collaborative spaces; the use of both the 'front stage' of tweets and the 'backstage' of the private Direct Messaging (DM) tool through the site allows for a paper trail of meaning conversations to be kept and archived between a pair of individuals.

Conclusion, recommendations and further research

This think-piece has pitched how Twitter is a platform that allows a freedom for the professional (educator) to access CPD, network and engage in at a time of their own choice. The possibilities are endless in what forms of engagement and commitment the educator takes. Although Lave and Wenger's original ideas for a community of practice back in 1991 could not have foreseen the technological advances that online platforms would have made, we are strong advocates that VCoPs do exist (Delgado et al., 2021).

We would like to encourage you as the reader to try and collaborate through this third space; engage in 'chats' or similarly follow VCoPs that you may want to participate with/ learn more from. This working paper for this special issue of CollectivEd was, itself, created on a Google doc link via Twitter DMs; despite having written several papers together, the co-authors have not yet met face to face.

In consideration of further research, the co-authors of this paper hope to conduct research into Twitter practices and would welcome interest from others in the field to collaborate; please do follow and contact us on Twitter via the details provided:

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Improving the educational experiences and outcomes of looked after children in secondary education: the role of teacher training and continued professional development

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Context

Looked after children (LAC) do substantially worse academically and professionally than their peers, but although the government focus has clearly shifted to improve this by putting together a national strategy for improving outcomes, there has been to date, very little improvement in results. In fact, there seems to be a downwards trend. This article hopes to investigate the cause for the widening gap.

To put this into perspective, the Department for Education's (DfE) most recent report showed that in 2020/2021, there were 80850 young people in care (DfE, 2021). This was an increase from 1% on the previous year. Since records began in 2009, this has increased year-on-year, except for a very small decrease of 0.1% in 2018. There will be more looked-after young people in the education system each year and this reflects the need for a robust strategy for ensuring LAC receive a suitable and tailored education. DfE statistics overwhelmingly indicate that the educational outcomes for LAC are significantly lower. In a report around 2019 GCSE data by the Department for Education, LAC had an overall Key Stage 4 (KS4) Progress 8 score of -1.23 compared to non-looked after children (NLAC) whose average Progress 8 was -0.07 (Department for Education, 2020). This is worse than the previous year in 2018, when the Progress 8 score was -1.2 (DfE, 2019) and worse still than the previous year, 2017 when the Progress Score was -1.18 (DfE, 2018) suggesting a downwards trend (see Figure One).

Year	Progress 8 score	Difference to previous year
2019	-1.23	-0.03
2018	-1.2	-0.02
2017	1.18	-0.02

Figure 1: Progress 8 Scores from 2017 to 2019

Therefore, although the number of LAC is increasing and on-the-whole the awareness of their presence in schools should be greater given the national strategy set out by the government, their outcomes are actually worsening and the gap between them and their peers is widening, which would disagree with the common-sense idea that the greater the awareness the more positive and tangible the impact. Whatever is being done is not having a meaningful enough impact on LAC. With this research I hope to shed light on how our system currently fails LAC and how as schools and individual practitioners we can utilise our skills to improve the outcomes for these vulnerable students and give them a greater chance of a fulfilling and successful life post-compulsory education focusing on training and continuing professional development as a drive for awareness and change.

It is imperative that school leaders invest in a training program that centres around attachment and trauma awareness as well as informing staff on emotionally intelligent practices to deal with the challenges of teaching LAC (Martindale, 2018). Given the symptoms of attachment disorder discussed earlier and the impact of abuse and trauma, as well as the poor outcomes for LAC in secondary education, it seems vital that teachers, school leaders and support staff understand attachment theory in particular, the role they can play in breaking negative behaviour cycles, creating strong interpersonal relationships and improving outcomes for young people in care (Dann, 2011). However, 'attachment theory is not part of the pedagogical domain of teachers' expertise, such as an approach to literacy or mathematics; teachers therefore lack this kind of professional expertise' (Fancourt, 2019). Likewise, despite a teacher's best and honourable intentions, teachers whom are not familiar with and specifically trained on attachment and trauma, they will be unsuccessful and unable to meet those particular child's needs, however if a teacher is able to meet there needs and school is able to create stability for the child, then this can be life-changing or altering for them (Dann, 2011).

Understanding attachment and how it affects LAC will help teachers be more effective in helping challenging pupils (Bergin and Bergin, 2009). Geddes (2018) believes that all children can be enabled to learn, however the responsibility lies within the teacher to understand the vulnerabilities of students with attachment disorder and how to respond reflectively to the challenges and obstacles this brings up. Geddes (2018) concluded in their research that schools that had therapeutically trained leaders and were able to share that practice required fewer outside services such as mental health professionals, socials services etc to be utilised, as teachers felt equipped with the toolkit to understand the students' behaviours, the causes of it and the implications of their actions in how it is dealt with. They reported that it gave teachers an awareness of their own experiences and how this is impacting how they respond to challenging behaviour or issues that arise from trauma or attachment. Many of the behaviours of LAC and traumatised children can have the effect on those around them, causing hypervigilance, stress and panic – which manifests with this; this is often called 'toxic stress' or 'secondary trauma' and has major mental health implications for the teacher or practitioner involved (Martindale, 2018). But what Geddes (2018) suggests is that teachers that have a strong awareness of the signs of symptoms of students with attachment needs, are able to protect, not just the student, but themselves from a spiral of negative experiences and outcomes and can negate the feelings of helplessness and inadequacy that inevitably arise when feeling out of your depth. It is important to note that, although the benefit of effective CPD (continual professional development) and training on attachment and LAC is primarily for the students, the positive effect on teacher's wellbeing and retention cannot be ignored. In 2019, only 15% of teachers that withdrew from the profession retired (DfE, 2019) and whilst there is no research to suggest a lack of training or CPD is the reason for this exponentially high turnover of staff in the profession, it is suggested that replacing negative narratives about LAC and those with attachments needs with a more empathetic response based on understanding of needs would be therapeutic for teachers as well help decrease the burnout of staff caused by the feelings of inadequacy in a profession currently haemorrhaging staff (Little and Maunder, 2020).

However, it is not only important to recognise the value of understanding attachment needs through continued professional development but also during Initial Teacher Training (ITT). A recent report – Teachers Who Care – commissioned by Become Charity (2018) on helping teachers and schools support LAC, found that 87% of teachers who had qualified since 2010 had received no training on how to support LAC before qualifying and they concluded that 'all routes into teaching should include information about children in care, including trauma and attachment aware behaviour management, what being in care is like, and key concepts such as the Virtual School, Designated Teacher, and Personal Education Plan. This should apply to university and school-led training and qualifications' (Become Charity, 2018; 4). In the most recent ITT Core Framework there is no obligation or advice that attachment, trauma or specifically targeting the progress of LAC should be a priority in either university or school-led training. It does highlight the need for high quality teaching for disadvantaged pupils (DfE, 2019), however this covers a multitude of demographics and given the statistics on both training and LAC academic outcomes, the connection is not being made holistically by the profession and therefore could be helped by being more explicit. It seems that this is being interpreted by the teaching profession as those from socio-economically deprived backgrounds, those with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities), perhaps the gender gap and those with English as an additional language (EAL), as we have seen that through rigorous change in policy all of these groups have started to profit from better outcomes, but LAC are still not seeing that benefit (Alix, 2020).

Rose, McGuire-Snieckus, Gilbert and McInnes (2019) conducted a significant piece of research that focused on the impact of training staff and implementing strategies and intervention in line with being an Attachment Aware School (AAS) and to deliver emotion coaching as universal practice that focused on relationships and targeted support for both teachers and LAC and those with attachment needs with the hope of this kind of

ethos becoming embedded in the school practice. Emotion coaching is an idea first introduced formally by John Gottman (1998) with an underpinning idea that we should try to listen and understand children's emotions and their reasons for emotional dysregulation, as opposed to using sanctions and disciplines to ignore or dismiss emotions as negative or attention-seeking behaviours (Gottman, Declaire and Goleman, 1998). A study of 200 participants across 40 schools were used in two separate UK Local Authorities. Each institution used a whole-school training and implementation approach supported by leadership and delegated to all members of teaching and support staff. During the training phase, staff were thoroughly informed of emotion coaching strategies and attachment aware interventions linked to attachment theory. The results demonstrated a lower level of sanctions, exclusions and overall difficulties whilst there were also tangible improvements to academic performance, including English and Maths. The results were so impactful that the research is now being used to effect policy at a national level (Rose, McGuire-Snieckus, Gilbert and McInnes, 2019). This study emphasises the importance of rigorous, meaningful and non-tokenistic training at a whole-school level of attachment aware interventions and strategies that would directly benefit LAC, their engagement in learning and subsequently their academic performance. The research highlights that all benefit (both students and staff) from a knowledge and understanding of attachment and how to approach difficult situations with student's whose lives and upbringings have been tempestuous and sometimes chaotic. The training was iterative, which research suggests is clearly better than one-off training. A one-off session may help to motivate or inspire staff but will not be successful in embedding the theories in practice (Langton, Boy and Eastwood, 2017). The staff involved in the training and research also reported better staff wellbeing, adult regulation and increased confidence in the classroom (Rose, McGuire-Snieckus, Gilbert and McInnes, 2019). Most likely, this stems from eliminating or reducing the feeling of helplessness and inadequacy discussed earlier as it gives teachers agency, autonomy and control over the classroom and how their students learn. From the research and the literature, it is apparent that the need for training is evident and the positive impact it can have on both teacher and student is palpable. Although The Children's Act (1989), specifically states that the local authority have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child looked-after by them which includes a specific duty to promote the child's educational achievement wherever they live (Children's Act, 1989) and the government have more recently introduced the 'Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children' in 2017 to demonstrate their commitment to improving outcomes for CIC and insisting all educational establishments 'strives for accelerated progress and age-related attainment or better for looked-after children' (DfE, 2018; 8) however, in the same guidance offers no promotion or suggestion of attachment based training for staff or leadership. And although this commitment to LAC is welcomed, if it is not permeated across all levels of education including teacher training and CPD it is not surprising that outcomes for LAC are worsening. Pre-care and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) such as abuse, maltreatment and neglect have shown that the experiences lead to a greater risk of academic vulnerability and therefore lower attainment (Lipkin, 2016). However, this is not completely deterministic of a child's future. Hardcastle et al (2018) states that Trauma-Informed (TI) practice and training that changes whole-school approaches to policy and procedure, as well as the support of a trusted adult to mitigate the effect of ACE highlights, that although the pre-care experiences have a profound impact, it is not deterministic and can be mitigated by the actions of an educational institution. This reinforces the idea that with an embedded training for teachers, across their professional career, from pre-qualifying to senior leaders, a difference could be made to break the cycle of low attainment and poor outcomes for a demographic of society at their most disadvantaged if effective training were in place.

Recommendations

1. At policy level, the ITE framework for training teachers needs to be restructured so that training on attachment and the needs of LAC becomes obligatory to all school-centred and university led courses. The objective should be to move away from aligning it with Pupil Premium training as this promotes using generic strategies to try and fit with very specialised and specific needs. As outlined, LAC are the worst performing students academically and therefore need an individual training approach, not a merged one. It needs to be in the pedagogical domain from the outset of a teacher's training to ensure it is embedded in their practice. As the data suggests, this means iterative training that is non tokenistic but that is woven through their ITT programme, perhaps evaluating approaches with LAC in a placement setting so that a training teacher can see behaviours and how specific interventions impact a LAC in the classroom. This approach avoids tokenism and promotes individualised and personalised approaches whilst putting it as a priority during training- not something that becomes an obstacle once qualified. This would be the first step to a national strategy that is actively disseminated to teachers to promote academic progress. Likewise, this would also involve training teachers on how to regulate, understand, and recognise their own emotional responses to what can be challenging and difficult relationships to form and students to teach.

2. At school level, develop consistent and fluid CPD programmes that are tailored to a student's individual needs. Move away from conventional time-restricted, usually after-school, CPD sessions that focus on generic approaches and instead put the child(ren) at the centre of the training. Base strategies on the needs of the LAC in an individual school and assess, update and disseminate this regularly. This will give teachers more agency, confidence, autonomy and control to personalise their learning and deal with challenging or disruptive behaviour. Tailored CPD and training would also help to manage expectations, avoid negative assumptions and strike a balance between child privacy and teacher agency, giving teacher's a more personalised route to understanding the child's needs whilst also only revealing and assessing information that is appropriate. To compliment this, ensure that LAC Personal Education Plan's (PEP's) are disseminated to teachers and become working documents that are obligatory reading if that child is in your class as this will also ensure teachers are well-informed of the child's needs. On top of this tailored training, ensure a regular training session on emotion coaching, de-escalation and attachment aware strategies to encourage a holistic and constant evaluation of the strategies and techniques used in the classroom.

3. Put LAC at the centre of the training and planning process to promote positive relationships and to empower students to be a participant in their education as opposed to a recipient

or to negate the feeling it is something out of their control. To avoid negatively labelling or equally to avoid not meeting a child's needs, use student voice or a focus group of LAC to determine what they felt appropriate for teachers to know. This would need to be done with social workers present to ensure safe sharing of information. Allow the child to have some control of what is shared about them and to what extent they want teachers to know of their legal status, life story, living arrangement and current circumstances. By creating this safe space for young people, we would be ensuring that a one-size approach does not get used for all and allow teachers some insight that might be useful as well as ensuring that the children at the centre of it all are allowed agency over their own life-story and how they want it to be used moving forward into secondary education.

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Extending impact and influencing others – An ECT Mathematics Teacher

Georgia Shakespeare – Mathematics teacher, Pool Hayes Academy

Introduction

This paper reflects on my teaching vision and its development since joining the profession as a Mathematics teacher in 2020. I will reminisce on my time (experiences) on the Teach First training programme and the completion of my first year of the newly established ECT framework and how this has shaped me into the young professional I am today. Additionally, I will review how these experiences have played a unique part in defining my teaching vision and style. Whilst my core principles and educational philosophy have remained largely unchanged, these unique personal events have been fundamental to my own development. Furthermore, they have allowed me to identify critical incidents in both my own practice and in the wider educational body of my school and trust.

Particularly, as my teaching and learning methodology has evolved, my vision has adapted. My primary focus is still to get the best possible outcomes for my students, but I now look at educational theory and research to guide this as opposed to solely my own good intentions. Evidence-based teaching is being "increasingly embedded within schools" (Carter, 2015) and I strive to deliver evidence-informed practice to enact my vision.

My employment school has also been on its own development journey. On reflection my own personal development has mirrored the developmental needs of the school, this has been addressed through school wide behaviour and learning focuses. In September 2020, my initial priorities were establishing routines and ensuring good behaviour management. However, on writing this piece I find my focus has extended to reviewing pedagogical approaches and discovering the wider impact I can have in my school. I now explore how I can extend my vision beyond my classroom and positively impact my school community.

Throughout this article, I will demonstrate how my vision aligns with that of my employment school's development. Additionally, through reflection I will identify a critical incident that I will address through key action points to work towards institutional change. Providing solutions to a critical incident will help to work towards my employment school and own personal vision and achieve a shared goal of bettering student outcomes.

Teaching vision and personal development

My Initial teaching vision stemmed from Teach First. This vision centres around providing students with a high-quality education and ensuring that every child is provided with the opportunity to succeed academically with 'no child's educational success limited by their socio-economic background' (Teach First, 2018). Throughout the last two years this has remained my key vision in my role as an educator. However, on reflection my methodology has adapted and improved providing agreater opportunity for my vision to be achieved.

The adaptations to my practice have been inspired by colleagues in school and at university, research, my school's improvement plan and largely from reflecting on my teaching practice. By reviewing journal entries written during my first year of teaching, I can clearly identify changes in my practice. Originally my focuses linked largely to my own development and the short-termism of my goals prevented me from identifying and addressing wider issues and critical incidents. The pedagogical strategies I employed, centred around maximising the impact of my teaching and ensuring pupil progress.

In addition, I focused heavily on promoting a good working environment through effective behaviour management. One article that resonated with this stated a classroom should ensure a good working climate to enable pupils to achieve (Harzer, Weber and Huebner, 2017). I managed working environment by using a simple lesson structure that was replicated across the school. Each lesson consisted of an independent 'Do Now' activity, followed by explicit modelling and then independent work. Through establishing this routine and following the lesson structure I aligned with the school's vision on how a lesson should look. In addition, it gave my teaching structure and assisted in behaviour management as it was clear how pupils should be behaving and what they should be doing in each section of the lesson.

However, despite my lessons being well structured they did not always utilise the time available. Particularly, time spent completing 'Do Now' tasks was time consuming, and it often felt like pupils achieved very little. This is highlighted in research as a potential barrier to the success of 'Do Now' activities (Ford, 2020). The time spent completing these tasks partnered by many pupils choosing to opt out meant that potential learning opportunities were lost. This was mirrored across my department where significant proportions of lessons were spent completing inefficient 'Do Now' activities. This limited my departments opportunities to fulfil one of our faculty improvement plan targets, improving outcomes for all students. Thus, I can reflect that as my teaching has developed, I have adapted my approach to ensure that each element of my lesson works towards my teaching vision. Additionally, I have become very self-aware that when setting tasks, they should centre around student learning and not become time filling exercises or be there as behaviour management strategies to settle a class at the beginning of a lesson. This is something I was culpable of in my early days of teaching.

As my practice has adapted, I now ensure retrieval is part of my teaching. Retrieval practice is simply defined as "the act of recalling previously learned information" (Agarwal, Nunes and Blunt, 2021) and is widely endorsed. Educators unwavering and longstanding support for retrieval practice stems from its ability to help students better remember classroom content and perform better in assessments (Agarwal, Roediger, McDaniel and McDermott, 2020). This is based on research that suggests pupil progress improves when information is processed, stored, and retrieved more successfully (Unleash the Science of Learning – Retrieval Practice, 2021). Therefore, the inclusion of retrieval practice in my lessons is a form of

deliberate practice to ensure the outcomes of my teaching meet my vision. Additionally, this aligns with our faculty improvement plan which focuses on using effective techniques and strategies to ensure knowledge is retained in pupils' long-term memories. Therefore, the inclusion of retrieval in my teaching and ensuring time is used efficiently to allow for progress, are the basis of this research.

Critical incidents and reflection

Teachers are continuously adapting their practice to adjust to new environments, pupils, and the current educational focuses both within their schools and nationally, this is highlighted in Kate Clanchy's book 'Some Kids I Taught and What They Taught Me' (Clanchy, 2019). As teaching practitioners these adaptations to our practice and decision making come from a series of reflections of our own unique experiences. Thus, reflective practice is defined as the systematic reviewing process of deeply personal incidents which enable teachers to link one experience to the next, to support student learning and ensure pupil progress (Finlay, 2008). The importance of reflective practice has long standing support in educational research with many models all supporting the same aim "to get the best results from learning, for both the teacher and students." (Cambridge Assessment International Education, n.d.).

Particularly, Tripp's approach to reflection is to contemplate on what he considers a 'critical incident' that stems from an event within school (Tripp, 1993). A critical incident is not particularly dangerous or life altering, but instead is created by the way in which we interpret the significance of an event, if an experience is regarded as important or relevant, this is a critical incident for that individual (Tripp, 1993). To regard something as a critical incident is dependent on the value judgement we make. Alternatively, a critical incident can be defined as 'experiencing an undesirable situation' which is reflected upon to insight change (Keatinge, 2002). Furthermore, it may be a series of experiences that collectively become a single critical incident and area of reflection as opposed to one key moment in time (Angelides, 2001).

At the beginning of my career these reflections focused on the critical incidents within my practice. I observed these critical incidents and made mental notes, documented them in journals and discussed them with my mentors. Reflecting on critical incidents makes teachers "question their own practice, and to concretise their generally abstract notions of values" (Tripp, 1993:17). In addition, they are an excellent way to understand and develop 'professional judgement and practice' (Tripp, 1993). Therefore, these reflections were essential to my personal development and helped shape and refine my practice to what it is today. Particularly, they insighted change, allowing me to implement my teaching vision. The importance of reflection is further noted by Valli who suggests unreflective teachers limit their ability to make change in their classrooms (Valli, 1992).

However, as my skills have developed, I now reflect more on incidents involving students and find myself continually adapting to their needs. This shows that the pursuit of purposeful reflections and the analysis of critical incidents is not a one-off and final affair that will gradually fade away as my years in the profession increase but rather a constant element of my practice needed to fulfil my teaching vision. This is noted by Tripp who states personal reflection is important in highlighting "how we see ourselves in relation to current and past selves and practices" (Tripp, 1993:10).

Now I will reflect on and analyse a critical incident from my earliest days of teaching. This incident has impacted starter 'Do Now' tasks in my lessons and highlights the importance of retrieval practice.

To ensure effective reflection, I will analyse my critical incidents using the Driscoll model of reflection (Driscoll, 2007). This framework for analysing a critical incident is centred around three questions: What? So What? And Now What? He states that the first stage, 'What?' is where the individual describes the incident they are reflecting on. In the second stage, 'So What?' the cognitive processes are prompted allowing for a deeper understanding of the event and the evaluation of emotions. In the final stage of the model, 'Now What?' an opportunity is created for the practitioner to develop an action plan and decide upon their next steps for the future. This action plan is based on their overall reflections and should consider how best to improve pupil progress.

Evaluation and key actions

What?

My employment school insists lessons follow a generic lesson structure; this includes displaying a 'Do Now' task on the board ready for students' arrival. This is to encourage retrieval practice and the storing of information in their long-term memory's. In addition, by repeating this across the school students should instinctively settle and begin working on the task presented to them immediately meaning time is used efficiently. However, for large waves of my students this was not the case. Instead of beginning working instantly they were disengaged with the starter tasks and had no understanding or appreciation of the benefits it had for their learning. In addition, I personally used the tasks as more of a teaching strategy to settle students and prepare for the lesson, as opposed to fully respecting it as a retrieval exercise and learning opportunity for my pupils.

The starter tasks I used were a shared department resource, comprised of ten numeracy questions intended to be completed in ten minutes. These were created before I began my career and were designed to tackle weaknesses in numeracy. However, I found them time consuming particularly when additional time was needed to mark answers and model correct solutions. I also observed students learnt very little over the weeks and were repeatedly choosing to only answer questions that involved little rigour such as addition and subtraction and were rarely accessing information stored in their long-term memories needed to attempt more challenging questions.

So What?

As a trainee teacher, I was more concerned with establishing a good working environment and preparing for what I then viewed as the 'most important' section of the lesson, the introduction and modelling of the day's new concepts. This resulted in both my students and I continuing to go through the starter task of each lesson half-heartedly and tiresomely all waiting to get to what I believe we all viewed as the 'proper bit'.

However, as I became more established in my teaching, I began to research the benefits of retrieval practice for pupil progress. I then contemplated strategies I could use within my own lessons to guarantee retrieval practice by my own students and ensure engagement in the process. I conclude that for the 'Do Now' starters to be deemed worthwhile I

needed to adapt them so they were relevant to my pupils to allow them to retrieve knowledge I was confident they had, time efficient and finally they must work towards improving pupil progress.

Now What?

This critical incident leads directly to my intended intervention. In addition, it has been my main teaching and learning focus in my ECT year and largely focuses on the widely announced benefits of retrieval practice to pupil progress (Unleash the Science of Learning – Retrieval Practice, 2021). The intervention will focus on the creation of a new format of 'Do Now' starter. It will be designed to address three issues I identified in my critical incident:

- Time efficiency
- Relevance to students learning
- Student engagement

Intervention

Using 'Do Now' as a retrieval starter task has been proven as an environmental retrieval cue for accessing prior knowledge (Carpenter et al, 2012). Additionally, by developing a routine it enables skills to be regularly practiced which improves and strengthens the neural pathways between the short-term and long-term memory, increasing the likelihood of effective retrieval (Carpenter et al, 2012). This research demonstrates that 'Do Now' starters can be a vital part of lessons and have a significant impact on my pupils learning. This research therefore supported my decision to adapt my departments current format of 'Do Now' starter to address the issues observed in my critical incident.

Time efficiency

One of the most noticeable issues was that starters regularly extended 15 minutes into the lesson, reducing time for modelling and independent practice. Therefore, to better suit the pace of lessons and their 55-minute period I chose to reduce the number of questions to five. This reduced the amount of time needed for students to attempt the questions and the time needed to model solutions.

Additionally, I ensured students completed questions independently and without classroom aids. This meant students could begin as soon as they entered the classroom. In addition, it ensured students were drawing solely on their own knowledge and using their long-term memories, improving their learning opportunities as "the more difficult the retrieval practice, the better it is for long-term learning" (Agarwal, Roediger, McDaniel and McDermott, 2020).

Relevance to student learning

Secondly, the intervention was designed to ensure 'Do Now' tasks were relevant to the students they were presented to. From reflecting on the critical incident, I realised students were frequently asked questions on topics for which they had no knowledge. This meant these starter activities were at times more of a period of learning that an opportunity to practice retrieval. Thus, for my intervention I selected questions from topics they had covered in class. This enabled students to fully develop their knowledge and test their long-term memory (Little et al, 2012). Also, by revisiting a topics months after they were originally taught it and being spaced apart by other topics it allows for spaced retrieval (Willingham, 2002). Providing an opportunity for retrieval by carefully selecting appropriate questions helps students better remember classroom content and thus perform better in assessments (Agarwal, Roediger, McDaniel and McDermott, 2020).

Engagement

Thirdly, the intervention was created to address the concern of pupil engagement and the frequenting issue of students opting out. This can be linked to several factors, including late arrival to lessons, insufficient equipment or taking time to focus and settle. Therefore, to alleviate the impact of these barriers I established clear expectations and provided equipment.

Additionally, I included live answer modelling whilst student's self-marked. By modelling answers, it helped students recall information that they had struggled to retrieve independently. Meaning when a similar question was presented to them in the future they were better engaged as they had been reminded of how to access the information required from their long-term memories (Barton, 2018). Furthermore, by providing accurate feedback it ensued the students held no misconceptions in their long-term memories and that they were able to correctly retrieve knowledge in future starter tasks (Barton, 2018).

Conclusion

I have already observed the benefits of revising 'Do Now' retrieval starters. Particularly, students are more engaged and proactive. In addition, pupils are better at recalling previous work and have a greater level of retention of new topics. This ability to recall information has aided in their understanding and knowledge within mathematics. Thus, by focusing starters on previous student learning it has enabled me as the facilitator to observe gaps in students' long-term memory and understanding and plan future teaching and work to address these gaps to aid pupil progress. Finally, this highlights the importance of critical reflection within teaching, shining a light on how essential this part of practice it is for teacher develop and for future career successes.

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Leading learning in communities: an exploration of an online-learning-based intervention aimed at supporting disadvantaged students' return to the classroom

Christy Smithers - Teach First Mathematics Trainee

Introduction

In this paper, I will explore the challenges of my school's community with focus on Pupil Premium (PP) students in a Year 10 mixed-ability foundation class. I will then evaluate the success of an online-learning-based intervention by considering the levels of engagement and pupil progress, and the resulting impact on my future practice.

The Community

Context

The school within which the intervention will take place serves a community of students who predominantly live on a nearby housing estate – estate X. Estate X is the oldest and most isolated of five public housing estates in the local town, having been purpose built in the 1920s to house families that had been removed from Victorian slums in the town centre (Girling et al, 2000). Accordingly, individuals are proud to come from estate X, where for many, their family have resided for generations.

The town within which the school lies has experienced vast change since the building of estate X. Notably, a large pharmaceutical company had its headquarters and leading manufacturing site based in the town until recently (Company A, 2021). The result was a large migration of middle-class families to the town, and the creation of pockets of wealth. Nonetheless, this injection of wealth has not been felt by the community which the school serves, with estate X being classified as one of the most deprived areas in England (Cheshire East, 2015).

The intervention school comprises of less than 600 pupils an is below its maximum capacity (Ofsted, 2021a). The undersubscription is likely related to the numerous Requires Improvement Ofsted outcomes since the school was created in 2011 (Ofsted, 2021a). In addition, there are five other state-run secondary schools in the town, all of which are much larger and rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted (Ofsted, 2021b). Therefore, the community which the school serves is plagued by structural inequality, with worse education, worse housing, and worse opportunities than those around them. The resulting sense of powerlessness that the students feel towards their own lives creates an apathetic attitude towards their education, which merely continues the cycle of deprivation (Patel et al., 2018).

The Focus group

The intervention will take place within a mixed-ability Year 10 foundation group comprised of eighteen students, where the focus will be six students who are identified as PP.

Proficiency and success in mathematics is a key indicator of achievement in later life, so much so that some scholars believe it a modern "civil right" (Moses, 2001). As a result, ensuring students from all backgrounds achieve their potential in the subject is both equitable and necessary for long-term economic prosperity of the country (Boaler, 2009).

Currently, a key challenge experienced by PP students in mathematics is knowledge gaps created by high absenteeism during online learning. Even prior to the pandemic, a significant factor contributing to the attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students was a greater

loss of learning over school breaks for individuals from lower-socioeconomic backgrounds (Alexander et al., 2007). The fact that PP pupils were more likely to be absent for online learning (Eivers et al., 2020), combined with the greater impact of breaks in education for such individuals, suggests that PP students will be struggling to keep up with their more-privileged peers more than ever before.

Such disparities in pre-requisite knowledge have also been associated with spikes in poor behaviour, as students cannot engage effectively in the new learning (Kremer et al., 2016). This is reflected in the fact that the intervention class originally contained three additional PP students – all of which are now either undergoing a managed move or are attending an alternative provision school.

The intervention

The aim of the intervention is to maximise the current asset of the school's assessment-based curriculum[2], by providing accessible online lesson resources for the six PP students to address their unique knowledge gaps outside of the classroom (see Appendix 1 for an example of a self-study lesson). Given the loss of learning for students at all levels since the beginning of the pandemic when compared to pre-pandemic cohorts (Schult et al., 2021), some may argue that online lessons have been relatively ineffective. However, this loss may be partly attributed to poor online-lesson design, due to the lack of experience of educators and the absence of opportunity to prepare for the move to online lessons (Tomasik et al., 2020). Similarly, much of the loss can be attributed to the low level of engagement with lockdown learning, as students that engaged fully with online lessons are found to have made similar levels of progress to previous cohorts (Chiu et al., 2021). Accordingly, my intervention design focused on pedagogy and student engagement.

Evaluation

Student engagement

Between two assessments to identify the students' knowledge gaps, only three of the six pupils completed an online lesson. For the students that did engage with the intervention, they completed two online lessons each on average. The low engagement may have been caused by the fact that not all the class participated in the intervention, which could have been interpreted by some students as unfair and thus reduce student compliance (Molinari et al., 2013). However, the students involved in the intervention also had the highest levels of missed homework out of the class, which indicates that the poor engagement with home learning for the focus group is systemic. This is in line with the literature that finds that disadvantaged pupils do less homework on average than their more-privileged peers (Pfeiffer, 2018), which could be being driven by the low confidence of PP pupils' parents in supporting their child with their homework, as a result of lower levels of education on average themselves (O'Sullivan et al., 2014).

However, the online lessons were designed to be completed without additional support, as explanatory videos have been found to eliminate the effect of parental support on the quality of homework produced by a student (McCollum, 2018), and half of the students did not even attempt to access the content.

Nevertheless, the students' reluctance to engage with the intervention is not necessarily an act of defiance. In my experience, it is rare that students are given videos or other resources to support them with their home learning, and after almost 11 years of being given homework by the time they are in Year 10, disengagement is a natural response to a system that is not inclusive towards their needs. This lack of inclusion is a potential underlying cause of the fact that there is a positive effect of homework on academic performance for all students except those at the bottom end of the socioeconomic scale (Rønning, 2011).

Accordingly, I will consider the inclusivity of the homework I set in future. To reduce the inequity, I will employ the research of McCollum (2018) and aim to provide a clear and relevant video explanation to coincide with homework tasks. I will also provide students with a timetable outlining when I am available to support them with their homework on a one-to-one basis, as giving set times has been found to increase student take-up of academic help (Bryan & Burstein, 2010).

Moreover, to increase engagement with the self-study resources I will set independent study through the SharePoint area as homework for classes with significant differences in knowledge gaps. One reason this should increase compliance is because it will increase the perceived fairness if everyone is involved (Molinari et al., 2012).

Additionally, by setting the independent study as homework, I can employ the school's behavioural policy if it is not completed, which should increase compliance as consequences for non-compliance have been found to have the greatest effect on home-learning completion (Haas & Reiley, 2008).

Pupil progress

All of the students that engaged with the intervention saw improvements between the two assessments in the knowledge gaps which they focussed on in the online lessons. This is in line with predictions in the literature which find that online learning is effective in the short run and has a positive effect on academic performance[3] (Zare et al., 2016). Furthermore, students performed well in topics where the online lesson was accessed a few weeks before the second assessment, which suggests that the online lessons resulted in a change to the long-term memory, and thus the improvements were not merely superficial[4].

However, the intervention only looked at knowledge gaps across two assessments. This could generate overly optimistic results, as perceived knowledge gaps of the students could be caused by unrelated errors which are easily resolved. For instance, a student may have known that angles around a point sum to 360 degrees but made an error in their calculation when finding a missing angle. This is supported in the literature, which finds that disadvantaged students perform less consistently in tests on average due to greater fluctuations in their environment (Knapp, 1992).

Moreover, the students chose which online lessons to access based on their knowledge gaps. Given that student motivation has been found to have a positive relationship with levels of privilege (Wright, 2014) – a trend likely to be linked to the amount of perceived power an individual has over their future – and that the focus group were all PP, it is possible that the

[2]The school's mathematics curriculum is designed to meet the individual needs of every pupil, by assessing the students regularly on both pre-requisite and new knowledge in accordance with the national curriculum. Teachers then use this data to respond to the bespoke needs of the class.

[3]Albeit, this is not in comparison to classroom learning.

[4]This is based on the idea that learning occurs when there is a change in the long-term memory (Ofsted, 2022).

students chose the online lessons which they were most confident with, as opposed to the ones which would have been the most beneficial for their progress. Therefore, the choice of topic increases the likelihood that the "resolved" knowledge gaps were not actually knowledge gaps to begin with.

In future, I will therefore be explicit on which topic each student should access on the SharePoint area to mitigate this association between privilege and motivation. I will also base this guidance on long-term individual-level data as opposed to one assessment, to reduce the externality caused by basic errors that mask conceptual understanding[5]. Given disadvantaged students produce less consistent work (Knapp, 1992), a long-term approach will also prevent PP students from getting less relevant guidance than their more privileged peers.

Conclusion

The online-learning based intervention aimed at maximising the asset of the bespoke mathematics curriculum was overly optimistic. The design failed to consider many of the additional obstacles faced by PP students, which resulted in a low take-up and potentially biased results. However, there is a need for the large disparities in knowledge gaps caused by the pandemic to be addressed, and despite its many failings, the intervention is a possible long-term solution to a current compounding issue. Through responding to the findings of this essay, and continuous adaptation to the needs of the students, I believe the intervention has the potential to be the foundations of a system that will allow PP pupils to again feel the full benefit of their school's unique curriculum design.

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[5]This will be relatively straightforward to implement, as students have their progress in each topic throughout the year on the first page in their book. This will allow me to easily highlight consistent and significant knowledge gaps that are unique to each student.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Self-study lesson resources: Angle Facts (Corbett, 2022)

ESK: Angles Facts

Open the corresponding worksheet in the folder – **Corbettmaths Angles**

Play the following video: https://corbettmaths.com/2013/12/19/angles-right-angle-video-34/

Complete Question 1

Open the **Corbettmaths Angles Answers** document and mark your work. If you have got any incorrect, identify your mistake and correct it.

Play the following video: https://corbettmaths.com/2013/12/19/angles-straight-line-snvideo-35/

Complete Question 2

Check your answers.

Play the following video: https://corbettmaths.com/2012/08/10/angles-in-a-full-circle/

Complete Question 3

Check your answers.

Go to https://www.geogebra.org/m/zBVbBA73

Do you notice anything?

You should notice that vertically opposite angles are equal.

Play the following video: https://corbettmaths.com/2013/03/16/vertically-opposite-angles/

Complete Question 4

Check your answers.

Complete Question 5 – State which angle rule you are using for each question.

Check your answers.

Well done – you have completed the lesson on angle facts! ☺

Angles

Videos 30, 34, 35, 39 on Corbettmaths

Examples

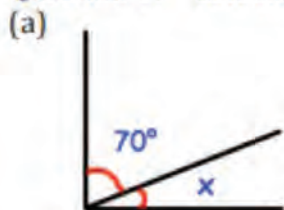
Workout

Click here

Scan here

Question 1: Calculate the size of the missing angles

(a)



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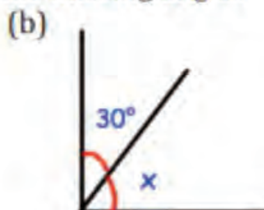

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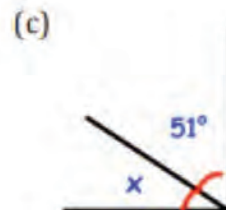

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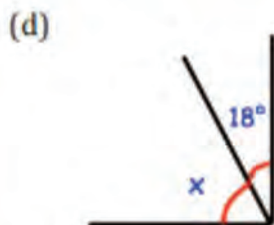

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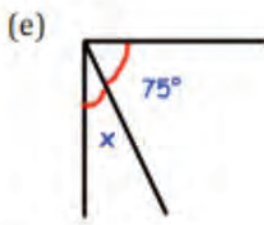

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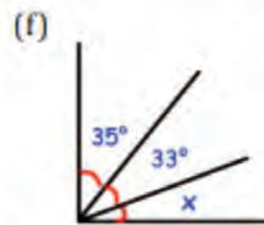

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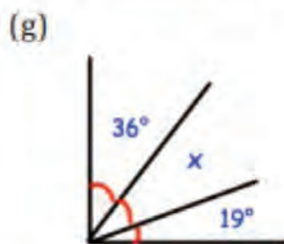

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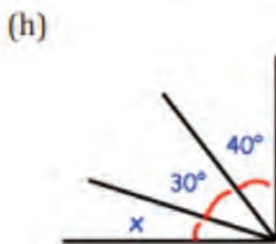

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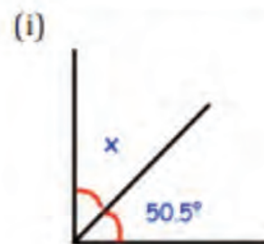

Question 2: Calculate the size of the missing angles

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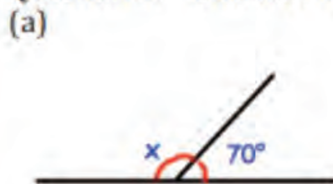

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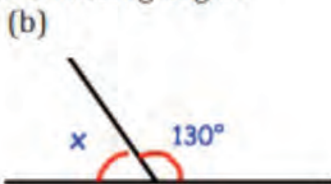

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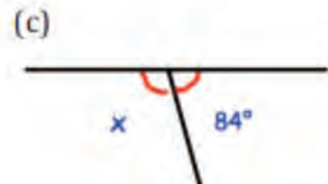

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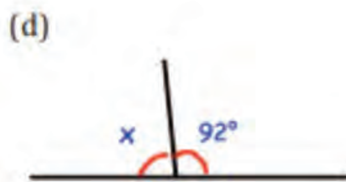

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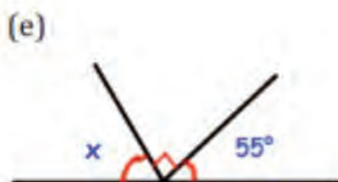

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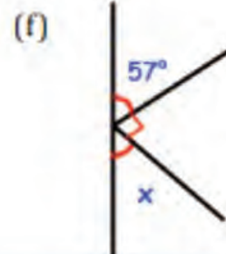

Angles

Videos 30, 34, 35, 39 on Corbettmaths

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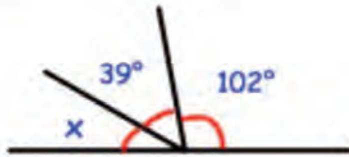

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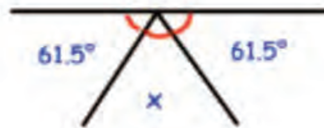

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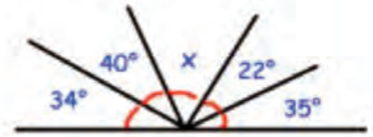

Question 3: Calculate the size of the missing angles

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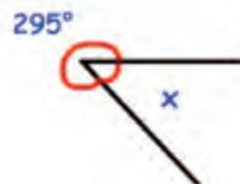

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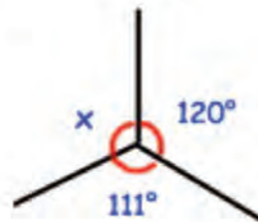

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Question 4: Shown below are two straight lines that cross.
Calculate the size of the missing angles

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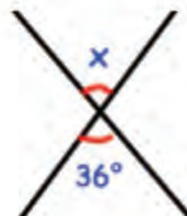
(b)



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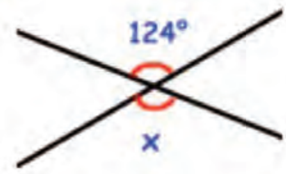

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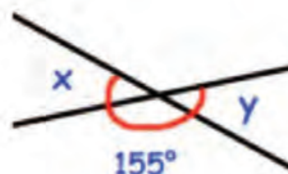

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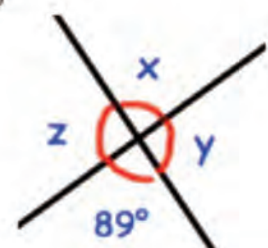

Angles

Videos 30, 34, 35, 39 on Corbettmaths

Question 5: Calculate the size of the missing angles

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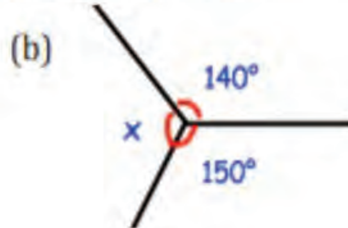
(b)



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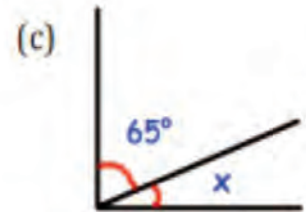

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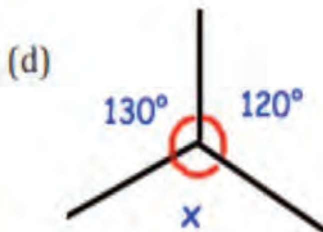

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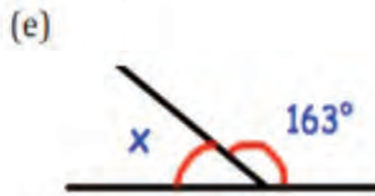

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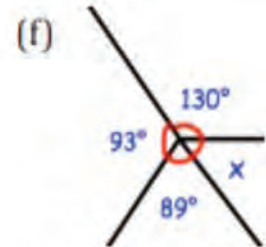

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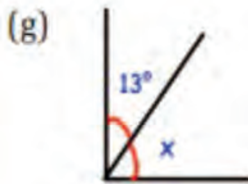

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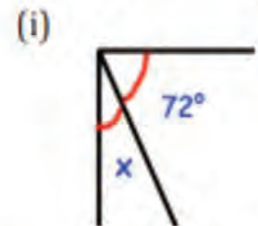

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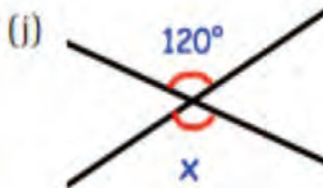

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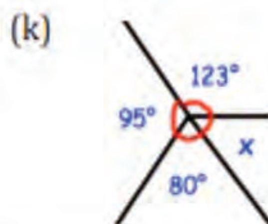

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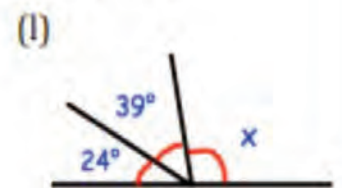

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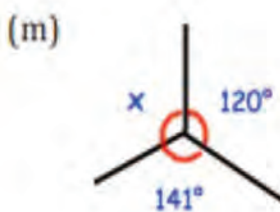

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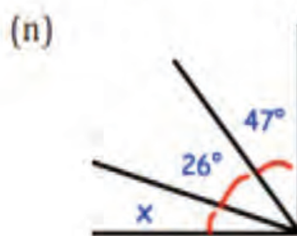

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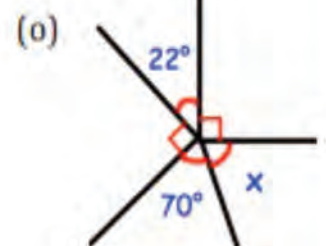
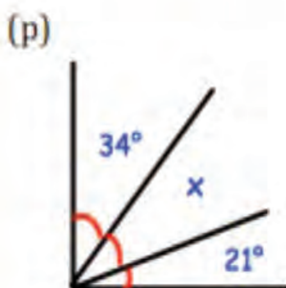
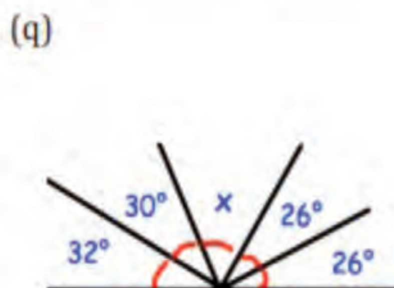


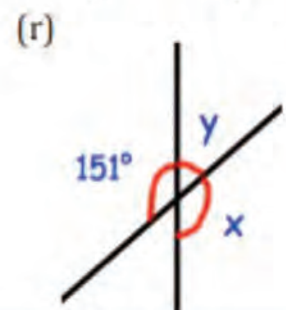
(p)



(q)



(r)



Corbettmaths Angles Answers

Question 1

"Angles in a right-angle sum to 90º"

(a) 90º - 70º = 20º

(b) 60º

(c) 39º

(d) 72º

(e) 15º

(f) 22º

(g) 35º

(h) 20º

(i) 39.5º

Question 2

"Angles on a straight-line sum to 180º"

(a) 180º - 70º = 110º

(b) 50º

(c) 96º

(d) 88º

(e) 35º

(f) 33º

(g) 39º

(h) 57º

(i) 49º

Question 3

"Angles around a point sum to 360º"

(a) 360º - 140º = 220º

(b) 65º

(c) 106º

(d) 132º

(e) 129º

(f) 113º

(g) 93º

(h) 23º

(i) 82º

Question 4

"Vertically opposite angles are equal"

(a) x is vertically opposite the angle equal to 160º, so x = 160º

(b) x = 36º

(c) x = 124º

(d) x = 156º "Vertically opposite angles are equal"

y = 24º "Angles on a straight-line sum to 180º" or "Vertically opposite angles are equal" and "Angles around a point sum to 360º"

(e) x = 25º "Angles on a straight-line sum to 180º" or "Vertically opposite angles are equal" and "Angles around a point sum to 360º"

y = 25º "Angles on a straight-line sum to 180º" or "Vertically opposite angles are equal" and "Angles around a point sum to 360º"

(f) x = 89º "Vertically opposite angles are equal"

y = 91º "Angles on a straight-line sum to 180º" or "Vertically opposite angles are equal" and "Angles around a point sum to 360º"

z = 91º "Angles on a straight-line sum to 180º" or "Vertically opposite angles are equal" and "Angles around a point sum to 360º"

Question 5

(a) "Angles on a straight-line sum to 180º"

(b) "Angles around a point sum to 360º"

(c) "Angles in a right-angle sum to 90º"

(d) "Angles around a point sum to 360º"

(e) "Angles on a straight-line sum to 180º"

(f) "Angles around a point sum to 360º"

(g) "Angles in a right-angle sum to 90º"

(h) "Angles on a straight-line sum to 180º" and "Angles in a right-angle sum to 90º"

(i) "Angles in a right-angle sum to 90º"

(j) "Vertically opposite angles are equal"

(k) "Angles around a point sum to 360º"

(l) "Angles on a straight-line sum to 180º"

(m) "Angles around a point sum to 360º"

(n) "Angles in a right-angle sum to 90º"

(o) "Angles around a point sum to 360º" and "Angles in a right-angle sum to 90º"

(p) "Angles in a right-angle sum to 90º"

(q) "Angles on a straight-line sum to 180º"

(r) "Vertically opposite angles are equal" and "Angles on a straight-line sum to 180º"

Using Bernstein's theory of pedagogical devices to examine compromises made within physical education curriculum designs

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Introduction

After the Women's England international football team (Lionesses) recently enjoyed success, the lionesses urged in a letter to the UK government that all schoolgirls have access to football and two hours of physical education (PE) each week (Lionesses, 2022). PE is a required core subject for all secondary school pupils between the ages of 11 and 16. However, not all schools place the same value on PE, as survey from 2018 (Youth Sports Trust, 2018) identified that KS3 pupils receive approximately 124 minutes of PE per week, whilst KS4 accessed 98 minutes. The national curriculum (NC) promotes guidance and recommendations, rather than statutory requirements. This could impact the core definition of PE, as the effect could be related to provisions offered and how students can access the curriculum criteria (Griggs and Fleet, 2021); however, the effectiveness of PE is based on students' comprehension of the subject and adherence to the Ofsted framework (2019).

This article will investigate PE curriculum designs with a focus on how they adhere to PE NC recommendations and consider the Ofsted (2019) inspection framework, which is used to assess and look at the quality of education in schools. Pedagogical techniques, such as curriculum designs and descriptions of how a topic should be taught, change because of reforms and frameworks in the NC. Numerous studies (Caena, 2014; Herold, 2020; Simmons and MacLean, 2018) have examined the advantages and disadvantages of PE, focusing on evaluation techniques and teaching methods, while ignoring the underlying ideologies of curriculum designs.

Based on Bernstein's educational strategies, this article looks to explore how current PE curriculum designs. The Ofsted inspection framework (2019) requires curricular designs to inspire pedagogical principles inside their teaching and learning journey, which led to the selection of this theory. Bernstein developed a theory that parallels how context can be conveyed through practice and enables knowledge to be transformed into pedagogical communication. Backman (2011), for instance, used Bernstein's paradigm to promote PE by reviewing PE overviews, creating concepts for pedagogic gadgets, and incorporating fresh knowledge on dance and outdoor education. As the recontextualization phase needs information from primary sources focused on and beneficial to the identity of pedagogy, the distributive knowledge phase must undergo selective judgments to grasp the requirements of PE and the provisions of the schools (Whatman and Singh, 2015). Primary sources are recent, relevant, organised strands of information related to the topic (Young, 2008). There might be an inference that distributive knowledge complies with NC recommendations, which would constrain the latitude and flexibility with which knowledge from primary fields was chosen and used as curriculum subject matter.

Bernstein's pedagogical devices

According to Bernstein, there are three pedagogical strategies (See Figure 1):

1 Distributive knowledge	Distributive knowledge focuses on the principles underlying the design of curriculums. For example, using the NC guidance on sporting activities would be distributive knowledge as source as an origin with a clear focus.
2 Recontextualization	Recontextualization concentrates on the primary knowledge found in curricula. For example, focusing on how the knowledge is produced, referencing the national curriculum once again, and how departments and curriculums look to develop individuals through sport.
3 Evaluation	Evaluation concentrates on student achievement (focusing on how the knowledge is reformulated and facilitated) For example, using GCSE PE sporting criteria as an assessment tool/measure to assess students' progress during each activity.

Figure 1: Bernstein's model

Bernstein's model focuses on gathering new knowledge and creating novel ideas suitable for providers. The model's significance is related to what the inspection framework (Ofsted, 2019) expects. The creation of curricula must exhibit both breadth and depth of knowledge while incorporating new material that is frequently taught.

Harris (2013), for instance, used Bernstein's paradigm to promote physical education by reviewing PE overviews, creating concepts for pedagogic gadgets, and incorporating fresh knowledge on dance and outdoor education. Backman investigated several dance and outdoor education programmes and evaluated how they may be recontextualized and taught inside each school, demonstrating success, and adhering to national curriculum guidelines Therefore, Harris' study highlights the significance of investigating distributive knowledge, choosing the appropriate provisions, and identifying the information within the pedagogy so that it can be recontextualized based on the primary source.

Numerous studies have looked at PE's provisions and compromises, concentrating on teaching strategies and ways to gauge students' progress. In my opinion, most curricula concentrate on sport-specific activities and ensure participation in sports, PA, and recreational levels of exercise (using Bernstein's pedagogical devices). The NC and the policies that schools must follow when setting goals and objectives are the basis for this assumption. Most schools may use the policy as a primary component when developing their curricula, giving little thought to personalization and alternative methods of recontextualizing the information from the NC. While students' participation in PE is comparable, the design of PE curriculum is influenced by fads like new emerging sports and financial budgets (O'Leary, 2019).

1 Correlations with Bernstein's distributive pedagogical device

In my opinion, most schools follow the NC advice in curriculum planning and documentation when considering Bernstein's first pedagogical device (distributive), but the majority fail to elaborate on how they intend to use the aims. Given that the NC served as the guiding principle, it is obvious that the common distributive pedagogical strategies employed across the curriculum referred to the NC, the skills that were taught,

recreational activities, and competitive settings. For example, one secondary school in London (Figure 2) focuses on basic skill development throughout KS3. Such concept refers to the NC guidance of developing tactics to overcome opponent in direct competition.

However, since the curricula just mentions the NC and not how the NC would be presented to develop knowledge, it is unclear how knowledge would be transformed (Shay, 2013). At this point, we should think about the methodologies and instructional techniques used to transfer knowledge to pupils from its original context (such as a sporting event). The sports activities mentioned on the NC guidelines and the sports activities available on curricular maps clearly relate to one another, according to Bernstein's pedagogical tools. As a result, the NC policy is where the distributive knowledge of sports that can be taught has originated from. As this would show consistency and correlation among PE curricula across the UK, there may be a limiting factor where schools and departments feel that the sports offered should refer to the NC examples. The need to consider a wide range of factors and motivations, from student experiences to the empowerment of physical capabilities through sport, cannot be overstated.

Yet, does the NC consider alternative opportunities for progress within PE? Each school will have a different demographic; thus, their PE and sport provisions would have to adapt to meet the students' needs and potential growth venture. In the past, I have created a personal, learning, thinking skills (PLTS) curriculum (Figure 3) that was designed for a secondary school with a local community that showcased low participation rates in sport during extra-curricular and outside of school. Such curriculum allowed the teaching staff to continuous promote progress and encourage learning, however rather than focusing on the sports, the focus was teaching the PLTS through sport.

According to Biesta (2017), policies do not take social justice into account; as a result, the PE NC may not support the viewpoint of children from demographic groups and backgrounds. This might give a picture of persistent problems in PE, like skill development, social norms surrounding physical activity, and the demand for quantifiable results. All these factors, however, are moot because the curriculum's designs must align with the Ofsted inspection overhaul in 2019. To increase interest and encourage participation, I developed a core physical education curriculum for the academic year 2018–2019 that was centred on theoretical issues and offered a variety of sports (Figure 4). Prior its creation, several criteria were considered, with participation being the primary concern. We promoted interest in PE and consistency with involvement throughout the academic year by providing such diversity.

Year 7	Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3	Topic 4	Topic 5	Topic 6
Key content	**Rugby**	**Table Tennis/HRF**	**Football**	**Basketball**	**Athletics**	**Cricket/Softball**
Key concepts & skills **BASIC SKILLS**	• Ball handling • Passing • Tackling	• Service • Forehand drive/push • Backhand drive/push	• Dribbling • Passing • Tackling • Shooting	• Dribbling • Passing • Shooting/layups	• Sprint starts (100m) • Relay change over • Throws (javelin/shot putt)	• Throwing • Catching • Striking • Bowling/pitching
Summative Assessment	*Theory content to cover a number of analysis opportunities in each unit plus standalone theory content which equates for 40% of students' final grade. Theory content in Year 7: Effects of exercise, role of blood, aerobic and anaerobic respiration, principles of a warm up and cool down.*					
Builds from	• Passing • Receiving (in isolation)	• Stance/grip • Perform shots on preferred side	• Dribbling • Passing • Shooting (in isolation)	• Dribbling • Passing • Shooting (in isolation)	• Starting running position • Standing position when throwing	• Stance/grip • Throwing • Catching • Underarm bowling
Builds towards	• Passing and receiving whilst moving • Tackle on both sides	• Return shots and sustain a rally grip/stance • Range of shots • Serving	• Passing and receiving whilst moving • Tackle on both sides	• Passing when under pressure • Triple Threat • Intercepting	• Passing based on distance • Throwing a javelin and shotput	• Striking a moving ball • Overarm bowling • Throwing over longer distances

Figure 2: Curriculum map for one secondary school in London

	REFLECTION	COMMUNICATION	LEADERSHIP	DECISION MAKING	HEALTH VALUES
MASTERY	To be able to evaluate earning and performance and create ways to successfully develop solutions consistently improve intended outcome.	To confidently use both verbal and non-verbal communication skills in a variety of settings and situations that show clear subject knowledge and use appropriate terminology.	To use subject specific analytical terms to analyse performance and promote leadership methods to improve performance.	To be able to mobilise personal strengths to set forth their ideas and to negotiate a fit between personal ideas and ideas of others, using sound subject knowledge.	Describes the characteristics of a balanced activity healthy lifestyle.
SECURE	To take into consideration and prioritise all the relevant factors and opinions needed to improve performance.	To be able to express ideas confidently and clearly in group situations showing clear subject knowledge and use of appropriate terminology	To express several leadership styles or ideas about a sport/activity which can be supported through evidence of either analysis or performing.	To express clear procedures for making decisions and prioritising other decisions whilst involving members.	To be able to perform in activities that will measure components of fitness whilst explaining how they body changes during exercise.
DEVELOPING	To regularly act upon internal and external feedback to develop learning and improvement in performance.	To use both verbal and non-verbal communication skills when leading others in a physical activity.	To respond to leadership styles or coaching methods using sport specific skills which relates directly to the taught sport or activity.	To be able to adjust the nature of a decision mid-course and explain why they were needed.	To be able to explain short term effects of exercise on the body. To be able to explain why it is important to lead a balanced active healthy lifestyle.
EMERGING	To be able to identify areas of strength and development in my own and others learning.	To respond both verbally and non-verbally to instructions and be able to question for clarification and make suggestions for progression.	To respond to different leadership styles promoted within lesson.	To be able to acknowledge that each member has significant role to play and personal responsibility in decision making.	To be able to identify simple reasons why they should warm up and cool down for exercise.

Figure 3: Example of a PLTS curriculum that was used to promote PE within different demographics.

Year 8

W/C	Theme	Girls PE1	Girls PE2	Boys PE3	Boys PE4
10/9/2018	Describe the roles and responsbilities of an official	Creative Movement	Rugby	Volleyball/B'ball	Hockey
17/9/2018		Hockey	Creative Movement	Rugby	Volleyball/B'ball
24/9/2018		Volleyball/B'ball	Hockey	Creative Movement	Rugby
1/10/2018		Rugby	Volleyball/B'ball	Hockey	Creative Movement
8/10/2018		Creative Movement	Rugby	Volleyball/B'ball	Hockey
15/8/2018		Hockey	Creative Movement	Rugby	Volleyball/B'ball
22/10/2018		Volleyball/B'ball	Hockey	Creative Movement	Rugby
5/11/2018	Describe what is meant by a balanced diet	Fitness	Football	Handball/Netball	lacrosse/Hockey
12/11/2018		lacrosse/Hockey	Fitness	Football	Handball/Netball
19/11/2018		Handball/Netball	lacrosse/Hockey	Fitness	Football
26/11/2018		Football	Handball/Netball	lacrosse/Hockey	Fitness
3/12/2018		Fitness	Football	Handball/Netball	lacrosse/Hockey
10/12/2018		lacrosse/Hockey	Fitness	Football	Handball/Netball
17/12/2018		Handball/Netball	lacrosse/Hockey	Fitness	Football
7/1/2019	Describe the principles of training	Yoga	Bootcamp	Futsal	Tramp'ling
14/1/2019		Tramp'ling	Yoga	Bootcamp	Futsal
21/1/2019		Futsal	Tramp'ling	Yoga	Bootcamp
28/1/2019		Bootcamp	Futsal	Tramp'ling	Yoga
4/2/2019		Yoga	Bootcamp	Futsal	Tramp'ling
11/2/2019		Tramp'ling	Yoga	Bootcamp	Futsal
25/2/2019	Apply practice methods to support improvement within sport	Kabaddi	Badminton	Striking and Fielding	Leadership
4/3/2019		Leadership	Striking and Fielding	Leadership	Kabaddi
11/3/2019		Striking and Fielding	Leadership	Kabaddi	Tennis
18/3/2019		CPR			
25/3/2019		Badminton	Kabaddi	Striking and Fielding	Leadership
1/4/2019		Kabaddi	Striking and Fielding	Leadership	Badminton
8/4/2019		Striking and Fielding	Leadership	Badminton	Kabaddi
29/4/2019	Create a fitness plan and evluate effectiveness	Bodyweight Training	Interval Training	Fartlek	Circuit training
6/5/2019		Circuit training	Bodyweight Training	Interval Training	Fartlek
13/5/2019		Fartlek	Circuit training	Bodyweight Training	Interval Training
20/5/2019		Interval Training	Fartlek	Circuit training	Bodyweight Training
3/6/2019	Evaluating and improving skills within PE	100m Sprints (Track)	200m (Track)	Long/triple Jump	Relay
10/6/2019		Javelin (Left side HC)	Shot Put (Behind Muga)	200m (Track)	Long/triple Jump
17/6/2019		Shot Put (Behind Muga)	Javelin (Left side HC)	100m Sprints (Track)	200m (Track)
24/6/2019		Relay	Long/triple Jump	Javelin (Left side HC)	100m Sprints (Track)
1/7/2019		200m (Track)	Relay	Shot Put (Behind Muga)	Javelin (Left side HC)
8/7/2019		Long/triple Jump	100m Sprints (Track)	Relay	Shot Put (Behind Muga)
15/7/2019		COMPETITION			

Key
Dance Studio
Field
Sports Hall
MUGA
Hard Court

Figure 4: Example of a curriculum map from 2018

2 Correlations with Bernstein's recontextualization pedagogical device

There is a clear correlation between the NC distributive policy information, and how these aims are contextualised through the sporting activities highlighted as examples within curriculum documents. Another significant point relates to teaching methods, curriculum maps' descriptions of classroom environments, and the calibre of education. When considering Bernstein's second pedagogical strategy, there is an evident connection between curriculums and the skills being taught and the KS3 NC instruction regarding "techniques in performance" (contextualisation). For instance, the curriculum map of one secondary school in Wolverhampton incorporates

YEAR 10 CURRICULUM MAP
Physical Literacy, Health, Wellbeing, Development

• Research and watch clips of top athletes in competition, play, pause make notes • Know where you need to focus in order to execute with accuracy self assessment • Remember footwork-preparation, execution, follow through and more importantly after throw/jumps-exit area rules **KQ2 – Can you identify areas of improvement with your track events (short and long-distance running)?** • Good starting position (sprint start to create power and speed) • Know exactly where to stand for your distance of event on the track, stay in lane, move lane and finish • Pacing with competitiveness and reflect on own ability. Know your age group time for a specific distance and builds targets around this. **KQ3 – What can I do if I want to persue this area of interest?** • Practice as much as possible • Attend after school clubs • Seek advice from your local club (visit one of their training sessions)	Reciprocal coaching-Developing weight transfer (low to high), release at crucial point, footwork and power in throws Suggested Activities/Tasks Partner work-record and review Student lead warm up-testing reaction time, pulse raiser and stretches, plyometrics for regular athletes. Small groups running together Class Discussion How can technique improve my performance? What are your age group timings for specific distances in your area of interest in athletics and how did thes people achieve this? Where can I be professionally coached for this specific area of athletics? CC Links Science – warm up, why is it important? Effects of exercise on the body. Sports Studies – CoF (what are we using for jumping, throwing and running) Maths: recording measurement of distances thrown/run. Trajectory of throws (technique for height). Timing for runs.
HALF TERM 6: Softball (Part 2) **KQ1 – What are the fielding positions in terms of roles and tactics?** • First base – majority of the fielded balls are thrown. If the ball is not going to be thrown right to you, you need to leave the base to get the ball because it is much more important to prevent the runner from advancing another base than keeping your foot on the base. If you will not be making a play you need to stay clear of the base path and runner because if she touches you and you do not have the ball it will be obstruction and the runner will get another base if they are heading to second or rounding first whan they touch you. • Second base – You have to cover first base and second base and you need to be aware in case a ball that is thrown back to the pitcher is not caught and you need to back them up. You also need to back up.	Key Methods of Delivery TGFU – particular focus on the roles and responsibilities of the fielding team. Ensure all fielders practice all positions during the full games. Suggested Activities/Tasks Full games to encourage use of skills, techniques and tactics. Class Discussion Discussion around rules and why they are important Discussion around the fielding positions, checking all students understand their role in the position CC Links PHSE – leadership skills, teamwork

Figure 5: A secondary school curriculum, Wolverhampton

important delivery techniques (Figure 5). With such clarity, the content is accessible to both students and teachers, and it offers a variety of ways to recontextualize the original information through various teaching, adapting, and delivery methods.

With such core principles, the foundation of the curriculums is clear as there are outlined descriptions of how departments intend to deliver their curriculum ideas. Circling back to Bernstein's first and second pedagogical devices, there are clear correlations with core principles attained from NC guidance, and then explicit descriptive information of how the principles will be taught, either focusing on the teachers' delivery method of students' pedagogical understanding over time. A mixture of knowledge and sport within curricula can either demonstrate depth, or clear confusion, as the curriculum maps simply attempt to fit as many "learning opportunities" as possible. The challenge then focuses on the effectiveness of PE, and how teaching supports the transformation of learning. Why games? Why sports? Why can't PE be taught through other modes? Such practicality within the documents shows transparency between NC guidance (distributive pedagogical device) and delivery expectations (Contextualisation).

3 Correlations with Bernstein's evaluation of pedagogical device

Versatility within curriculum texts show how knowledge is transferred (Ekberg, 2021). Sporting skills evaluation criteria show progressive development points, whereas skills and performance continuous development across the major phases, highlighting the difference between a structured and vague curriculum. However, the differences between the skills and theoretical knowledge taught varies, leading to a debate regarding the lack of consistency amongst the curriculum plans. One secondary school In Hereford (Figure 6) offered a hybrid-like assessment approach that gives students a range of opportunities to develop amongst the distributive knowledge. Such approach gives students the opportunity to develop in different modes, promoting both performance and knowledge progressive opportunities.

The assessment techniques reflect the knowledge or skills emphasis, with most schools placing more emphasis on practical development than theoretical development. Such discrepancies can be attributed to several factors, including access to provisions and the department's vision and intent, the latter of which reflects the variations in PE instruction.

However, because no technique is "one size fits all," the variety of evaluations has an impact on how a curriculum is developed. Some evaluations use GCSE levels to measure progress, whereas others refer to teaching and learning objectives. We need to consider the history of the evaluation standards. While some evaluation techniques may have evolved their own assessment criteria that reference their department and school demands, sport skills that employ GCSE levels and criteria have a clear distributive origin that references the GCSE PE standards. Therefore, without a consistent focal point, most schools may create their assessment criteria to influence teaching pedagogy, which references Bernstein's second pedagogical device, recontextualization. The bigger picture could emphasise the relationship between underpinning pedagogy, teaching and learning practices whilst streamlining coherent assessment protocols allows for holistic curriculum development.

Year 8

	Autumn 1		Autumn 2		Spring 1		Spring 2		Summer 1		Summer 2	
	PE	Games	PE	Games	PE	Games	PE	Games	PE	Games	PE	Games
Boys	Basketball P, DM, M	Rugby P, DM, M	Gym P, M	Rugby/ Hockey P, DM, M	Fitness P, M	Football P, DM, M	Table Tennis P, DM, M	Football P, DM, M	Athletics P, M	Tennis P, DM, M	Athletics P, M	Cricket P, DM, M
Girls	Fitness P, M	Netball P, DM, M	Dance DM, M	Hockey P, DM, M	Table Tennis P, DM, M	Rugby P, DM, M	Gym P, M	Ultimate Frisbee DM, M	Athletics P, M	Rounders P, DM, M	Athletics P, M	Cricket P, DM, M
Mixed	OAA/ Fitness P, DM, M	Rugby P, DM, M	Table Tennis P, DM, M	Hockey P, DM, M	Gym P, M	Football P, DM, M	Netball P, DM, M	Basketball P, DM, M	Athletics P, M	Rounders/ Cricket P, DM, M	Athletics P, M	Tennis P, DM, M

Assessment Focus

P – Performance

DM – Decision Making

M – Mindset

Activity Key:

OAA – Outdoor and Adventurous Activity

Figure 6: A secondary school in Hereford

Conclusion

Over the years, PE curriculums have adapted and changed based on several external influences, ranging from OfSTED inspection frameworks to new PE initiatives. Compromises with specific activities taught teaching methods and types of assessment all influence the underpinning philosophy behind the delivery of PE within a local field. Albeit in document form, there seems to be an adoption of NC aims and objectives, with minimal descriptive methods of how those standards would be challenged through provisions and flexibility of teaching methods. Although opportunities within the curricula seem to meet the NC criteria, multiple priorities varying from sports and skill development to life skills demonstrate little consistency between the designs. Additionally, these principles seem to be driven by assessment protocols, rather than underpinning philosophies from wider fields before implementation within a local setting. However, these could be all positive aspects. Whilst promoting flexibility within a curriculum, departments are free to express and promote provisions that appeal to their target audience. Demographic influences such as community outreach and access to sporting activities may influence the design of a curriculum, as departments may focus on increasing opportunities, within PE, rather than developing aspects such as sports-specific skills. By doing so, departments can create policies and documents that state their curriculum is personalised, whilst contemplating the PE practitioners. Not all curriculums had intent, implementation methods or types of evaluation. Many did not have core KS4 PE curriculum designs, and even fewer had descriptive information on how they would evaluate their students. More focus is needed on teaching pedagogy and development, rather than deconstructing documentation, as the latter could be a process designed to meet the demands of inspections.

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BIRMINGHAM CITY
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Continual Professional Development Opportunity

CPD in Special Educational Needs – An essential introduction for educators

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

Suitable for anyone in a teaching or support role for SEND learners of any age, including adult education

Duration: 8 weeks

Mode: Online learning (weekly sessions from 5-7pm)

Start date: 4th May 2023

WHO IS DELIVERING THE COURSE?

This course is a unique partnership between Birmingham City University and National Institute for Conductive Education (NICE). Sessions will be led by specialist teachers in SEND, with substantial expertise on best pedagogic practices, current and future trends.

WHAT WILL THE COURSE COVER?

1. Structural inequalities and SEND
2. You as a reflexive practitioner
3. Communication Difficulties
4. Autism
5. Digital Pedagogies and SEND
6. What children tell us through their behaviour
7. The importance of movement on learning
8. Perceptions and labels

HOW IS THE COURSE DELIVERED?

The course is delivered one evening per week via online workshops. Each two-hour session (5-7pm) will be with co-tutor experts and peers working through MS Teams in a friendly collaborative space

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£378 per delegate

For more information please contact Dr Tina Collins by email: tina.collins@bcu.ac.uk

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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