

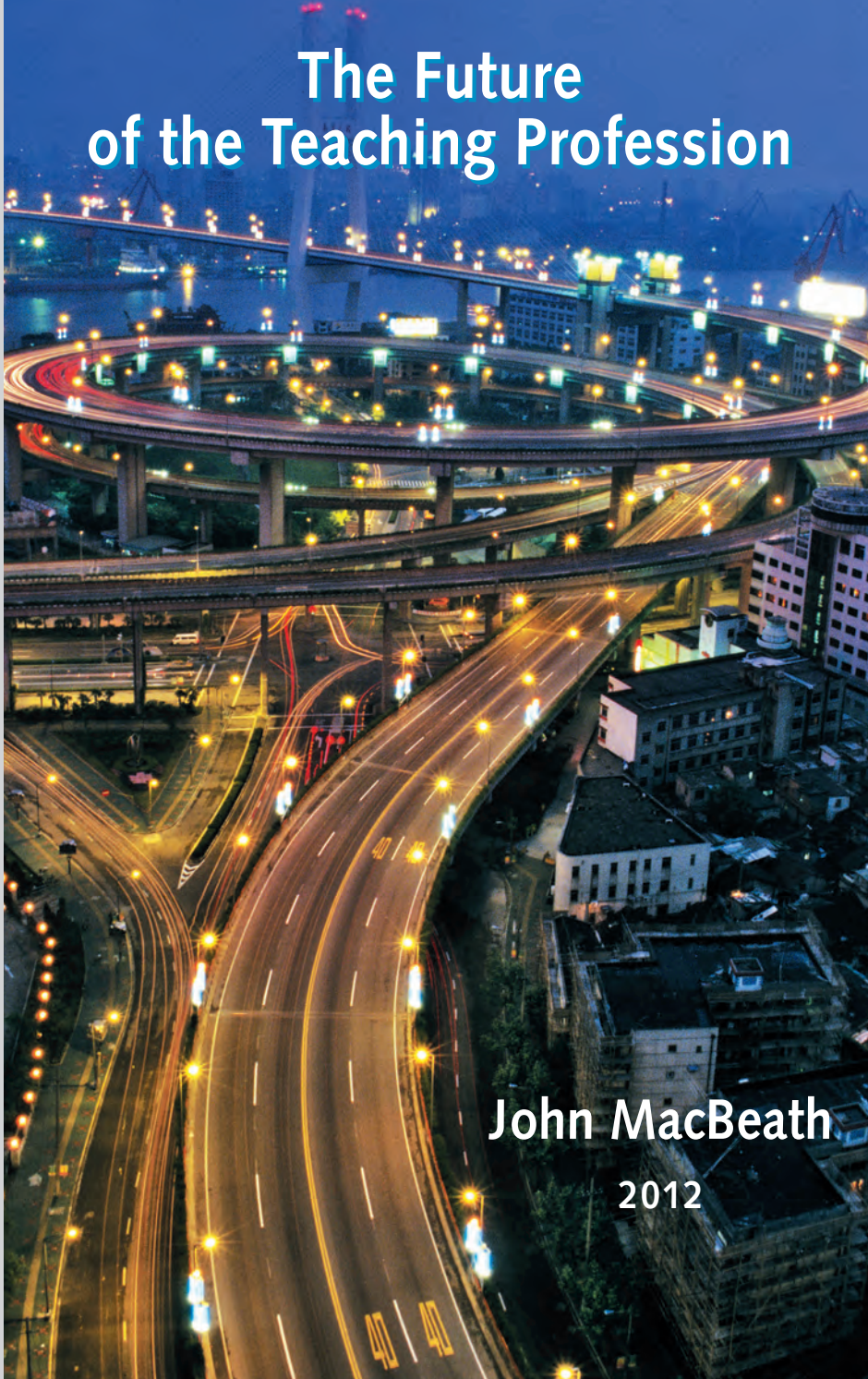


Education International  
Research Institute



UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE  
Faculty of Education

# The Future of the Teaching Profession



John MacBeath

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- 2012-



LEADERSHIP *for* LEARNING  
The Cambridge Network



## FOREWORD

*"Teaching is a profession that lies at the heart of both the learning of children and young people and their social, cultural and economic development. It is crucial to transmitting and implanting social values, such as democracy equality, tolerance cultural understanding, and respect for each person's fundamental freedoms."*

*("Building the Future Through Quality Education." Policy Paper on Education adopted unanimously at the 6th Education International World Congress 2011.)*

At its 2011 World Congress in South Africa Education the largest Global Union Federation in the world, Education International agreed to a ground breaking policy for the future of the teaching profession. Representing thirty million teaching and education staff, Education International decided that it was vital to develop a comprehensive programme which reflected both the evidence about how to achieve high quality education and coherent policy proposals for the teaching profession. All who took part in the debate in South Africa agreed that EI's policy paper provided the right framework but its strength was that it was a "work in progress". EI's development of its teacher policies needed to draw on the latest evidence.

As part of this process EI's Research Board decided to commission Professor John MacBeath Emeritus Professor at the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge to carry out a review of the available evidence on the relationship of the teaching profession to societies and governments globally. He was asked to reflect on possible next steps governments, communities and the teaching profession itself could take to enhance the learning, efficacy and status of teachers. It was an extraordinary and Herculean task, and Education International is profoundly grateful to John for producing such a powerful and coherent study.

The study contains profound insights into the nature of teacher professionalism. It explores an enormous range of research on education policies which turn teachers into "satisfiers" or "dissatisfiers". Debates on the policy directions in education in the past decade have been increasingly focusing on learning outcomes and effectiveness indicators in search of the "hidden truth" or the "holy grail" of what makes an effective school. While effectiveness and efficiency have become the "call-of-the-day" not only in education, but in other public sectors, too often attempts to capture what defines student achievement and teachers' contributions to it, have often been narrow, one-sided and limited, leading to distorted policies affecting the efficacy and morale of teachers.

Drawing on the evidence on what it means to be a teacher in the 21st century this study begins with an analysis of the current situation in differing countries of the world.

It examines the policies which frame teachers' work and the underpinning assumptions on which those policies rest. It illustrates how policy has been shaping the nature of practice, often with effects that limit teachers' professional judgment and which may, in the process, constrain student achievement. Most importantly, drawing on the evidence from international research and fact-finding this study offers alternative propositions for system redesign, illustrating these with vignettes of breakthrough practice from around the world, drawing out the key principles that characterize such practice. The world, despite globalization, is still very diverse also in terms of education and teachers, their issues and priorities. Given the enormous body of practice and knowledge available, a body which is constantly changing and evolving, like EI's Education Policy, this study can only be a work in progress; a work which reflects the impact on school communities of education policies and systems.

Primarily, this is a profoundly practical study, there to support teachers and their organisations in their arguments to place the voice of teachers centre stage in the arguments around shaping the teaching profession in the 21 century. For EI the study will be profoundly important in carrying forward its dialogue with global partners such as OECD. The jointly sponsored seminar in February 2012 with Cambridge University, OECD, Education International and the Open Society Foundation on the Future of the Teaching Profession with this paper providing the template for debate is evidence of EI's determination to open up the debate globally on this issue. The reasons for this are self-evident. The future happiness and success of children and young people and of the societies in which they live depend on schools and the teachers and staff within them.

Fred van Leeuwen  
General Secretary



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# CHAPTER 1

## To be a teacher ?

Is teaching a profession? What does it mean to be a professional and what global forces are at work to enhance or to diminish teachers' professional compass? This chapter begins with the assertion that schools worldwide are now better places for children, for parents and for teachers. But as teachers are subject to new and multiple pressures, what is the impact on their professional and personal identity? What happens to the high expectations that new teachers bring with them and how are those attenuated over time and how are they kept alive? It is in understanding and managing the balance between the 'dissatisfiers' and 'satisfiers' that keeps teachers resilient and optimistic in an increasingly demanding and increasingly vital job. Any scenario or programme for the future of the teaching profession, it is argued, has to begin with an understanding of this 'force field', its profound impact on the lives of teachers as a prelude to identifying where the levers of change may lie.

### Schools are better places for everyone

In 2011, it can be asserted with some confidence that schools are better places for children, better resourced, more humane, more intelligent in respect of diversity and individual needs, more likely to reach out to parents and communities. Children, it is increasingly accepted, have rights too. The UN Convention on Children's Rights, ratified by governments around the world, came into force in 1990. Article 19 defines a right for children not to be 'hurt' or 'mistreated'. Article 37 prohibits 'harmful' punishment and Article 12 asserts the child's right to be heard and his or her opinions to be respected. These are, states UNICEF, 'a universally agreed set of non-negotiable standards and obligations..... founded on respect for the dignity and worth of each individual, regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, opinions, origins, wealth, birth status or ability and therefore apply to every human being everywhere'.

Corporal punishment has been progressively outlawed in countries across the world - in Japan, South Africa, Kenya, New Zealand, Russia, the Philippines, Costa Rica, in every European country except France and the Czech Republic, and in North America, with the exception of 20 US states. (Farrell's exploration of these issues internationally can be accessed at <http://www.corpun.com/coun.htm>)

While children's 'rights', in countries of the Middle East, Africa and South America are frequently observed in the breach, the flouting of these principles often occurs in conditions which defy easy solutions. Corporal punishment, for example, is less easy to eradicate where it is deeply institutionalised in custom and belief systems and held in place by



expectations of children and parents. A school principal in Ghana who determined to abolish the cane was told by his pupils, "Master, if you do not punish us, we will not behave and we will not learn" (Swaffield and MacBeath, 2010).

Implicit in this statement is a view of learning as a coercive process, driven not by self-interest, not by a natural desire to learn, but enforced by a peculiar set of conventions which define a place called school. One year on, a case study of how Ghanaian teachers are changing their practice reported:

For teachers, it meant a radical change of behaviour, from an autocratic and punitive relationship with students to a more positive stance, rewarding and encouraging good behaviour. As was consistently pointed out in the course of interviews, teachers had been used to caning, harassing, intimidating, and insulting students in order to maintain discipline. After the Leadership for Learning programme, there had been a major change in mind-set with a consequent impact on student behaviour. Beginning to show an appreciation of students' work and efforts had produced almost immediate returns. Punishment had been replaced by praise and reward. (*Malakulunthu, 2011, p. 20*)

Schools are becoming better places for children because there has been a developing understanding of:

- The complex relationship between sanctions and incentives, motivation and demotivation
- School and classroom environments which can both promote and inhibit learning and effective teaching
- The impact of parents, home and peer groups on children's values, attitudes and dispositions to learn
- The damaging effects of discrimination by sex, race, class and "ability" together with enhanced opportunities for access and progression
- Learning disabilities and special needs with access to improved diagnostic tools and remedial strategies

Schools today are better places for children with special needs and learning difficulties in countries where teachers have access to research and enjoy opportunities to take part in continuing professional development. Girls disenfranchised and under achieving, now equal and often excel boys' achievements in many countries. Anti-racist legislation and school level policies have succeeded in removing or attenuating the use of abusive and dismissive language and raising awareness of cultural differences and the insidious forms which racism can assume. There is a growing and deepening grasp of child development, physical and emotional impairment and on-going discoveries of brain science. A language which categorised children as "feeble-minded", "imbeciles"



and “uneducable” would today be almost universally regarded with dismay. We are moving slowly but progressively to question the Platonic myth of children as gold, silver and base metal. We have come to understand more fully the harmful effects of labelling, differentiation and discrimination, historically embedded in selective and tripartite school systems.

Schools today are better places for parents. Their rights are more widely recognised and the best of schools are making imaginative and sustained efforts to communicate with and involve parents. There was a time when parents were kept at the school gates, both literally and symbolically, with schools displaying signs such as, ‘No parents beyond this point’. Parents were often discouraged from teaching their children, intruding on the teacher’s province. The recognition of parents as the first and crucial educators has led to exemplary initiatives, teachers working together with parents in equal partnership and in sites beyond the school. Parents in many countries now have a place on governing bodies, school boards, councils and Parent-Teacher Associations. In Canada, Peter Coleman (1998) wrote about “the power of three”, the significant advances that occur when children, parents and teachers work together towards a common goal.

Schools today are better places for teachers. This growing awareness may be both cause and effect of rising standards of teacher qualifications and professionalism. Teachers are, in general, not only better qualified but can call on a wider repertoire of tools and skills. In the most privileged of countries, they teach in schools and classrooms that are better resourced, with smaller class sizes and para-professional support. Teachers enjoy more opportunities for continued learning and professional development. Assessment strategies at their disposal are more sophisticated and, as “extended professionals”, they exercise a broader, more complex and professionally demanding remit than in any generation before them.

There is a tide flowing towards the right to “a good quality education” for all (UN Article 18) now widely accepted, if variously interpreted. While legislation has played a key role in sanctioning practices and policy, in part it does no more than reflect and endorse a current of thinking, stimulated and disseminated by educators and researchers, teachers and teacher organisations, parental lobbies, and by a less definable social and cultural shift in attitudes to children and young people.

## A sense of identity

While teachers in different parts of the world come with differing aspirations and conceptions of what it means to be a ‘teacher’, there does appear to be a fairly common core of defining characteristics. Professional identity, it is found (Beijaard et al., 2004), is not a static once-and-for-all concept but is an on-going and dynamic process which evolves from ‘provisional professional identities’ through rehearsal and experience.

There is a continuous strand, which runs through teachers' professional identity, maintained through explicit ways of talking about the job, through routinized personal behaviour and influenced by cultural and historical factors, but it is also reshaped by the context in which a teacher functions at specific times and in response to particular events.

Teachers develop an 'interpretative framework' during their career, one that is shaped and reshaped through interaction with the social, cultural, structural and political conditions which impact on their day-to-day work (Kelchtermans, 2009). That framework has to accommodate emerging policy mandates which, as Lasky's 2005 study reported, may both threaten that developing identity and undermine the way in which those policies come to be implemented. Reforms which did not align with teachers' own professional perspectives on what constitutes good teaching, and what it means to be a good 'professional', affect teachers' sense of self-efficacy and autonomy. Drake, Spillane and Hufferd-Ackles (2001) found that teachers who told similar stories about their professional identity showed similar responses to educational reforms, their optimism, sense of agency and self-efficacy being the defining factor. This was, report Fokkens-Bruinsma and Canrinus (2011), related to their reason for wanting to be a teacher; the stronger the vocational motive, the stronger the professional resilience.

While teachers who experience more autonomy feel more satisfied in their work and are more motivated and feel more competent (Bogler & Somech, 2002; Weiss, 1999), a teacher's level of autonomy can change over time. As Hargreaves (2000) argues, the market perspective, and the rules and regulations it brings in its wake, diminishes teachers' sense of autonomy and confidence in their classroom judgment.

At the end of the first decade of the 21st Century, many countries around the world are facing what has been described as a recruitment and retention 'crisis'. The conflation of these two terms in the now extensive literature on the subject does conceal a complex equation. Recruitment issues take different forms not only across countries but within countries dependent on 'desirable' and 'hard-to-staff' areas of the country and also dependent on shortage subjects. This means that, for some who want to teach, there are few vacancies while, in other places, many of those qualified to teach are looking for jobs elsewhere.

## Who wants to be a teacher?

In Addis Ababa in 2010 at the Ninth Meeting of the High-Level Group on Education for All (23-25 February), it was said that, globally, 18 million new primary teachers will be needed in the next seven years just to achieve universal primary education. The report concluded:

National governments must strike a balance between the short-term need to get teachers into classrooms and the longer-term goal of building up a high-quality professional teaching force. Addressing the teacher gap requires country driven long-term strategies and firm commitments. Policies must encompass attention to professional development opportunities, adequate employment and teaching conditions and greater participation of teachers in decision-making via social dialogue (Para 17)

As various research studies show internationally, teachers have been leaving the profession in unprecedented numbers. An OECD Education Policy Analysis in 2001 warned of a 'meltdown scenario' caused by a growing teacher exodus from the profession. A year later, a report by the General Teaching Council in Wales (GTCW, 2002) described the fulfilment of that forecast with one in 10 teaching posts remaining unfilled. Its Chief Executive claimed, 'Clearly, heads don't believe they have enough choice of applicants to make the appointments they want ... in some cases, they had no choices at all'. A November 2009 survey by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) found that three out of four local education authorities in England were experiencing a teacher shortage; with 18 per cent of those polled saying the problem had reached crisis levels. Of the 73 per cent of English local authorities which said their schools were struggling to find suitably qualified staff, half said the shortage was either moderate or severe.

In the Netherlands, the 2011 Commissie Leerkracht (Commission on Teaching) noted that, by 2014, about 75 per cent of the teachers in secondary education will have left the profession because of retirement and attrition. As a consequence, serious teacher shortages are predicted because the influx of new teachers in the profession will be unable to replace those who left, and those who do enter the profession may only stay in teaching in the relatively short term. In countries where recruitment is currently not a major issue, retention will, nonetheless, present an issue as the gap between expectation and the demands of classroom life over a sustained period is likely to lead to earlier retirement or career change.

In Australia, the Wilhelm et al. study found that the teacher exodus occurs after a short period in a post. The research team found that teachers who left did so within the first five years of teaching. In the US, Susan Moore Johnson (2004) depicted the 'hole in the bucket' inflow and outflow of staff as an expression of a shifting socio-economic situation. In Ingersoll's metaphor (2003), the 'revolving door syndrome' is symptomatic of a profession that loses new recruits very early as teachers suffer from lack of autonomy and flexibility in addressing pedagogical issues creatively. While the rates of teacher turnover in Australia are difficult to obtain, as no official statistics are available, conservative estimates in 2003 suggested that one out of every four teachers did not teach beyond five years (Manuel, 2003).

Teaching is no longer a career for life and no longer for first career entrants prepared for the job in traditional ways. Between 24 and 40 per cent of teachers in Moore Johnson's study were mid-career entrants, many from industry, finding it difficult to operate privately and autonomously in their own classrooms. They looked for opportunities to work in teams and to have expanded influence.

The range of issues which act as a deterrent to recruitment of staff, key factors in teachers leaving the profession, were summarised by a 2001 PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) report in England. A decade later, these issues may be attenuated or intensified depending on an interlocking set of factors. Many of these issues such as trust, resourcing, support and workload do, however, resonate with teachers' experiences in other countries around the world.

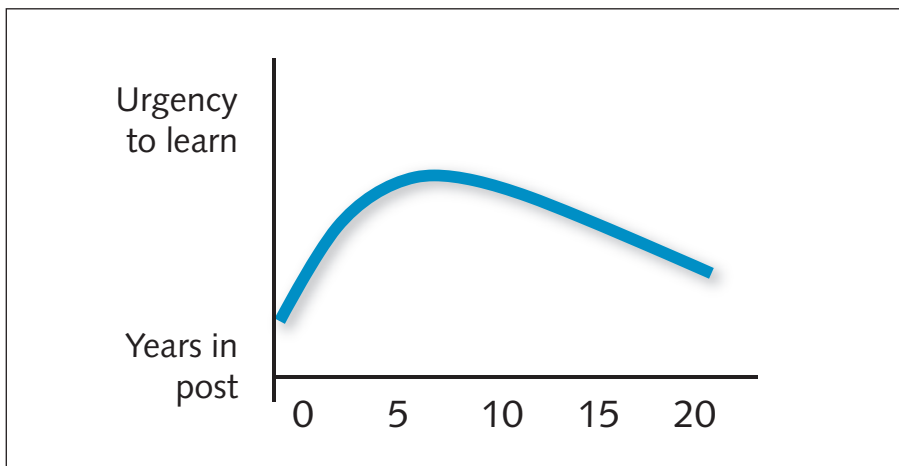
**Table 1 - Performativity, control and trust**

- At the core of the job was the need to put on a 'performance' for many hours each day. While it could at times be exhilarating, it was also often exhausting.
- There was relatively little contact with other adults so that some teachers may have virtually no time for a conversation with another adult during a whole day.
- The working environment was often a source of pressure with lack of suitable space, often inadequate resources and support.
- Lack of availability of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) resources, lack of support and suitable training lent to skill gaps and increased workload.
- Not being in control of their work was a salient cause of stress, exacerbated by the pace and manner of change and insufficient support to meet those changes.
- Resentment about having to engage in tasks which did not support learning. Tasks carried into weekends were an additional source of resentment. Many tasks could be carried out by staff rather than by teachers, or more efficiently using ICT.
- As professionals, teachers felt they had not been accorded the trust they merited.
- Inappropriate expectation of what schools and teachers could achieve intensified pressure, especially in a context of deteriorating pupil behaviour and a lack of parental support. Head teachers did not always recognise the need to manage the workload of their staff and the drive for higher standards was not always balanced by attention to sustainable workloads.
- Head teachers' own workloads were higher than average by some 300–400 hours a year in comparison to other professions (even after taking account of holiday hours). They too experienced intense pressure of high expectations and levels of accountability.

*(PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2001:32)*

The issues identified by the PwC study bring to the fore the importance of pre-service education or 'training' and underline the imperative of Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The timing and quality of the CPD on offer could add to teachers' workload, often requiring supply cover, with attendant concerns about support for classes, plus the additional, extra preparation and marking that this could generate. Training in twilight sessions, on the other hand, may mean an extra imposition on teachers, tired after a working day, as well as the additional weekly hours these extra unpaid sessions generate, impacting on domestic and family life.

In the Netherlands, Andre Koffeman (2011) identified a trend for teachers after five or so years in the job to lose the 'urgency to learn'. Entering the profession was attended by commitment and openness to become more skilled and effective. However, without the stimulus and re-invigoration of new challenges and new horizons, it was easy for teachers to become resigned to business as usual and, with external pressure for compliance, to submit to the seemingly inevitable.



In a Scottish study on the recruitment and retention of head teachers (MacBeath, Gronn, Cowie, Davidson, O'Brien and Opfer, 2009), there were teachers and heads whose strategy for survival was 'dutiful compliance' while others took the path of 'cautious pragmatism'. There were others still, however, who thrived on the challenge and relished the adrenalin rush. Others still were characterised by the researchers as demonstrating 'unruffled self-confidence' and 'bullish self-assertion'. As one head teacher said, "I've got a fridge magnet that says: 'You can't frighten me, I have children', and I think that's part of it, you know, that actually once you've been there and done that, nothing else is as scary and nothing else is as important" (2009, p. 45). 'Urgency to learn' and professional renewal occurred when the balance between the 'dissatisfiers' and 'satisfiers' tipped in favour of the latter.

## Satisfiers and dissatisfiers

Any agenda for the future of the teaching profession has to weigh in the balance the tensions between the 'satisfiers' and 'dissatisfiers', identifying policy and professional drivers which release the brakes and press the accelerators.

**Table 2 - Satisfiers and dissatisfiers**

Satisfiers	Dissatisfiers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Autonomy</li> <li>• Being valued</li> <li>• Being trusted</li> <li>• Being listened to</li> <li>• Time for learning, teaching and planning</li> <li>• Collegiality</li> <li>• Initiative</li> <li>• Creativity</li> <li>• Contact with pupils</li> <li>• Scope for innovation and experimentation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenge</li> <li>• Feeling of not being in control</li> <li>• Lack of time</li> <li>• Isolation from colleagues</li> <li>• Prescribed or inflexible curriculum</li> <li>• Bureaucracy</li> <li>• Testing</li> <li>• Policy initiative overload</li> <li>• Pressure to meet targets</li> <li>• Lack of parental support</li> <li>• Poor student behaviour</li> <li>• Stress</li> </ul>

The term 'intrinsic satisfiers' is used by the Institute for Public Policy Research report (Edwards, 2002) to denote those things which are essential to teachers' sense of professional fulfilment. He argues that professional wastage will only be reduced by enhancing the positive features of the job - the core work of classroom contact with pupils, enhancing responsibility to determine the course of events in the classroom, with scope and freedom to apply initiative and creative skills to both content and pedagogy.

The following testimony from an American teacher speaks for the many for whom the intrinsic rewards come at a high personal cost. Yet, however small the satisfiers, making a difference to the lives of children is the repayment for the frustration and disappointment which, for many teachers, is encountered on a daily basis.

'No, there wasn't much glory in working with kids who greeted me with, "I don't do reading", before I'd had a chance to learn their names. Nor was it heart-warming to teach kids who saw me more as an annoyance than an inspiration, kids who couldn't care less, that all I'd ever wanted my entire life was to be a teacher.'



I cried a lot my first year. I cried the day my whole class failed what I thought was a simple pre-test. I cried the day my kids wouldn't sit down and be quiet while my supervisor was in the room. I cried the day a parent said that maybe her son would do better with an "older" teacher. And I cried the day I visited the home of one of my most difficult students and found her mother falling-down drunk before lunchtime.

Perhaps deep down, there's the possibility that our excitement, or even our good intentions, somehow makes a dent, that our caring and commitment allow us, inevitably, to touch the future.'

A study for the Ford Foundation (Buckley, Schneider, and Shang, 2004) found that the degree of idealism teachers bring to their job was a significant factor in their ability to deal with the day-to-day mundane realities of the classroom. The higher the teacher's idealism, the greater the risk of disillusion and attrition. While high expectations are easily dashed by the demands of the job, the study concluded, a key to retention is the effectiveness of their teacher preparation programme.

## Becoming a professional

Teachers come into the profession for differing reasons in different country contexts, in differing economic circumstances and with varying expectations of the rewards and challenges of the role. Common to all, however, is a need for appreciation, autonomy and affiliation - the latitude and discretion to exercise professional judgment, together with recognition and endorsement for such initiative and a sense of belonging to a cadre of like-minded people whose interests and motivations you share. The place of these within a hierarchy of needs varies country by country depending on an essential infrastructure of safety, security, working conditions, resourcing and adequate remuneration.

Wherever teachers have been questioned about their priorities and satisfiers, in South America, Sub-Saharan Africa, Europe or North America, they cite the importance of recognition and respect for the challenges they rise to on a daily basis. However, their expectations of being the professional shapers of the next generations have to contend with being cast as a 'trade', associated with minimal training requirements, ease of entry, low pay and benefits, and located at the bottom of the civil service ladder, in what has cynically been referred to as 'women's work' (Cooper, 1992: 15).

Teachers, unlike most professions, are burdened with excessive expectations from society at large, caught between high expectation and low professional esteem (Punch and Tuetteman, 1996).

The irony is that we in education are expected to develop in our young people the attributes, skills and capacities that will enable them to prosper and succeed in the knowledge society and, at the same time, we are expected to counteract and mitigate, to an extent, the problems emerging from an increasingly globalised economy. (Taylor and Runté, 1995, p. 5).



Yet, how is teachers' work acknowledged or rewarded? Michael Davidson (Senior Policy Analyst at the OECD), interviewed on TALIS international dataset, referred to 'a shocking statistic' - that 75 per cent of teachers said that they wouldn't be 'rewarded in any way for improving the quality of their work'. This is an overall figure but, in some countries, he claimed, the figure was over 90 per cent (in Bangs et al., 2010:141).

Debates may continue as to whether teaching meets the criteria of a 'profession', but it is impossible to deny the juxtaposition of low esteem and the highly specialised knowledge, skills, and 'bedside manner' which characterise high, and continuously rising, teaching standards in countries at the leading edge of development. Figure 1 illustrates the commonly accepted criteria of what it means to be a 'professional'.

### Figure 1: 12 Criteria of professionalism

1. Theoretical knowledge and concomitant skills: Professionals are assumed to have extensive theoretical knowledge and, deriving from that, skills that are exercised in practice.
2. High quality pre-service academic and professional preparation: Professions usually require at least three years' academic accreditation plus professional induction, together with a requirement to demonstrate professional competence in the workplace.
3. Legal recognition and professional closure: Professions tend to exclude those who have not met their requirements nor joined the appropriate professional body.
4. Induction: A period of induction and a trainee role is a prerequisite to being recognised as a full member of a professional body together with continuous upgrading of skills through continuing professional development.
5. Professional association: Professions usually have professional bodies organised by their members, intended to enhance their status together with carefully controlled entrance requirements and membership.
6. Work autonomy: Professionals retain control over their work and also have control over their own theoretical knowledge.
7. Code of professional conduct or ethics: Professional bodies usually have codes of conduct or ethics for their members and disciplinary procedures for those who infringe the rules.
8. Self-regulation: Professional bodies are self-regulating and independent from government.
9. Public service and altruism: Services provided are for the public good and altruistic in nature.
10. Authority and legitimacy: Professions have clear legal authority over some activities but also add legitimacy to a wide range of related activities.
11. Inaccessible and indeterminacy body of knowledge: The body of professional skills are relatively inaccessible to the uninitiated.
12. Mobility: Skills, knowledge and authority belong to professionals as individuals, not the organisations for which they work and, as they move, they take their talents with them. Standardisation of professional training and procedures enhances such mobility.



Meeting the criteria to be a teacher goes beyond these formal categories. For example, in a policy paper on the quality of teachers by the Association for Teacher Education in Europe (Smith, 2006), teaching is described as 'a profession that entails reflective thinking, continuing professional development, autonomy, responsibility, creativity, research and personal judgments'. They add, 'Indicators that identify the quality of teachers should reflect these values and attributes' (p. 7).

The Australian Council of Professions defined teaching in this way:

A profession is a disciplined group of individuals who adhere to ethical standards and who hold themselves out as, and are accepted by the public as, possessing special knowledge and skills in a widely recognised body of learning derived from research, education and training at a high level, and who are prepared to apply this knowledge and exercise these skills in the interest of others. (ACP, 2004, p.1)

It is this lack of self-interest or profit motive, 'a commitment to public service' (Burbules and Densmore, 1991) that, above all, defines what it means to be a teacher. This does not imply that all teachers everywhere are exemplary models of that professional ethic but it does set teaching, as a vocation, apart from most other and less altruistic professions.

How teachers themselves perceive their professional commitment is described by Crosswell and Elliot (2004) as a 'passion' (positive emotional attachment); as an investment of time outside of contact hours with students; as a focus on the individual needs of students; as a responsibility to impart knowledge, attitudes, values; as 'maintaining professional knowledge' and as engagement with the school community

For early career teachers with 'high expectations, knowledge of current pedagogy, and a heightened desire to meet the needs of students and the demands of fellow teachers and supervisors', their initial encounters with a class can be a daunting experience. It is at this critical time that support and encouragement are at a premium, and as Fives, Hamman, and Olivarez, report (2007), the lack of such collegial support and reassurance can prove particularly damaging to aspiration and ambition. It is expressed in 'feelings of ineffectiveness or un-accomplishment [which] are accompanied by a growing sense of inadequacy. The world seems to conspire against efforts to make progress with the result that beginning teachers "lose confidence in their ability to make a difference professionally"' (Friedman, 2000, p. 595).

Analysing the issues which worried student teachers most, Smith (2000) identified five prevalent concerns: discipline in classroom management, personal and institutional adjustments, and personal characteristics, teaching methods and strategies, and working with special needs students. In a Swedish study (Paulin, 2006), it was reported that teachers were demonstrably unprepared for difficulties in understanding and handling problematic pupils, dealing with discipline, managing relationships and cooperation with colleagues and parents. Paulin contends that these difficulties were due to both the content of their training programmes and their induction as beginners into school life.

### *Don't Smile until Christmas*

A book of the above title, written by neophyte teachers (Ryan, 1972), contains stories of the perils encountered in the first year of teaching. Unusually, Ryan's edited volume also deals with something of a taboo subject, sexuality in the classroom which, rarely dealt with in pre-service education of teachers, nonetheless can present hugely conflicted issues for young teachers, sometimes only four years or so older than their students. For young male teachers, 'disciplining' girls, in particular teenage girls (an issue redolent of pervasive website images of adult female models in school uniform), presents its own peculiar emotional tensions.

Thirty years on from this study, little has been written that helps teachers, or teachers in training, to deal with these issues. A notable exception is Kate Myers who has been researching these issues over a number of years and, in 2005, explored in depth the dilemmas faced particularly by young teachers most vulnerable to sexual power games by adolescents 'who try out their new-found sexual power on the most powerful adults in their lives' (Myers, 2005:59). Ignoring these issues because of their sensitivity, she concludes, not only does a serious disservice to teachers but may make its own contribution to a premature exit from the profession.

Whether in respect of sex and gender, discipline, relationships with colleagues, with authority or with policy, a common finding internationally is that teachers are generally unprepared for surviving and thriving in the world of classrooms. In Tasmania, a programme for beginning teachers was commissioned in 2001 to explore the experiences of teachers through training, pre-service, and fully qualified teaching (*An Ethic of Care: Effective Programs for Beginning Teachers, Tasmanian Educational Leaders Institute, 2002*). This report identified that at least 20 per cent of beginning teachers felt under-prepared to begin their careers. A quarter of supervisors felt that beginning teachers were not adequately prepared to meet the challenging demands of teaching, primarily due to the constant change and the changing nature of the job.

The challenge for pre-service education is to help neophyte teachers to deal with the dissonance between their own conservative experience as pupils and the transformational demands of the teacher, between their own lack of agency as a pupil and the authority of the teacher. Induction into the profession means 'rendering visible' previous experiences, the unconscious and latent models that students bring with them when they start their training programmes.

One of the perennial problems is that student teachers are 'insiders' (Hoy and Murphy, 2001), their views of teaching shaped by their own experience, so that they return to the places of their past, complete with memories and preconceptions often unaffected by their higher education or training college experience. They may feel they have no need to 'discover' the classroom or to see it with new eyes because they are already too familiar with the territory – having spent the last dozen or so years of their lives in similar places (Pajares, 1993).

Nor, argues O'Connell Rust (1994) is pre-service education effective in disturbing those inert ideas. He claims that neophyte teachers 'most probably leave our programmes



with their deeply held beliefs intact, ready to teach as they learned during their apprenticeships of observation' (p. 215).

Teacher education, it is suggested (Malm, 2009), needs to focus much more on the personal processes involved in becoming a professional teacher, with a well-grounded balance between the cognitive and emotional dimensions of learning to teach. To be effective in that cross fertilisation, says Hansen (2007), it requires a synergy between an evidence-based track and an existential and normative track. The latter is concerned with how teachers understand themselves, which in turn depends on a little help from their friends – mentors, coaches or critical friends who not only help with adjustment to the demands of the organisation but help to push their charges beyond the conservative expectations of their comfort zone. As Fives et al. (2007) found in their study of beginning teachers, those who benefited from 'high guidance' from their higher education mentors, demonstrated lower levels of burnout and were less likely to leave teaching than their colleagues who experienced 'low guidance'.

Understanding the sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, as Edwards and others have shown (see, for example, Nias, 1989, Southworth, 1995), is a crucial prelude to addressing measures taken to lessen the impact on the personal and professional lives of teachers, at its most acute in induction and the early years of teaching.

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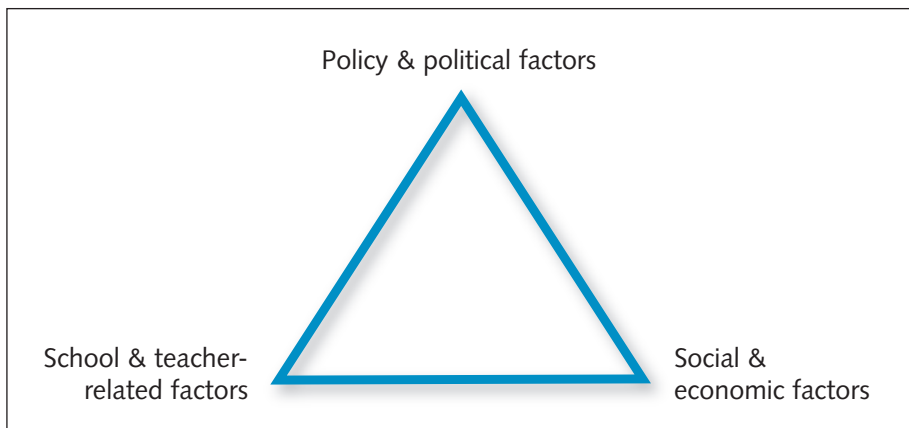
# CHAPTER 2

## Understanding and addressing the dissatisfiers

Chapter 1 described the balance between the satisfiers and dissatisfiers, the ‘force field’ which exerts a pull on teachers to enter and stay in teaching, and the push factors that gradually tip the balance towards a reluctant exit. For those charged with making policy and those charged with implementing (and challenging) policy, coming to terms with, and addressing, the dissatisfiers is a prelude to change and essential to the future of the teaching profession.

### Policy, school and social context

Research in many different countries has furnished an extensive list of disincentives and dissatisfiers, but what has been addressed less in the literature is the dynamic interplay among them. The nature of that interplay may be depicted by a triangulation of factors – policy, school, and social context-related.



For governments, solutions to educational problems are to be found in educational institutions. If children are not succeeding, it is obviously the fault of teachers, their low expectations or incompetence, the malign influence of unions on teachers, or failures of leadership to raise standards of children and those who teach them. There may be a nodding acknowledgement to social and economic factors but successive governments have regarded any reference to these as excuses and insisted that background factors can be overcome by good teachers and inspirational leaders. This ignores the growing body of evidence not only on child care in the early years but the crucial influences on child development that occur in the first nine months after conception. The





growing foetus, the developing human being, with at that stage unimagined potential, is subject to the effects of smoking, bad diet, drugs and foetal alcohol syndrome, damage which is often beyond repair of the most enlightened of teachers and most expert of interventions. Policy and political factors, at the apex of the above triangle, have limited power to address the interface of social and school-related factors but have often used their powers to make that relationship more problematic for teachers to address.

In 2007, a Cambridge University study published a report on an independent enquiry into the condition and future of primary education in England. It drew on 87 sessions, constituency by constituency, starting with children and moving out from the classroom to the school and the wider community. It concluded:

In spite of our careful attempts to elicit and record difference, what is striking about the Community Soundings is the extent of consensus which they reveal, especially in the key areas of educational purpose, curriculum and assessment, the condition of childhood and society, and the world in which today's children are growing up. This tendency to consensus on the big issues transcends both constituency and location'. ..... Wherever we went we were likely to hear:

- That children are under intense and perhaps excessive pressure from the policy-driven demands of their schools and the commercially-driven values of the wider society
- That family life and community are breaking down
- That there is a pervasive loss of respect and empathy both within and between generations
- That life outside the school gates is increasingly insecure and dangerous
- That the wider world is changing rapidly and in ways which it is not always easy to comprehend though on balance they give cause for alarm, especially in respect of climate change and sustainability
- That the primary school curriculum is too narrow and rigid
- That both the curriculum and children's educational careers are being compromised by national tests, especially the Key Stage 2 SATs
- That some government initiatives, notably *Every Child Matters*, are to be warmly applauded but others may constrain and even disempower rather than enable
- That the task facing teachers and other professionals who work with children is, for these and other reasons, much more challenging now than it was a generation ago (Alexander and Hargreaves, 2007, p. 3)



## Five key factors

It is in the inter-relationship of five key factors that we begin to grasp the reasons for a growing disaffection among teachers, going a long way to explaining the 'crisis' in teacher recruitment and retention described in Chapter 1. The five factors discussed here are:

1. Intensification
2. Role overload
3. De-professionalization
4. Student behaviour
5. Inclusion and special needs

Critics may lay all of these issues at the door of politicians and policy makers. But they need to be understood in their social and economic context in which expectations of and pressures on schools arise from changing social mores and the new configurations in the lives of families and children. They have to be understood as acting in concert, as integral to wider global, economic, and social movements and in respect of how schools and teachers meet these demands. This differs widely between and within countries, from resignation to inevitability at one extreme to a sense of agency and resilience at the other, drawing strength from the collective and from the support of teachers' associations and unions.

### 1. Intensification

This umbrella concept encompasses the multi-faceted local, national and global pressures which, in concert, impact powerfully on teachers' professional autonomy, efficacy and self-confidence. It is described in the following terms by Shimahara in Japan.

Intensification refers to the loss of autonomy, caused by prescribed programs, mandated curricula, step by step methods of instruction combined with pressure to respond to various innovations and diversification of students' academic and social needs (2003, p. 23)

He characterises Japanese schools as experiencing 'the troubled relationship between the children who are the main actors in the educational process and the system itself' (p. 23). While locating the source of the problem in government policy, he attributes its power to the way in which teachers respond. He describes it as 'coming from within' as teachers adhere to the collectively defined ethos of teaching, accepting what is termed *shukumei*, an acceptance of your lot, a situation not to be challenged. While a similar determinism may not obtain in other cultures, there is an inherent tension between compliance and dissent. The compliance response, its source at school, rather than teacher, level is well illustrated by the following extract from a case study of a New York City



school. The pressure on students to fill every 'free minute' is matched by pressure on teachers to sacrifice their own free minutes to an intensified lifestyle.

Nine-and-a-half-hour days, class on Saturday, school during the summer and two hours of homework each night are non-negotiable... If you're off the bus, you're working," says Feinberg... "Each morning, students receive a worksheet of maths, logic and word problems for them to solve in the free minutes that appear during the day.

Teachers carry cell phones with toll free numbers and are on call 24 hours a day to answer any concerns their students might have. "Ten calls a night may sound like a drag," says Feinberg," but everyone goes to bed ready for the next school day." (Principal Michael Feinberg, in Carter, 2001 p. 95)

In this scenario, the solution is located at classroom and individual teacher level. Pressures on achievement such as Feinberg described have to be understood in part as a product of decentralisation, a policy trend internationally which locates responsibility and accountability at school level. This is closely related to the competitive market economy which requires that, simply to keep pace with 'competitors', teachers have to work harder, with more demanding hours and in the face of progressively higher stakes.

In a 2005 survey by the Trades Union Congress in Britain, which produced a league table of unpaid hours by occupation, teachers topped the poll by a significant margin – over 11.5 hours unpaid per week, two hours more than corporate managers and senior civil servants who jointly took second place. Even a decade and a half ago, as revealed in a 1996 study by Fujita in Japan, it was found that the majority of teachers spent at least 10 hours in school every day, middle school teachers spent 11-12 hours, as many as half staying until 8 p.m. Similar working hours have been reported in Hong Kong schools (MacBeath and Clark, 2006) where a powerful normative culture discourages teachers from departing from normative practice. While in these cases, intensification may be described as 'self-imposed', it has to be understood as a collective response, deriving from a sense of professional duty.

While stoicism in Eastern cultures makes teachers less inclined to voice their discontent, a sense of professional duty is not restricted to the East. While in the English context in which teachers are more inclined to voice their discontent, there was, on the one hand, outspoken complaint about policy, pressure and de-professionalization, with, at the same time, a dutiful compliance to the inevitability of the situation (Galton and MacBeath, 2002, MacBeath and Galton, 2004).

How to make sense of this 'cultural dysfunction' as Troen and Boles (2003) characterise it, is by reference to Foucault's Panopticon, the all seeing eye, in which a state of conscious and constant surveillance reduces resistance and becomes permanent in its disempowering

effects. These authors conclude that, 'teachers have operated for so long under [the dysfunction] that they regulate themselves with their own myopic, bureaucratic chains' (p.24).

There is a consequent danger that by draining off dissent, the vitality, scope and diversity of the organisation is potentially diminished. There is a substantive body of evidence to suggest that compliance stifles creativity and initiative and that consensus can close down creative alternatives (Surowieki, 2004). An Australian study (Wilhelm, Dewhurst-Savellis and Parker, 2000) reported that if there were few mechanisms for the collective or individual expression of disagreement and few protections for those who challenged state or school or policies, those dissenting teachers were more likely to leave the profession.

In the triangular relationship of schools to social factors and policy dictate, to cast schools and teachers as hapless victims is to undermine their agency and latent power. As Wilhelm and colleagues show, if a school provides mechanisms for the protection of academic freedom and for voicing opposition where there was disagreement with school policies, teachers would be less likely to see themselves as passive victims and less likely to exit. While there may be collective strength at an individual school level in expressing dissent, schools in strong association with one another, and with external support, can create a positive synergy much greater than the sum of the parts.

## **2. Role diffusion and overload**

Intensification is expressed in large part by the multiplicity of roles that schools and teachers now exercise, a consequence of having to carry responsibilities that would have fallen, in a previous era, to parents and grandparents, local communities, churches and other social agencies. While clearly a matter of policy, it is a response to a society in which social and moral teaching lie by default with the teaching profession.

An Australian government report identified 13 separate and identifiable roles that teachers undertake, many of which occur across multiple fields (Skillbeck and Connell, 2004). In New Zealand, a 2008 OECD report attributed the shortage of suitably qualified teachers to the requirements of the job that 'have grown to the point where they seem unmanageable. As role diffusion increases, there has been no corresponding reduction in ancillary functions unrelated to the professional role. There are issues around the relative remuneration and/or the 'do-ability' of the job' (OECD, 2008, p. 34).

In England, role overload and the ensuing time demands were identified as one of the top two reasons why those studying to become teachers did not take up the profession and why existing teachers considered leaving the profession (Barmby, 2006).



The survey found that although more “intrinsic” and “altruistic” reasons were given by teachers for going into teaching, the issues of workload and pupil behaviour were found to be most important in dissuading teachers from entering the profession or possibly causing them to leave teaching (Barmby, 2006, p. 1).

As Parker (2009) points out, workload of itself is not the problem. It has to be understood in relation to the nature of the other work that must be attended to, the complexity of the work, the role conflict or role ambiguity which it brings with it. It is the emotional concomitants and costs of overload that find expression in rising levels of stress, accounting for much of the dissatisfaction and attrition within the profession. Referring to stress in a range of occupations, Tennant (2001) writes:

The problem of assessing what may be acceptable or unacceptable stress is further confused by virtue of the fact that increasing responsibilities and hours worked are becoming more common in the workplace and thus seem “normative” (Tennant, 2001, p. 702).

### *Stress and deskilling*

When, in 1975, an article in the Times Educational Supplement in the UK identified teacher stress as an emerging issue, it was seen as a new phenomenon or one that had rarely been discussed or researched. Was teaching not a nine-to-four job with long holidays, good pay and benefits? In the succeeding decades, teaching has been acknowledged as one of the most stressful of occupations. Research conducted by the Health and Safety Executive in Cardiff, UK found that teaching was the most stressful profession of all those surveyed. Forty per cent of teachers indicated that they were highly stressed, twice the average for all professions surveyed (Smith, Brice, Collins, Matthews, and McNamara, 2000). In Canada, Leithwood reported a rise in stress levels ‘considerably exaggerated over the past two years in Ontario as a consequence of the speed with which policy changes have been introduced’. ([www.oise.utoronto.ca/orbit/school\\_leader](http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/orbit/school_leader))

Stress produces a range of effects, feelings of inadequacy and ‘negative affect’ (Bradley and Eachus, 1995). As many as 20 per cent of Australian teachers reported experiencing psychological distress and close to 10 per cent experienced severe psychological distress, a level much higher than in the general population (Howard and Johnson, 2004). In Nias’ study of primary teachers in the UK, she writes that while stress was reported by a majority of teachers, it did not have a single cause. Stress had emotional roots, with teachers frequently experiencing ‘guilt, failure, frustration, anger, or regret at the absence of personal fulfilment’ (p. 110). It also had physical correlations, physical fatigue, with teachers feeling ‘drained’, ‘exhausted’, or ‘shattered’, the same words used in a recent Scottish study (MacBeath, et al., 2009). In his book, *The Sickening Mind*, Martin (1997) traces the correlation between feeling out of control

and chronic illnesses such as heart disease and cancer. Other researchers (e.g. Cohen, Janiiki--Deverts and Miller, 1995; Cohen, Kessler and Gordon, 2007) also identified the relationship between loss of control and psychiatric as well a physical illness, 'triggering or worsening depression and cardiovascular disease'.

At its roots is what Dollard, Winefield and Winefield (2001) describe as 'emotional dissonance', the mismatch between felt emotions and what are seen as 'required' emotions. 'Why teachers are at greater risk of suffering from emotional dissonance than most other human service workers, write Dorman and Kaiser (2002), is due to the heavy emotional investment that they make in their students. 'The more important that care is to a teacher, the more emotionally devastating is the experience of failing to provide it' (Hargreaves and Tucker, 1991, p. 496). These authors mention this commitment as being particularly strong among elementary teachers. To many, it has motivated their choice to become teachers and is also a major source of job satisfaction.

The dissonance is graphically portrayed as 'the mask of the teacher', the front that is displayed for the benefit of students, parents and senior managers but one that ultimately takes a psychological toll. A Scottish head teacher described putting on make-up every morning as a symbolic act, 'trying to keep a professional face, not letting the mask slip' (MacBeath et al., 2009). Among teachers questioned in that Scottish study as to their reasons for not applying for headship, 81 per cent cited the 'potential stressfulness of the position' (p. 43).

This has to be counterbalanced with many other people with whom the teacher interacts, the diversity of relationships ever present in teachers' work (Steel, 2001) and the respective roles they have to adopt in dealing with the competing demands these different 'role partners' present. 'It is not surprising then to find that the interpersonal domain is one of the key areas in which teachers experience large amounts of stress' (Ritvanen et al., 2006).

'Burnout', defined by Maslach and Schaufeli in 1993 and revisited by Maslach, Jackson, and Leiter in 1998 as a 'prolonged response to chronic interpersonal stressors on the job' (p. 37), has three distinct but loosely coupled dimensions: emotional exhaustion (feelings of being emotionally overextended and exhausted with one's work), depersonalisation (the development of negative and uncaring attitudes towards others), and negative personal accomplishment (the loss of feelings of self-competence and dissatisfaction with one's achievements). Teachers operating under high levels of stress for significant periods of time can develop burnout characteristics including less sympathy towards students, reduced tolerance of students, failure to prepare lessons adequately, and a lack of commitment to the teaching profession (Otto, 1986).

Deskilling is a term used to describe what happens to people when they no longer feel in control of their own work. It is in the growing disconnect between the individual



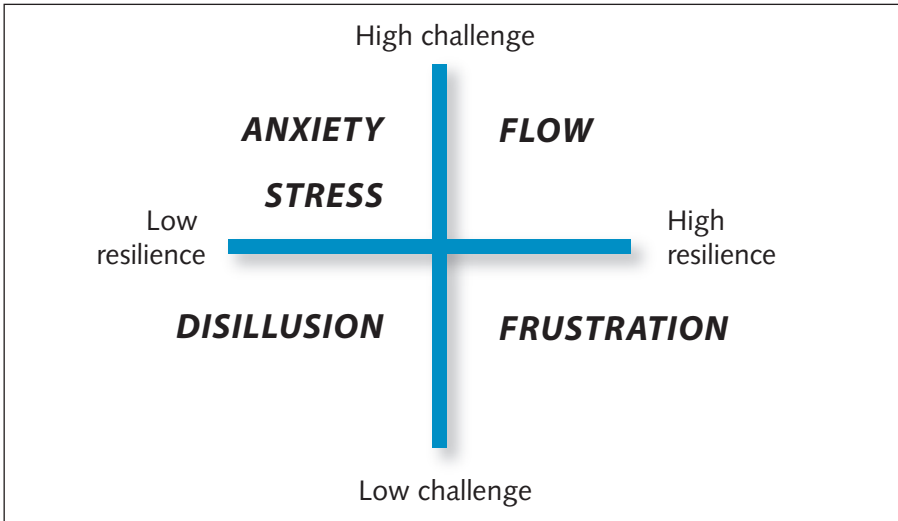
teacher and the organisation that deskilling occurs. When teachers find that they cannot sustain the intensity of investment in teaching and in meeting the needs of their students, when they no longer see themselves or others as valuable or valued, they are likely to experience deskilling. Littler (2009) identifies four processes which occur together in deskilling:

- Where the individual loses the right to be involved in designing and planning what will happen – a divorce of planning and doing
- Work itself becomes fragmented
- The redistribution of tasks removes some of the most satisfying aspects of the job
- The re-organisation of the workplace changes from an individual 'craft' base to a more 'Taylorised' form of operation

Taken together, these are a potent mix of dissatisfiers. While much of the early work on stress and deskilling focused on the individual and on psychological causes and personality traits, later studies focused more on contextual factors at school, neighbourhood and policy level. A Spanish study in 2004 (Con-Garci, Padilla-Munox and Carrasco-Ortiz) concluded that causes, analyses and potential solutions required a more inter-actionist perspective, one that understood the complex dynamic which operates among teachers, with their students, with families and with the policies which frame and drive their work.

As deskilling is a product of the triangular relationship among policy, social factors and school factors, so a strategic resolution lies within that same nexus. The evidence from the Spanish study, reflecting findings internationally, is that resilience in dealing with the myriad challenges of teaching is determined in large part by the support which teachers can call on to meet those challenges. As Maslach and colleagues had concluded in their 1996 study, 'the social environment is at the heart of both understanding the teacher burnout phenomenon and ameliorating it' (p. 22).

Stress, and one's response to it, may also prove to be the greatest source of professional fulfilment when the power balance among the three apexes of the triangle shifts towards the incipient agency of teachers to make, rather than simply respond to, policy. Stress takes different forms, what has come to be known as 'good stress' and 'bad stress' (Kottler and Chen, 2008). The essential difference is between stress that is long term, imposed, unwelcome, draining of energy and motivation as against the stress which accompanies a challenge, an important and welcome event, rewarding and ultimately professionally enhancing. Czikzentmihalyi's concept of 'flow' (2001) describes the point at which high challenge and high skill, or high resilience, meet. Holding on to core values and rising to the challenge against the political or social odds, seeing their pupils in 'flow' is when flow also takes places, for teachers – a reciprocal 'high'.



Recognising and managing the nature of stress may lie in individual strength but, for most teachers, it requires a little help from their friends – colleagues, unions, prescient policy makers and advisers.

### 3. De-professionalization

When the pressures on teachers go unrecognised and when the needs of beginning teachers are not attended to, there is a gradual attrition of teachers' sense of fulfilment. And when the attributes which define a profession are no longer evident, a process of 'de-professionalization' is likely to take place. It is most likely to be seen in the loss of power among professional bodies, diminished authority and autonomy of teachers and induction which bypasses theoretical and specialised knowledge. As Furlong wrote in 2003 in the UK context:

Despite 10 years of almost constant revolution, with wave upon wave of reform during that time, almost every aspect of the shape and purposes of teacher education has been transformed. But in that process, those in higher education—who traditionally might have been expected to lead such debate—have been marginalised and silenced (2003, p. 23).

For beginning teachers, the disjunction between pre-service education and the day-to-day challenges of the classroom is further reinforced by the inertia of 'the way we do things round here', referred to by Senge (2001) as an 'organisational learning disability'. It becomes deeply embedded in school cultures when teachers feel a loss of control over their professional lives; 'shorn of professionalism' (O'Brien, 2011), they are unwilling to take risks or venture beyond the tight bounds of accountability.

Although a number of teachers and their professional associations and professional bodies have played or are playing a part in policy making, the global thrust of many changes in education has meant that teachers' voices have been less heard and mechanisms for implementation in particular have proceeded with little discussion. The recent very substantial changes in teachers' work and the central specification of how to work ... have reflected an assumption that teachers do not have their own suggestions to make and that their own professional expertise is not significant, which in turn is consistent with a reduced trust in experts (Draper and O' Brien, 2006, p.25)

Where there is a gradual attrition of professional authority and autonomy, this is attributed by some commentators to 'the loose-tight paradox of local decision-making responsibilities alongside increased public scrutiny and external accountability' (Day, 2001). Over two decades ago, March and Olsen (1984) wrote about the double trend in educational policies which, since the 1980s, has witnessed a progressive lessening of organisational couplings between the state level and provinces, municipalities or communities, giving greater power and responsibility to local units, provinces, municipalities, or schools. At the same time, there has been a tightening of the organisational couplings in respect of inspection, testing, and curricula.

The impact of this liberalising trend is a double bind, a promise of autonomy together with mandated curriculum and assessment and, in some countries, prescriptive methodologies. The nature of organisational couplings does, however, vary significantly from one country to the next, in part a differential response to economic pressures, to the marketization of educational services and an opening up of parental choice and private selective schooling. Comparative data from the OECD has been used by some ministries to benchmark improvement while, in other cases, it has been used selectively and punitively.

Among teachers questioned in that Scottish study as to their reasons for not applying for headship 81 per cent cited the 'potential stressfulness of the position' (p.43). There are powerful echoes of these themes from countries as diverse as East Timor, China and Tanzania. In a 12-country study, Cowie and Crawford (2011) refer to some of the common challenges of making the transition from classroom leadership to school leadership.

- 'A period of deep emotional trauma for me and school staff' - Scotland
- An Australian principal who felt that he could manage the day-to-day operations of the school but, after three years, he still had to learn to lead
- Learning 'to spin like a top all day' in Mexico. 'When you enter the dance floor, you have to dance'
- In Romania, being a director is like living in a crystal clear glass – everything is transparent and you may be vulnerable at times, to the community, mass media, to everybody who is involved' (p. 202)



- The unforeseen challenges of inter-agency work in British Columbia
- How to develop strategies for hard-to-reach parents in China
- In South Africa, if 10 parents turn up to a parents' meeting, this is regarded as a major success
- In rural communities in Texas, not having the resources to address the problems of drugs, broken families, alcoholism, abuse, child prostitution

#### 4. Student behaviour and indiscipline

Issues of behaviour and indiscipline may be located at the school and teacher apex of the triangle – a school and classroom-related issue, dependent on the skills and expectations of teachers and school leaders. But to what extent may the impact of these issues be explained by social and economic factors and to what extent may they be attributed to policy intervention or lack of it?

Dealing with conflict in the many forms in which it is expressed proves to be one of the factors which wears down teachers through a slow and unrelenting process of attrition. Disciplinary issues are not new. They go back to Willard Waller's treatise in 1931, to lurid accounts of indiscipline and violence in Colonial schools in 17th Century America, and to Socrates' complaints about unruly youth.

What is new, however, is the level of social unrest and alienation that finds expression in the classroom on a daily basis. While there is dramatic and increasing evidence of extreme violence against school staff, these are less common sources for the disaffection that teachers express. The problem has more to do with low-level disruption, the day-to-day insidious undermining of order, and the need to be constantly in control.

Calls to the Teacher Support Line in the UK are primarily about pupil behaviour and indiscipline, particularly low-level disruption, which gradually wears teachers down, causing anxiety and depression, reported Patrick Nash, Chief Executive of Teacher Support Network in the UK. He cited a survey carried out by Teacher Support Network earlier that year which revealed that 63 per cent of respondents would consider leaving the profession because of pupil aggression and unruliness.

Dealing with the underlying causes of indiscipline takes time. Problems are often deeply rooted and not amenable to a quick fix. But time is the commodity most lacking. Because teachers are themselves under so much pressure, issues are left unresolved, and problems then resurface in other places (Galton and MacBeath, 2009)

In four English studies between 2002 and 2008, from which the above quote derives, it was the troublesome and pervasive repercussions of classroom behaviour that was ranked top of the dissatisfiers by 75 per cent of the teacher sample.



While much of the literature comes from the UK, Australia and US, the issue has become a growing concern in Asian countries. For example, the stereotypical view of Japanese schools and classrooms as well-controlled environments for learning is contested by numerous accounts of endemic indiscipline in classrooms. A New York Times article in 2000 (14 February), *Japan Grapples With a Breakdown of Discipline in Class*, cited a rise in incidents of violence against teachers as 19.2 per cent higher than the year before. A government official was quoted as saying that students were expressing their frustration and stress through violence, being less able to exercise self-control in the current social climate. An education consultant is reported as saying that children spend too much time on their own playing computer games and arrive at school without knowing the most basic rules of good behaviour. This is less surprising for those who have spent time in Japanese classrooms. In 2003, in a comparative study of schools in seven countries in which a group of researchers observed classes over a four-week period, classes were described as taking a long time to settle down, with a continuing 'unsettling atmosphere' throughout the lessons and persistent disruption by small groups of students (Barnett and Greenhalgh, in MacBeath and Hidenori, 2003, p. 174). To observe a handful of students sleeping uninterrupted throughout the lesson was not uncommon and has been reported elsewhere.

A 2004 World Bank report (Moreno, 2004) on schools in the Ukraine and Bulgaria found that school leaders spent 70 per cent of their time on raising finance, and the remaining 30 per cent on conflict resolution. Resolving conflict while often responding to disciplinary issues among students often takes the form of tensions, disputes and sometimes violence among children from different cultural backgrounds. In countries such as Malaysia, Sri Lanka, and New Guinea, the classroom is the microcosm in which larger political issues of race, class and cultural identity are played out. Countries in Europe, the Americas, and Australia are not exempt as teachers and school leaders struggle to accommodate minority ethnic groups - Aboriginal people (Australia), Maori (New Zealand), First Nation people (Canada), Mexican Americans (US), the Turkish community (Germany), North Africans (France) – creating policies aimed at resolving emerging tensions between different religions and 'tribal' identities.

Issues whose origins lie primarily in the social, economic and policy world have to be addressed at school and classroom level. Tougher, stricter, 'zero tolerance' measures have an obvious appeal but containment and compliance are short-term responses. When teachers, schools, local agencies and teacher associations take initiatives to broaden the scope, contexts and motivations for learning, issues of control and discipline assume a less impatient place (an issue explored in Chapter 5).

## 5. Special needs and inclusion

While disruptive behaviour is often in relation to children with complex and profound learning difficulties, teachers are today much more aware that this is not a case of 'bad behaviour' but an issue generally beyond their understanding or ability to control. The recognition that children also experience stress has come to the fore in the last

two decades. It presents a powerful compounding factor for teachers who have to assume responsibility for factors well beyond their personal control.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that some two million young people in the European Region suffer from mental disorders ranging from depression to schizophrenia, becoming increasingly marked in late primary and early secondary school. Many of these young people receive no care or treatment, their conditions often barely understood by teachers, parents or social services. Depression is associated with suicide in the young, the third leading cause of death among young people. The highest rates in the world are found in the European Region, particularly in Eastern European countries.

These are disproportionate in their effects on disadvantaged neighbourhoods, with the highest rates of mental disorders occurring among children from families where no parent has ever worked. The data show a clear link between mental disorders and rates of smoking, alcohol consumption, and cannabis use, most prevalent in the most economically deprived areas. Poorer people are also six times more likely to be admitted to hospital with schizophrenia, and ten times more likely to be admitted for alcohol-related problems (p. 127-202).

Common to European countries, as the report data shows, is the growth of inequality, applying in particular to families with children and adolescents for whom access to quality health services, information, education, decent housing and adequate nutrition continues to be difficult. Inequities in health and in access to health care between different groups are shown to be both socially divisive, contributing to social instability. The poorest segments of the population suffer high mortality rates and underlying conditions such as malnutrition, an issue not only prevalent in poorer countries but among disadvantaged groups in more affluent countries, such as the UK or the US. Across Europe, child poverty ranges from under five per cent in Scandinavia to over 15 per cent in Ireland, Italy and the UK.

A UK report in 2008, *The Costs of Inclusion* (MacBeath, Galton, Steward, MacBeath and Page), was met with letters and emails from around the world claiming that the issues raised were being played out with similar problematic effects in their own countries. 'Inclusion', in essence, refers to the ability of an educational system to encompass children of all abilities and needs. Ideally, all children should be catered for within mainstream schools but it is in this respect, however, that the problem arises.

A premise of the report was that inclusion is not only desirable but an imperative if the goal of equality is ever to be achieved. However, this goal is not served by physical inclusion, simply placing children in mainstream classrooms alongside their same age peers without the appropriate resourcing, support and professional development. As the report concluded, doctrinaire and under-resourced 'inclusion' could exacerbate inequality by depriving children of the kind of informed support they deserved. Nor did it do much for the morale of teachers who recognised their inability to give the kind of expert help that was needed, often expressing a sense of inadequacy and guilt.



I think, it's a funny thing to say, I think they (children with special needs) add guilt to my job. I go home sometimes and feel I haven't done a good job because I haven't given them enough time. (Reception Class Teacher)

We were doing something in Maths last week and they still hadn't got it and I felt a failure in myself. I got so emotional and I said to my TA [Teaching Assistant] because I was close to tears, "I've got to go out of the classroom". I felt it was something I was failing in – I couldn't cope with it any more. (Primary teacher, 12 years' experience)

The *Costs of Inclusion* ended with this paragraph, pointing to an issue with social origins, with classroom impact but requiring in the first instance a policy solution.

There is an unarguable case for more intelligent and targeted resource provision. But resources on their own will not bring about change. The issues run deeper and challenge the very nature of current policy. Inclusion can only work in a culture of collaboration in which there is sharing of resource and expertise. Competitive market-driven policies impact on the most vulnerable of children and penalise the most dedicated of teachers. The most striking aspect of this study is the goodwill of teachers who believe in inclusion and try to make it work but do not find their goodwill repaid by the level of professional support they deserve. It is time for a thorough review of policy and practice (p. 68).

## Reciprocity and returns on investment

It is the nature of reciprocity between what teachers invest in their work and what they receive in return by way of thanks and recognition that helps to explain the inability to meet the range of demands and expectations placed on them as well as their resilience to rise above the challenges (Taris, Van Horn, Schaufeli, and Schreurs, 2004).

The association found between poor interpersonal work-related interactions stress and emotional dissonance (Bakker and Heuven, 2006) is countered in school cultures which provide social support, in collegial cultures which promote self-efficacy, self-concept, coping strategies, optimism, and hardiness or resilience (Abraham, 1998, 1999; Cooper et al., 2001). Identifying these buffers is seen as the key to intervening in ways which reduce attrition and to help teachers to maintain engagement and effectiveness. Self-efficacy is generally referred to as a personal trait rooted in individual psychology but it may also be seen as a collective attribute, as David Frost (2011) describes it. In his report on teacher leadership in 15 East European countries, he points to 'collective self-efficacy' that inspired teachers to go beyond constraining policy mandate and external validation to engage in teacher-generated knowledge and knowledge validation.

Resilience, the ability to rise above problems, to maintain a sense of self-belief and mission is in part a personal attribute, but is to a greater extent a function of social relationships. Not all teachers have the same capacity to sustain frustrated aims and to maintain a high level of energy over time. Teachers respond differently to a policy

mandate and how it mediated through structure and culture. In the Scottish study referred to in Chapter 1, while confidence and 'bullish assertion' came from length of experience and learned resilience, expressions of individuality have, nonetheless, to be understood as nested within school cultures, neighbourhoods, local government, national policy and international pressures.

UNESCO's Addis Ababa Education For All 2010 conference noted the critical role that teachers play collectively, pro-active in their school decision-making, exercising leadership in addressing marginalisation of families and underachieving students. Recognising that the problem is deeply rooted in communities and the ways in which policy responds to those communities allows teachers to engage with social policy without the associated guilt that the problem lies with them. In China, the issue of marginalisation is being addressed through greater investment in rural areas, support to persons with disabilities, help for minorities and children of migrant workers, through school nutrition programmes, school construction and an enhanced range of teacher incentives.

The quality of leadership, mediation, support, encouragement and reward are vital ingredients in the improvement and accountability mix, as a UK Government Select Committee noted in 2009:

The problem with the Government's assessment of the accountability system is that it implies that schools welcome the opportunity to take "ownership of their own improvement" but then provides the perfect example of how they have been prevented from doing just that. The "flexibility" of the system, allowing a constant shift in priorities by central government, is precisely the reason why schools are struggling to engage with the accountability regime and myriad school improvement mechanisms. The Government refers to the flexibility of the accountability system as if this is an inherent benefit. The opposite is true. (Paragraph 44, Government Select Committee, Session 2009-10, UK)

'Finding the right balance between accountability and trust would therefore entail reduced requirements for documentation, greater capacity for local innovation and risk-taking' (PwC, 2001, p. 32). In Andy Hargreaves' words, 'Reading the tea leaves' (2005) implies for teachers and senior school leaders the ability to distinguish between the urgent, the important and unnecessary, having the courage and professional solidarity to 'resist the juggernaut' (Frost, 2005) and, with support from profession associations, to maintain an educational vision, intellectual subversion and moral integrity.

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# CHAPTER 3

## From magnificent myth to the rise of school effectiveness

Long-serving or retired teachers will remember the good old days when there was greater freedom to teach, less regulation and 'snoopection'. But to what extent were those days really 'good'? What has been the contribution of an 'effectiveness' movement to raising standards and to what extent has it had a constraining influence on schools and classrooms? Whose interests does it serve? Who is it *for*? And what essential aspects of human learning does it ignore?

This chapter ends with a return to what we know about learning, its theoretical underpinnings and essential principles.

### Remember when

Teachers whose professional lives stretch over four or five decades look back, from time to time with nostalgia at what teaching was like in the 1960s and 1970s. Remember when:

- The classroom was the teacher's domain and no-one interfered with the teacher's autonomy and professional judgment
- There were opportunities for spontaneity and following of children's interests
- The teaching day finished mid or late-afternoon and it was rare to take work home
- Teaching was relaxed and classrooms were creative places
- Teachers were respected professionals
- Parents supported teachers' judgements and sanctions
- Education was valued in its own right rather than for the economy or individual gain

This is, in Platonic language, the 'magnificent myth', not because it is necessarily untrue but because, while founded in reality, it comes with a gloss that conceals inherent flaws in the narrative. In many countries, social and economic conditions could not afford such 'eccentricities' as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector in England described it:



The head of the Office for Standards in Education said as an educationist he had seen in the 1960s and 1970s "too many incoherent or non-existent curriculums, too many eccentric and unevaluated teaching methods, and too much of the totally soft-centred belief that children would learn if you left them to it". (The Guardian, 6 October, 2004)

While England became the focal point for 'progressive' primary schools, attracting cohorts of visitors in the early 1970s, similar practices flourished elsewhere, particularly in the Nordic countries and in the US where the New York State Commissioner, Ewald Nyquist, declared that, by 1972, all elementary schools in the state would be 'British primary schools'. The dawn of tougher, less tolerant, decades to follow have to be understood in part as the pendulum swing of the historical dialectic. The future is, in many respects, a captive of the past and what took place, what was said and written in the 1960s and 1970s set the stage for a powerfully and politically driven antithesis.

In countries in the West, the two decades of the 1960s and 1970s could be characterised as an era of optimism, conviction and hope for the future. There was a belief that schools could be the catalyst for social change, the harbinger of a more equal and just society. Reflecting on that age of idealism in the US, Elaine Showalter (2005) writes that, during the 1960s and 1970s, teaching became an explicitly political act. Feminist and anti-racist critiques put pressure on the curriculum, particularly in the teaching of literature, to reflect the lives of black men and women and disenfranchised minorities.

Endemic to the spirit of the 1960s and 1970s was school as the place in which young people embarked on a quest for meaning linked to an altruistic social mission - doing good for society. A primary goal of schooling was seen as the creation of a better society for everyone. The evidence is uncontested that schools had, until then, failed substantial groups of children, in particular minority ethnic groups and girls, as well as teachers and society in general. The idealism and social purposes of school is exemplified in Hartmut Von Hentig's letters to his fictional nephew, Tobias:

In school, you meet people different from yourself from different backgrounds, children you can observe, talk to, ask questions, for example, someone from Turkey or Vietnam, a devout Catholic or an out-and-out atheist, boys and girls, a mathematical whiz kid, a child in a wheelchair ... I believe wholeheartedly that the open school is there first and foremost to bring young people together and to help them to learn to live in a way that our political society so badly needs. (Von Hentig, 1995, p. 47)

Although written in the 1990s, the Von Hentig 'letters' followed his earlier damning critiques of a German system (in Lister, Deschooling, 1974) which, he wrote, had failed so many children in the past by its elitism and narrowness of purpose. It was a critique reflected in a growing stream of literature, in titles such as *Death at an Early*



Age (Kozol, 1985), *School is Dead* (Reimer, 1971), *Compulsory Miseducation* (Goodman, 1966), *Free the Children (and other political prisoners)* (Graubard, 1972). In Italy, children of the *School of Barbiana's Letter to a Teacher* (1970) described schools as 'tending to the healthy and neglecting the sick'. In South America, Paulo Freire wrote of *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1968) and the Austrian, Ivan Illich, proposed *Deschooling Society* (1971).

In her work on oral histories with an idealist generation of young people in the post-Vietnam US, Bethany Rogers (2008) writes about their channelling of energies into a war against poverty and inequalities associated with race and class, joining the Teacher Corps as an opportunity to act on their desire to 'do good'.

Oral histories serve as a potent reminder that history involves a complex calculus between big ideas, events, and movements, on the one hand, and the very personal, particular, and unplanned tides of a life on the other (p.41).

Referring to this, George Counts' challenge to teachers to 'dare to build a new social order' she says, was 'a classic 1960s sentiment'. It 'privileged idealism and good intentions above the role of professional training. Unlike today, pursuing socially conscious values and "meaning" far outweighed practical considerations of "jobs" or admiration for professional expertise' (p. 50).

The 'freedom' rhetoric, the free school movement and the search for radical alternatives to what were seen as failed, self-interested systems were symptomatic of the age and explain how, in the fervour for less authoritarian forms of schooling, progressive and child-centred alternatives presented an easy target for the New Right.

Although the crusade of the radical reformers was against a failed system, their unfettered idealism was seen politically as creating a whole new raft of problems. The push 'back to basics' that gathered momentum from the late 1970s onward was spurred in part by changing political cultures as a global discourse focused attention on disparities in attainment among countries, among schools within countries, and among children within the same school. With availability of data and the emerging influence of super-national bodies, it exposed the under-achievement of large groups of children and the under-achievement of schools that were failing to equip their pupils with the essential tools of literacy and numeracy. The golden age of spending and resourcing of education in Western countries was beginning to feel the bite of economic stringency and the efficiency of schools was becoming subject to closer scrutiny.

## Efficiency and effectiveness

in the mid-1960s and early-1970s. Two seminal studies (Coleman et al., 1996 and Jencks et al., 1972) were to set the agenda for the hugely influential school 'effects' studies, occupying the opposite end of the spectrum from the 'new Romantics'. While the Coleman and Jencks studies found that schools made only a marginal difference to social equality, and that there was only a small difference between the 'best' and 'worst' schools, it was to provoke its own powerful antithesis. These two landmark reports were met by a proliferation of studies, designed to show that schools *do* make a difference (Brookover et al., 1979; Mortimore et al., 1988). The next four to five decades were to witness a quest among researchers for a 'science' robust enough to explain and predict 'outcomes', tying these to the impact and 'effect' of the school and, with a progressive tightening of focus, on the individual teacher.

While quantitative studies of 'effects' originated in a desire to test whether schools were in fact instrumental in reducing inequality, research findings had become, by the late- 1970s, not only a defence of schools in their more fundamentalist mould but a reservoir of measurement tools, which would be put by grateful governments to the service of performance tables and punitive policies. As Slee and Weiner (2001) point out, governments (in their most invective form expressed by UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher) were frustrated with the caution, complexities and caveats of academics, a tiresome distraction from direct political action and simple answers.

The claim of measurable and generalizable outcomes help simplify the task of the politician and civil servant seeking to impose clarity on a 'messy' policy domain and ... a polity that grown impatient with careful research analyses of complex educational and social issues. (p. 86).

School effectiveness studies offered an unprecedented opportunity to compare schools with a toolbox of criteria, the seven, 11 or 12 indicators emerging from studies, most prolifically in the US, the UK, the Netherlands, Australia and New Zealand. School improvement, born in the house of effectiveness, appropriated a less common-sense construction of 'improvement', applying effectiveness measures to determine 'residual value added' or achievement above expectation. 'To try to improve low-performing schools by encouraging them to adopt the characteristics detected in effective schools is problematic', argues Sandoval-Hernandez (2008) because:

... Schools differ so much in relevant aspects, such as the causes underlying their specific performance, capacity for change, contextual characteristics, etc. These differences are stressed when considering the practice of importing school effectiveness models from one country to another. That is to say that one-size-fits-all solution cannot be used to improve school performance; instead school improvement efforts should carefully consider the power of site or place (p. 32).



Wrigley's (2003) ground for his critique of SER is that 'effectiveness research, by separating itself off from wider sociological studies to focus on the size of the school effects, simultaneously deflected attention from the issues Coleman raised' (p. 21). It helped politicians to shift the terms of reference to a neater more manageable focus for policy. He goes on to reproach the 'gatekeepers' of the paradigm for their acquiescence with dominant political forces, and offers first-hand evidence from two founding fathers of the movement themselves.

Pragmatists working within the SER paradigm believed that efforts to alter the existing relationship between social class and student achievement by bringing about societal changes are naïve, perhaps quixotic. We prefer to work within the constraints of the current social order (Teddle and Reynolds, 2001, pp 70-71).

'We have a systems problem, not a people problem', writes Vollmer (2010) in his book, *Schools cannot do it alone*, pointing to the futility of trying to change the school system without 'touching the culture of the surrounding town'. 'Everything that goes on inside a school is tied to local attitudes, values, traditions, and beliefs'. Starrat (2005) similarly takes issue with the notion that schools can somehow be studied detached from the world beyond their walls, and refers to the paucity of a 'meat and potatoes curriculum', which conveys the message that school learning stands outside, and insulated from, children's personal and civic lives.

As human beings, they [children] are searching, and must search for the truth of who they are. Educators miss this connection because they are accustomed to view the learning agenda of the school as an end in itself, rather than as a means for the moral and intellectual "filling out" of learners as human beings. Schools assume that their learning agenda stands above and outside of the personal and civic life of learners. By and large, the message communicated to learners is: leave your personal and civic lives at the schoolhouse door – certainly at the classroom door (Starrat, 2005, p.3).

## Inside the black box

The 'black box' model, with which the effectiveness story began, quantifies inputs (prior attainment) and outcomes (achieved attainment) with a focus on what happens in between to account for a more-or-less effective school and classroom. This calculation rests on quantitative measures amenable to defining and manipulating effect sizes, holding variables constant in a quasi-experimental process. Over time, this basic paradigm has become progressively more sophisticated, in particular with the advent of multi-level modelling, and growth-curve modelling which attempt to account for the effect size at each organisational level so as to quantify with increasing precision what makes the difference: The type of school? The school ethos or culture? The principal? The department? The teacher? Class size and composition? The subject of study?

The quest for the 'Holy Grail' set out to discover and pin down not only what the archetypal effective school looks like but to determine which of these layers of influence prove to be the most or least effective. So it might be able to prove that principals matter more than ethos, that teacher effects are more important than departmental effects or that schools matter more than home background. Coe and Fitz-Gibbon (1998) characterise such an approach as 'fishing for correlations' between particular factors associated with school effectiveness and particular characteristics of schools, without specifying why or how it is expected that these particular characteristics be related with school effectiveness' (p.422). The logic, that 'more of this is associated with more of that' does not help, they argue, in teasing out the intricate relationship among these 'variables' nor help to explain the hidden and deeper factors which underlie these relationships.

'Numbers are like people; torture them enough and they will tell you anything', writes Gorard (2011) in his critique of the ways quantitative methods have been used and interpreted. 'Blinded by pseudo-science', he argues that people have 'not really thought about the process and have simply bought into what appears to be a scientific and technical solution to judging school performance. He continues:

I use the term 'bought' advisedly here because part of the answer might also lie in the money to be made. In England, school effectiveness has become an industry, employing civil servants at DCSF [government] and elsewhere, producing incentives for teachers deemed CVA [Contextual Value added] experts in schools, creating companies and consultants to provide data analysis, paying royalties to software authors and funding for academics from the taxpayer. A cynical view would be that most people in England do not understand CVA, but a high proportion of those who do stand to gain from its use in some way (p.3).

Gorard goes on to question whether the variation in school outcomes, unexplained by student background, is 'just the messy stuff left over by the process of analysis? Or is it large enough, robust and invariant enough over time, to be accounted a school "effect"? 'Almost by default the answer to the second question has been assumed by most research users to be "yes". There has been generally weak opposition to the dominant technical model of school effectiveness, perhaps stemming from an inability to understand the technicalities'. (p.3)

The more complex value added and contextual measures, correlations, effect sizes and esoteric disputes become among the 'little enders and the big enders', the more teachers come to rely on the experts, admitting that their forms of statistical wizardry are beyond teachers' professional compass.



Measurement of achievement and 'value added' simply cannot deal with the complexity of learning, reducing it persistently to the lowest common denominator. When schools are not alive to their incipient agency, the everyday discourse among staff is, by default, shaped by policy pressures, constrained by the demands of organisational convenience, and slowly and insidiously absorbed into the intellectual and emotional bloodstream. Learning comes to be seen as what happens in classrooms as the result of teaching and leadership is seen as the province of those who make the big decisions about the future. All too easily, learning as a vibrant shared activity, ceases to be the main consideration. All too easily, the potential to lead learning is left to others. (MacBeath and Cheng, 2008, p.8)

While a range of qualitative approaches and increasingly sophisticated measures have been developed, and while researchers themselves are careful to add numerous caveats, pointing out that an effect size is no more than a relative measure and subject to considerable margins of error, it has not prevented governments from turning a blind eye to some of the 'health warnings' and for teachers whose work is progressively devoted to keeping an eye on the numbers. Researchers, for their part, are cautious to qualify the language of 'effects', referring to 'a *more* effective' or 'less effective' school, department or teacher, pointing out that statistical differences are often marginal and tend to conceal more than they reveal. This has not, however, prevented a casual slippage and conflation of 'effective' and 'good' – one intended as a scientific statement and the other as a value judgment. One is concerned with 'value-added' (a statistical term borrowed from economics), the other is more concerned with values in their moral, 'human', professional and (in some cases) religious sense.

The resulting failure to address these theoretical and methodological tensions can all too easily lead to ill-founded conclusions and definitive prescriptions. Measures of 'quality' and 'equity', enduring concerns in effectiveness studies are, as the following reveals, inescapably tied to student 'scores' as the key explanatory variable for in-school and between-school variance.

The two general dimensions of school effectiveness, quality and equity, are still at the heart of the research domain. The international comparative studies tend to report the effectiveness of educational systems regarding these two dimensions. School quality is seen as the degree to which a school scores better than other schools, corrected for student intake characteristics. The equity dimension refers to the compensatory power of schools, indicating that some schools are better at compensating for input characteristics (such as SES, gender and ethnicity) than others. Thus, the quality dimension refers to between-school differences, while the equity dimension refers to within-school gaps (Reynolds et al., 2010, p.36)

Yet schools, writes Ball (1997) 'are complex, contradictory, sometimes incoherent organisations like many others. They are assembled over time to form a bricolage of memories, commitments, routines, bright ideas and policy effects. They are changes, influenced and interfered with regularly and increasingly. They drift, decay and regenerate' (p.317).

Despite attempts to capture school effects and improvement over time, the inherent flaw in black box studies lies in the difficulty of capturing the incoherence, the 'flow' and 'drift' while allowing the tight focus on the school or classroom to discount, underestimate or misconceive the impact of what happens outside the black box. Consistent among studies since the 1966 Coleman Report has been the identification of the school effect as being between eight and 15 per cent. While this is a statistic to be treated with much caution and qualification, the interplay of school with family, neighbourhood and community needs to be taken into account in any judgment made about teaching quality and effect. While, in many countries, social class and gender are two of the most powerful discriminating factors in school and teacher effectiveness, their impact on the lives and efficacy of teaching takes very different forms in Nordic countries, in Eastern Europe, in Japan, Australia and countries of the Middle East, for example.

## Effective for whom and effective for what?

This is the question posed by Bogotch, Miron and Biesta (2007) in their critique of an effectiveness movement which, they say, has claimed 'legitimacy by attribution' but has been unable to provide insights into the deep structure of the school experience for children.

The most consistent finding from effectiveness studies is the key role of the principal or head teacher. So ingrained is it in popular conception that it appears to be beyond challenge. In some countries, successful head teachers receive enhanced salaries, bonuses or 'golden hellos' yet 'success' may often be bought through the disempowerment of teachers by what have been described variously as 'heroic', 'charismatic', 'narcissistic' or 'coercive' principals. In a major three-year ESRC-funded study in England, (James et al., 2008), the most successful head teacher, later knighted for the effectiveness of his school and the raised achievement of his students, attributed his accomplishments to his own powerful influence.

*'This policy has got a lot of me in it. It's largely me.'*  
*'That wasn't from the staff. That was from myself'*  
*'It was quite brutal. It was tough. It was me'*

The use of words like 'tough' and 'brutal' are one expression of what is widely referred to as 'strong' leadership, raising the stakes, creating willing followership. Another head in the same ESRC study described having to 'force' ideas on to his colleagues,





involving 'battles' to get people to accept his plans for the school. The chimera of shared leadership or shared decision-making is exposed in the following quote:

I think teachers have got to feel that they're making decisions but what I suppose I'm forcing them to do is making those decisions (p.66).

These insights only became visible through highly skilled probing interviews running in some cases to 27,000 words of transcript, exposing the noble lie of a high-performing school in which former school students now in universities complained about the unequal task of thinking for themselves, something for which their pressure cooker school had failed to prepare them (in MacBeath, 2006).

Leadership which is genuinely empowering is described in these terms by Mulheron (2011) referring to the Australian Education Union:

Schools work best when the principal acts, not in an individualistic way, but in a collegial, supportive, and co-operative manner, building relationships with staff and working alongside them as a fellow educator (Mulheron, 2011, p.33).

The pre-eminent task of leadership is to foster a 'culture' in which learning is the day-to-day norm, built into the fabric of school life. 'Culture', a humpty-dumpty word with a multitude of meanings, may best be captured by Peterson and Deal's 1998 definition as 'the underground stream of norms, values, beliefs, traditions, and rituals that build up over time as people work together, solve problems, and confront challenges' (p. 28). It is comprised of a set of informal expectations and values which shape how people think, feel, and act in schools and 'includes the cognitive schema that frame and mould expectations and assign meaning to experience, and is infused with stories, myths and legends, emblems, symbolic objects and rituals and is inseparable from the structures through which these are expressed' (Geertz, 1973,p.50).

As the above example from the ESRC study reveals, disempowering or teachers through a combination of structure and culture may be easily achieved but empowerment comes through a more circuitous route.

You can disempower somebody but you cannot empower them. They will really begin to change, take initiatives, take risks, provide real feedback, learn from mistakes and accept responsibility for what they are doing when they feel sufficiently confident to do so and are provided with a clear framework. Achieving this type of relationship is not easy. It requires much effort, openness and willingness to learn - and some humility. It feels uncomfortable, particularly for leaders in organisations where this style is not the norm. It requires a high degree of self-belief and a willingness to try (Binney and Williams, 1997, p. 69).



Beane and Apple (1999) offer three critical conditions for school leadership to be able to create a culture in which innovative pedagogies thrive.

- The open flow of ideas, regardless of their popularity, that enables people to be as fully informed as possible
- Faith in the individual and collective capacity of people to create possibilities for resolving problems
- The use of critical reflection and analysis to evaluate ideas, problems, and policies (p. 7)

## The peer effect

The principal/head teacher 'effect' on transforming school cultures is mediated by what effectiveness research has identified as the 'compositional' effect (Mortimore et al., 1998), confirming what most parents already know - that who your children will go to school with is the most salient criteria in the exercise of choosing a school. The power of the 'compositional', or peer, effect has also been shown to be one of the strongest determining factors of achievement and attitudes, but is also mediated by the strength of cultural capital within the family. The weaker the social and intellectual capital in the family, the stronger the influence of peers which tends to find its level as the lowest common denominator.

While multi-level modelling attempts to factor in the compositional effect, it is difficult to measure the subtlety of ways in which peer relationships extend into the 'underlife' of the school. Martin Thrupp, in his 1999 study, *Schools Making a Difference*, contends that 'the social mix' is too slippery to be so easily quantified or treated as a troublesome variable. Compositional measures tell us little about the nature of relationships within the peer group, a critical mass of motivation or disinclination, engagement or disengagement, a precarious balance, which may constitute a tipping point into either order or anarchy or be harnessed successfully by some individual teachers but not by others.

These issues are the substance of Judith Harris' award winning book, *The Nurture Assumption* (1998). Its sub-title, *Why children turn out the way they do*, ascribes the dominant forces in childhood and adolescence to the 'significant others' who shape values and character often more insidiously and powerfully than parents and teachers. Harris takes to task conventional assumptions about relative effects, teasing out nature of the peer effect, particularly in adolescence.

Harris' findings add depth and texture to the 'compositional effect' by revealing what quantitative studies stop short of measuring - the power of the connections between how peer group affiliations and expectations play out in school and classroom life, on the one hand, and how they play out in the street and neighbourhood culture, on the other.



The French sociologist Louis Wacquant's 1996 studies of adolescent culture in Paris 'banlieus' examine 'the neighbourhood effect' which establishes norms then carried powerfully into schools. It opens the door to a more textured ethnography of street cultures, norms inherent in places where children grow up, the other children they meet, play with or fight with, the peer pressures they experience and the adults who model behaviour. These norms and behaviours have deeper roots in what Wacquant's termed as 'advanced marginality' characterised by polarised economic growth, fragmentation of the labour market, casualization of labour, autonomisation of the street economy, and political alienation.

The implications for future research are that studies comparing schools in their effectiveness or improvement will need to take much greater account of the multiplicity of learning experiences which children and young people have outside schools. We will have to take greater account of contexts, opportunities, and constraints on learners. More fundamentally, if schools are only one element of a learner's potential learning encounters, detailed longitudinal case studies of learners, rather than schools, are likely to be more helpful in understanding what combinations of experiences best promote the learning of different people. (Stoll, MacBeath and Mortimore, 2001, p. 195)

## Learning in captivity

The literature on school improvement, for all its talk of values, mission and vision is strangely silent about curriculum', writes Wrigley (200:91), accusing SER researchers of tacitly accepting its implicit rationale, yet all effect measures derive from performance within that received and transmitted body of knowledge. Although qualitative data, classroom observation and finer-grained tools are progressively added to the researcher's repertoire, ultimately researchers, and in turn policy makers, continue to rely on curricula-related attainment tests, standing in as a proxy for learning. These measures are computed within the school or classroom context and within the 'ruthlessly cumulative' nature of the curriculum (Pinker, 2002). Our judgements of such powerful notions as 'potential' and 'achievement' then come to be viewed and defined within these parameters, what David Perkins (2002) has described as 'learning in captivity'. The jokey yet telling parallel with the potential and achievement of fleas tells a story.

When fleas are captured for the flea circus, they are placed in jars and the lids are screwed on. When the fleas jumped in the jars, they would hit their heads on the lids. They still wanted to jump so they learned to jump just high enough so that they wouldn't hit their heads. The trainer then comes back and takes the fleas out of the jars and puts them in the circus. Even though the fleas now have the whole sky above them, they still do not jump past their now self-imposed limits. Even though the fleas are now free, they have made the limits truly theirs by refusing to go beyond them.

Insights into institutional constraints and ways in which children limit their aspirations are not news to teachers and have been the subject of an extensive literature (Rosenthal and Jacobsen's 'self-fulfilling prophesy', 1968; Seligman's 'learned helplessness,' 1975; Dweck's 'Mindset', 2006). What Gladwell calls the 'talent mind set' is inherently inhibiting because of how we attribute qualities to other people and tends to ignore or minimise contextual and cultural factors. Working with children and young people in contexts other than the classroom and unbounded by assumptions of 'ability', teachers can find themselves in new conceptual and experiential territory, reframing their assumptions about intelligence, motivation and potential.

In 1965, a Scottish dominie (school master) wrote a book, entitled *Escape from the Classroom*, to illustrate how much there was to learn beyond its containing walls. Were Robert Mackenzie alive, he might write about an escape from the language to which school and teachers have become captive. The soft, horticultural, language of growth, nurturing, blossoming has been replaced by the tough, commercial language of targets, standards, measures, value-added and accountability. In a recent academic paper by Coffield (2011), analysing the uncritical reception for recent McKinsey reports (Mourshed, Chijioke, and Barber, 2010), he takes issue with the language of 'delivery' which sits at the epicentre of how teachers and teaching are viewed in this brave new world.

They espouse a high-performance model of schooling, which is characterised by relentless pressure, competition, line managers, customer services, and data for performance management, accountability and value for money; and professional autonomy for teachers only when granted by the centre .... Their model of a school system is highly prescriptive, top-down, and mechanistic. Teachers are reduced to the status of technicians, of agents of the state who 'deliver' the ideas of others (p. 15)

There are strong resonances here with Finland's explicit rejection of that paradigm. *What can the world learn from educational change in Finland?* is the sub-title of Pasi Sahlberg's recent book, *Finnish Lessons*. The central message of the book is that Finland's high-performing education system is owed to adopting policies counter to that of most Western education systems such as standardising teaching and learning with common criteria for measurement and data; increased focus on core subjects, particularly literacy and numeracy; prescribed curriculum; transfer of models of administration from the corporate world; high stakes accountability policies - control, inspection, division between schools and an ethos of punishment (for educators). He writes:

As Finnish teachers were exploring the theoretical foundations of knowledge and learning and redesigning their school curricula to be congruent with them, their peers in England, Germany, France and the United States struggled with increased school inspection, controversial externally-imposed learning standards, and competition that disturbed some teachers to the point that they decided to leave their jobs (p. 5)



Sahlberg's argument is that 'the GERM' - the Global Education Reform Movement - has been highly contagious to the point that we have lost touch with learning and what it means to be in love with learning, simply for its own sake.

The best-performing educational systems all have built their change strategies on systemic approaches that rely on collective professional and institutional (or social capital) development, enhanced conditions for teaching and learning for all, and more equal educational opportunities within their education systems. <http://www.pasisahlberg.com/blog/?p=32>

As in James and Brown's (2005) taxonomy of learning purposes, the challenge for pedagogy is both to move from, and be able to 'measure' from attainment of competence, to membership, inclusion, self-worth – affinity towards, and readiness to participate and contribute to, groups; building social and substantive identities.

#### Table 4 - James and Brown's 7 learning purposes

1. Attainments – often school curriculum-based (literacy, numeracy, science) or measures of basic competence in the workplace.
2. Understanding – of ideas, concepts, processes.
3. Cognitive and creative – imaginative construction of meaning, arts or performance.
4. Using – how to practise, manipulate, behave, engage in process or systems.
5. Higher order learning – advanced thinking, reasoning, meta-cognition.
6. Dispositions – attitudes, perceptions, motivations.
7. Membership, inclusion, self-worth – affinity towards, and readiness to participate and contribute to, groups; building social and substantive identities.

(Source: James and Brown, 2005, p. 11)

### Measuring what we value: wellbeing and a sense of self

'We must learn to measure what we value' began the report to the US Congress, *Education Counts*, in 1991. A fuller picture on the lives and learning of children is offered by data from the 2007 UNICEF Report premised on what constitutes a 'true measure' of how nations look after the next generation.

The true measure of a nation's standing is how well it attends to its children – their health and safety, their material security, their education and socialization, and their sense of being loved, valued, and included in the families and societies into which are born (UNICEF, 2007, p. 3).

This *Report Card* provides a comprehensive assessment of the lives and wellbeing of children and young people in 21 nations of the industrialised world. Its purpose is to encourage monitoring, to permit comparison, and to stimulate the discussion and

development of policies to improve children's lives. Is it significant that on a composite of the six wellbeing indicators, the two countries with arguably the most pressure on school and children's performance, the UK and the US, occupy the bottom two places?

Acknowledging the early pioneering work of school effectiveness researchers as a necessary corrective to the overly pessimistic, even deterministic view of the influence of social and political factors on the efficacy of school, Fielding (1997) nonetheless depicts it as a diversion of attention away from the structural impediments of poverty and inequality as part of the genre's 'contemporary myopia' (p.141). It raises the question as to whether a school is the best unit of analysis and whether we need a new paradigm which does not simply abandon the advances made, but recasts it in a new more adventurous mould.

Academic research in the field of school effectiveness is lacking in the field of pupil wellbeing and wider outcomes beyond assessment results (paragraph 37, Government Select Committee, Session 2009-10, UK.)

While effectiveness research has, in fact, taken a greater interest in measures such as wellbeing, many within the field acknowledge that effectiveness research is still far from an empirical process robust or valid enough to factor into the equation the 'variables', to tease out the dynamic interplay of factors that tell the story of what good teaching looks like in the many different contexts in which it takes place. The challenge is to grasp the complexity and dynamic of schools and classrooms as living, growing entities, and their relationship to a complex and changing world beyond.

Hedley Beare (2007), with four decades of involvement in school effectiveness and improvement, suggests the need for 'a giant step' away from current approaches: 'The incremental development of effectiveness over four decades has surely reached saturation point" (p.27).

Such is the international investment in this 'hunt for the unicorn' (Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars, 1993) that, if effectiveness is to remain a viable construct, it will have to be recast in a framework which is sensitive, complex and sophisticated enough to account for the inter-relationship among:

- Student achievement across a range of activities and experiences
- Changes and patterns of student performance over an extended period of time
- Changing student motivation and engagement over time and place
- Students' prior experiences, expectations and attitudes to school and to learning
- The inter-relationship among gender, ethnicity, social class and language(s)
- Teachers' experience, qualifications and expectations
- The locus, nature and impact of leadership and management
- The impact of international, national and local policy
- Funding and resourcing, and its distribution and usage
- Support and professional development for staff



Taken together, and in various combinations, the above factors constitute a complex and volatile mix, compounded by aspects of children's and teachers' experiences which defy even less easy measurement, such as:

- The impact of parents, siblings, 'family', and extended family
- The influence of the school peer group and the neighbourhood peer group
- The contribution of private tutoring, study centres and supplementary schooling (e.g. 'jukus' and 'Kumon' centres)
- The impact of inspection and school review on teacher motivation and effect
- The contribution of advisory services and other sources of support and challenge
- The composition, competitiveness or collegiality within a staff
- Violence and intimidation of teachers (by parents and/or students)

As SER and Educational Effectiveness Research (EER) mature, effectiveness studies have broadened their compass to take greater account of sociology, cognitive neuroscience and humanistic psychology. While this is interesting work in progress and now described as EER, its focus is still squarely on what is measurable within the school and classroom.

## A theory of learning

Any future modelling has to start from what we know, and are continuing to learn, about learning and its sensitivity to context, relationships and resilience over time. 'We need a theory on what constitutes effective learning' (CERI *Innovative Teaching for Effective Learning* p.3). While echoing David Perkins' claim a decade ago that 'we are still only in the foothills of our understanding of learning', it is nonetheless a surprising statement given the volume of research, scientific discovery, a substantive body of literature and an abundance of theory available. In 2011, we know much more about child development, the nature of cognition, the role of emotions in intelligence and behaviour and the importance of environment (including the pre-natal years). "A great deal is actually known about pedagogy, both in the UK and internationally," writes James and Pollard (2011), but they add: "The synthesis, communication and implementation of such knowledge are far weaker than they should be" (p.276). The puzzle to be solved has less to do with learning 'in the wild' than learning 'in captivity'.

Speaking at the Thinking Skills conference in Singapore in 1997, Robert Sternberg, professor of psychology at Yale University, portrayed effective learners as 'jungle navigators'. He expressed 'despair' at students who arrive at his university 'bright, well-schooled, and examination-smart, but poor jungle navigators', often without what he called the practical, creative and successful intelligences that really matter in life. Schools should be less concerned with 'imposed skills and imposed categorical systems' but rather encourage students to seek individual personal solutions to problems. In much of the so-called problem-solving in classrooms, he said, it is the teachers who present the problems, and often also provide a method for solving them. But the vital step, recognising and defining the problem, is left out. The learning environment of the classroom should

be one which invites challenge and discovery across domains, he argued. Melting the 'ice cube' of compartmentalised subject classroom-bound knowledge allows learning to become fluid, real and exploratory (in MacBeath, 1997, <http://www.tes.co.uk/teaching-resource/Inside-the-thinking-brain-55932/>)

The *Power of Place* is the theme of Winifred Gallagher's book of that title in which she explores the relationship between individual attitudes, social conditioning and the environmental factors which shape our lives and, most crucially influence, 'the ability to control and enjoy ones' experience' (p.11). Her treatise is given new dimensions in Weiss and Fine's studies of *Construction Sites* (2000). The book of that title explores how children 'construct' their intelligence, their identity, their social and moral self according to what any given 'site' offers them. Construction sites may be the home, the neighbourhood, the peer group, the gang, the school, the classroom, the mosque, church or temple, as well as a range of other venues. It is, however, in the interplay among these various sites, and the ease with which young people travel among them that shapes intelligence, motivation and wellbeing. With an echo of Sternberg's jungle metaphor, Wylie (2004) argues that it is students' ability to 'navigate' the differing norms, expectations of social conventions of differing sites that, in large part, distinguishes those who succeed and those who fail. This ability may be explained in terms of 'bridging' and 'linking social capital', in which 'doing school' effectively requires 'young people and their parents to be able to engage successfully with hierarchies and authorities and to negotiate their paths through school conventions' (MacBeath et al., p 45).

Maybe it is time to consider young people's out-of-school knowledge and cultures not as 'distractions' from the main business of schooling, but as rich, complex, diverse and powerful sources for learning and as an important place to start in designing education for the 21st Century (Sutherland, Robertson, and John 2009 p. 176).

As globalisation and supranational bodies cast schools in a common mould in order to compare their effectiveness, we have constantly to be reminded that schools have differing historical roots and weak or strong ties to their local communities, and that there are differing socio-cultural constructions of what school 'is' and what essential purposes it serves. Not only across countries, but within countries, there are pendulum swings at policy level as to essential purposes of school across a spectrum of individual and social aims, academic and 'whole person' development, disciplinary, 'transversal competencies', inter-disciplinary and vocational aims. Global pressures, policy borrowing and the continuing pursuit of the unicorn, neglect the deep-seated cultural histories, each with their own forms of resistance and subversion, often in tension with compliance and internalisation of the language of performativity and accountability and managerialist logic. Research findings into the nature, contexts and expressions of learning may be summarised in these four headlines:

1. Learning is situated in broad socio-economic and historical contexts and is mediated by local cultural practices and perspectives



2. Learning takes place not only in school but also in the multiple contexts and valued practices of everyday lives across the life span
3. All learners need multiple sources of support from a variety of institutions to promote their personal and intellectual development
4. Learning is facilitated when learners are encouraged to use their home and community language resources as a basis for expanding their linguistic repertoires, and are encouraged to draw on their wider life experience in engaging with new emotional and intellectual challenges

To understand means literally 'to stand under', and alludes to 'descending to a deeper level of analyses p. 72). The seven principles outlined in the 2010 CERI publication offer 'a powerful action-orientated theory of learning'.

- Recognise the learners as its core participants, encourage their active engagement and develop in them an understanding of their own activity as learners;
- Be founded on the social nature of learning and actively encourage well-organised co-operative learning;
- Make sure that the 'learning professionals' are highly attuned to the learners' motivations and the key role of emotions in achievement;
- Be acutely sensitive to the individual differences among the learners, including their prior knowledge;
- Devise programmes that demand hard work and challenge from all without excessive overload;
- Operate with clarity of expectations, use assessment strategies consistent with these expectations, and give strong emphasis to formative feedback;
- Strongly promote 'horizontal connectedness's across areas of knowledge and subjects, as well as to the community and the wider world.

Less 'a theory' than set of principles of practice, these may be taken as a small step, a prelude to the 'giant step' that Hedley Beare presaged. It implies a recasting of language and the conceptual assumptions underlying the policy rhetoric.

Andy Hargreaves' characterisation of teachers as 'midwives' (2008, p138) may appear to be drawn from the same metaphorical source as 'delivery', the term currently favoured by policy makers to describe what teachers do. However, these two ideas could not be further apart. 'Delivering the curriculum' casts the teacher as the intermediary between pre-determined government policy and the class. Midwifery casts the teacher as the intermediary between the child and the learning environment in which he or she will grow and flourish (MacBeath and Townsend, 2011, p. 1,244).

Teachers remain as the key agents in challenging and reshaping political and public perceptions as to what teaching is for. Schools remain the last bastions of hope for rebuilding a sense of community, but not without casting them in a new mould which, without the inspiration of teachers, in collaboration with researchers, politicians and policy makers, could never be accomplished.

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# CHAPTER 4

## Getting a measure of teaching

After decades of school effectiveness studies and the discovery that teachers make a difference, the focus of research turned to the teacher effect. Appraisal, evaluation and performance measures have been embraced by governments worldwide. But what distinguishes good teachers from bad and outstanding teachers from the merely good? What criteria is used, and in whose judgement – policy makers? Pupils? Or teachers themselves? With such knowledge what purposes may it serve? What have we learned from inspection and self-evaluation that will prove helpful for the future of the teaching profession?

### Evaluation – effective, fair and reliable?

More and more countries are showing a growing interest in implementing comprehensive teacher evaluation systems, as a response to the demands for high educational quality... There is also a broad consensus about the involvement of teachers throughout the development of the process. An effective, fair and reliable evaluation scheme requires teacher's overall acceptance and appropriation of the system. Developing a comprehensive approach may be costly but is critical to conciliate the demands for educational quality, the enhancement of teaching practices through professional development, and the recognition of teacher knowledge, skills and competencies (Isore, 2009, p. 32)

The impetus to get a measure of teaching has arisen from a number of different sources, motives and ideologies. From a government viewpoint, some form of regulation and differentiation was needed if schools were to raise standards and compete with their international counterparts. For researchers there was a rich field of inquiry as to what made for more and less effective teaching. From a public, and media, perspective, there was something inherently unfair about lazy or incompetent teachers enjoying the same pay and conditions as hardworking and dedicated teachers.

While the search for robust, valid and reliable tools of measurement has gathered momentum over the last four to five decades, owed in considerable part to the school effectiveness movement, attempts to measure teacher 'effects' has a longer tradition. In England, payment by results was introduced in 1863, with national funding for individual schools largely dependent on the outcomes of pupils' performance in examinations. Abandoned in 1890, in part due to the attendant bureaucracy and paperwork, the idea has been revisited in different forms since then and is currently enjoying something a revival in stringent economic times. There is a strong contemporary resonance with the notion of keeping school managers and teachers 'on their toes' in this US tract.

It kept school managers on their toes and teachers would be sacked if the managers thought it (bad exam performance) was costing them (denying them extra funding). (Mitch, 2010, *Did High Stakes Testing Policies Improve School Performance in the Most Educationally Disadvantaged Regions of Victorian England?*)

Merit pay was introduced in America at the end of the 19th Century, but abandoned in the 1920s after a fair system proved impossible. President Reagan took up the idea in the 1980s and, while 14 states introduced schemes and six enacted the necessary legislation, it never came to fruition. Other countries which had adopted similar schemes ended up watering down their proposals so that extra pay was given for extra duties and more qualifications rather than for teacher performance or pupils' results. On July 18, 2011, the *New York Times* announced that New York City had finally abandoned performance pay. Reviewing cost and effects over the last three years in which the city had distributed \$56 million in performance bonuses to teachers and other school staff, the Department of Education announced that the decision had been made after a study found that 'bonuses had no discernible effect on the way teachers did their job or on student test scores'.

### In search of an effective 'science'

As discussed in the preceding chapter, the last four to five decades have seen a quest among school effectiveness researchers for a science, robust enough to explain and predict 'outcomes' and to tie these to the impact and 'effect' not only of the school but of the individual teacher. In search of the 'hidden truth' behind the surface of education practice, as Catlaks (2010) writes, we appear to believe that market paradigms and quantitative measure will reveal to us that elusive elixir. As attention turns from school effects to teacher effects, the analysis of classroom factors becomes more and more detailed and specific. One of the most widely regarded and much quoted of research studies is John Hattie's 2009 meta-analyses of classroom/teacher effectiveness. Its precise decimal point correlation measures illustrate just how far quantitative measures have been applied to identify effect sizes such as 'teacher style', 'questioning', or use of 'advance organisers' for example.

Influence	Effects size	Source	Influence	Effects size	Source
Class environment	56	Teacher	Peer effects	38	Peers
Challenge of goals	52	Teacher	Advance organisers	37	Teacher
Peer tutoring	50	Teacher	Simulations and games	34	Teacher
Mastery learning	50	Teacher	Computer-assisted instruction	32	Teacher
Parent involvement	46	Home	Testing	30	Teacher
Homework	43	Teacher	Instructional media	30	Teacher
Teacher style	42	Teacher	Affective attributes of students	30	Student
Questioning	41	Teacher	Television Home	-12	Home

(Source:Hattie J. (2009) *Visible Learning; a synthesis of over 800 Meta-analyses relating to achievement*)

What can we take from a set of data such as these? That class environment is of considerable importance and that having goals are probably very helpful? But how are classroom environment measured and how much of it is within the control of the teacher? And whose goals count and for what purpose?

What credence do we give to the finding that your school and classroom peers impact on your motivation and learning but less so than the nature of teacher 'style' and questioning? Or that how students feel about themselves, their learning and their motivation (affective attributes of students) is relatively inconsequential?





What are we to make of 'homework' and 'parental involvement' and what do these descriptors refer to? The more we move into this contested territory the more pertinent the questions it raises. Studies of homework, for example, arrive at very different conclusions, in relation to its negative impact, its neutral effect and its positive benefit. It all depends on the nature, locus and classroom use of homework and, most crucially, the support, encouragement and help of peers and parents in which 'homework' is deeply embedded in the quality of home life. An aggregated effect size, in fact, tells us nothing useful about the relationship between in-school and out-of-school learning.

The same may be said of television. It may or may not have a negative effect dependent on the nature of television programmes watched, the stimulus that some programmes give to conversation in the family, or that ignite interest for further exploration, as against the opportunity costs of watching wallpaper television at the expense of other more educational activities.

According to teachers' self reports from TALIS, the criteria most commonly used on average among participating countries are: student-teacher relations (85% of teachers reported this as a criteria with high or moderate importance), knowledge and understanding of the teacher's subject field (80% of teachers), classroom management (80% of teachers), knowledge and understanding of pedagogical practices (78% of teachers), student discipline/behaviour (78% of teachers) and relations with colleagues (78% of teachers). 'Approaches to teacher evaluation that adequately assess the different dimensions of quality teaching do, however, vary but 'continue to evolve across and within countries' (Weatherby, 2012).

The recent US study *Measures of Effective Teaching Project*, recently released study found that students are expert commentators on which teachers are most and least effective. One of the key findings of the report was that classroom observation visits by principals were largely inadequate. 'It's common to have 98 or 99 per cent of teachers in a district receive the same "satisfactory" rating from such visits, so it's clearly a perfunctory exercise.' By contrast using student feedback together with showing teachers their own videos, and by providing feedback related to student achievement was proving a much greater impetus to improvement. Using a rubric for guiding classroom observations to help score the videos offered a more rigorous approach to professional development and improved classroom practice. ([http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/06/education/big-study-links-good-teachers-to-lasting-gain.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/06/education/big-study-links-good-teachers-to-lasting-gain.html?_r=1))

## Accounting for the out-of-school effect

However sophisticated the methodology, such as multi-level modelling, for example, how can quantitative measures build into the equation the effect of the *jukus* in Japan where children may spend three or four hours after school? The *after-school Hagwon* in Korea? The *Sermeban* in Malaysia, *Madrasah* in Pakistan? The *Sunday school* in Thailand? The 600 Kumon centres in the UK, and tutorial centres in virtually every European country are typically situated in the most advantaged areas where social and economic capital is also at its highest. These complementary forms of coaching play a fundamental role in adding value.

Even more elusive of quantification are the subtle, complex and pervasive effects of a home culture infused with a love of books, of conversation and debate, cultural visits with boundaries extending internationally. In a radio broadcast in August 2011, the author



Alain de Buton depicted the rich educational home life that creates a love of learning and 'assembles' personalities:

Beneath the surface activities of the family, the games of hide and seek and the baking of biscuits, the trips to the zoo and the colouring of Tyrannosaurus Rex's scales, personalities are being assembled upon whose strength and creativity all subsequent flourishing will depend.

Michelle Obama recounts a childhood spent in long evenings around the family dining table at which her father presided over provocative family debates, each evening introducing a new thesis to be examined and contested. Contrast this with Frank Field's MP's description of inter-generational poverty in his own constituency of Birkenhead in England. His graphic descriptions of 'blighted childhood', of growing up in abusive or neglected homes, deprived not only of affection but of language and experience which barely extended beyond the few square miles of their own neighbourhoods. Louis Wacquant's descriptions of life in the outskirts of Paris is a stark reminder of what 'deprivation' means while Manuel Castells treatises on 'perverse integration' documents alternative routes for young people into the shadowy economy and the twilight world into which they escape from inadequate family life and uncompromising social institutions.

It is within that rich social capital, or in its absence, Buton contends, that the psychological plasticity to deal with setbacks is created, nurtured or destroyed. There is ample research to confirm that perseverance in the face of setback is what distinguishes the high from the low achievers. Repeated experience of failure and perceived inadequacy lead to withdrawal, an unwillingness to compete on an uneven playing field and with no obvious pay back for the frustration and 'blame turned inward'. Self-concept, self-confidence, and self-efficacy may be encompassed in Hattie's 'affective attributes' (.24 of a correlation) yet it remains one of the most powerful discriminators which distinguish those who give up and those who have the personal resilience and social support to succeed against the odds.

In an inner city school in Glasgow headlined in the press as 'the worst school in Scotland', a classroom wall in the physics department bore this counsel - 'If at first you fail, try again - fail better.' The experience to deal with failure is a hugely telling indicator of school success and success in later life, the seeds of which are planted early. That every failure is a learning opportunity has gained the status of a cliché, but can only become a classroom reality when failure no longer carries high stakes penalties.

Sir Ken Robinson, appointed to lead the British Government Task Force on Creativity, points to a systemic failing of classroom learning and school-based learning in high stakes' environments. The tyranny of the right answer, the fear of getting the answer wrong are at premium in a culture where mistakes are penalised rather than viewing them as essential formative building blocks.

What we do know is if you're not prepared to be wrong, you'll never come up with anything original. And by the time they get to be adults most kinds have lost that capacity. They have become frightened of being wrong. We stigmatise mistakes and we're now running educational systems where mistakes are the worst thing you can make. (Sir Ken Robinson, Chair of Government Task Force on Creativity, 1997-2001)



## The accountability paradox

We are confronted with the paradox that while the nature of learning has been shown to be more determined by influences that lie outside of schools, teachers have become increasingly more accountable for the performance of their pupils. Comparisons among countries set the stage and provide the script for policy makers to worry about their place in the international concourse. Comparative data from international agencies have provoked a widespread urgency (some might say moral panic) among politicians and their advisers, sending emissaries to Taiwan, and more recently Finland and Shanghai, to bring back the magic bullet of school and classroom practice. A more studied approach and informed analysis would have revealed that the answers do not lie in classrooms but outside schools, in the social composition of the country, in its history and culture, in the homes and communities from which it draws its pupils, and in complementary forms of learning out of school hours.

Schools can only build on, or challenge, and what children bring with them and, hopefully, enrich what children take away with them. As Baroness Greenfield's data on the lives of 11 to 12 year olds (described in Chapter 1) has shown, the 900 hours children spend in school is overshadowed by the hours they spend in the home and in the virtual world of the internet. How much do we know and how much can we know, she asks, about the power and impact of differing construction sites and their inter-relationship? (Keynote Speech in Dubai, September 2010).

Ultimately, all of these questions assume minor importance when the impact of classroom activity is set in a broader frame which encompasses the school, the home, the neighbourhood, and other sources of added value such as extra-curricular activity, clubs, private tuition, all defying easy quantification. In some circumstances, extra tuition may compensate for the weakest of teachers while in more disadvantaged situations highly effective teachers may accrue neither the benefits of outside tutoring or the support of the family, the single parent or the children's residential home in the measurement of their 'effects'.

Without these insights into the nesting of children's experience it is not surprising to find that attempts to measure teacher effects and to use them for policy purposes have so consistently run aground.

*Measuring Teacher and School Performance Based on Student Test Score Gains*, a study conducted by the National Centre for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance in the US, reported that 'more than 90 per cent of the variation in student gain scores is due to the variation in student-level factors that are not under control of the teacher'. In other words, it is what students bring with them into the classroom and how that prior experience helps or hinders them in making sense of themselves, their learning and their relationships.

In similar vein on July 2, the Washington Post reported that a re-analysis of the L.A Times value-added findings for 6,000 teachers were 'deeply flawed'. When Briggs and Domingue of the University of Colorado at Boulder subjected the data to an alternative value-added model that used a long history of a student's test performance, as well as peer influence and school-level factors, results changed dramatically. Less than half of

teachers retained the same effectiveness rating under both models while 8.1 per cent of those teachers identified as 'effective' under the alternative model were identified as 'ineffective' in the L.A. Times database, while 12.6 percent of those identified as 'ineffective' under the alternative model were identified as 'effective' by the L.A. Times model.

A more recent review (Hout and Elliott, 2011) questions the impact of incentives. 'The research to date suggests that the benefits of test-based incentive programs over the past two decades have been quite small. The guidance offered by this body of evidence is not encouraging about the ability of incentive programs to reliably produce meaningful increases in student achievement.' A further caveat is contained in a paper from the Australian Council for Educational Research: 'Performances can be *reduced* if results-driven incentives take the place of intrinsic motivation. In other words, rewarding people for behaviour that they would have engaged in anyway' and concludes:

Under results-driven incentive schemes, there is evidence of schools assigning their best teachers to the grades in which high-stakes testing occurs; teachers spending minimal time on untested aspects of the curriculum; large amounts of time being spent on drilling students in test-taking strategies; lower-achieving students being withheld from testing; and schools making surface-level responses to achieve short-term test gains at the expense of deeper, longer-term improvements in classroom teaching (Masters, 2011, p. 3).

## Five cautions

Lisa Guisbond, policy analyst for the National Centre for Fair and Open Testing, a Boston-based organisation, offers five cautions as to the use of test score for evaluating teachers (February 25, 2010).

### Table 5 - Five Cautions on test scores for evaluating teachers

**First**, value-added rests on the shaky assumption that maths and English test scores tell us what we need to know about student progress. No matter how good a test may be, it can't measure all of what parents want for their children and intensifies the pressure on teachers to teach to the test.

**Second**, the impossibility of teasing out the effect of one teacher from those who came before or to separate a teacher's influence from the influence of a chaotic home, poor nutrition, lack of sleep or a host of other factors.

**Third**, the validity of this approach rests on the false assumption that students and teachers are assigned randomly. In reality, senior teachers can and do choose better schools and classes, while parents in affluent towns fight to get their kids into classrooms of teachers with good reputations.

**Fourth**, value added doesn't give us any information about what practices distinguishes good teachers from bad. All we know is good teachers get better test scores, not what they did to achieve this.

**Fifth**, researchers looking at maths tests results saw more variation within one teacher's 'effectiveness' than from one teacher to another. In other words 'good' teachers aren't consistently good, and 'bad' teachers aren't consistently bad.

Although it would be unhelpful to deny that, at the extremes, there are some consistently ineffective teachers and some who are fairly consistently inspirational, we also know that context matters but as the political imperative grows to make schools more effective, more accountable and more transparent, so the burden falls more squarely



on teachers to demonstrate that it is good teaching, not environment, not family, not socio-economics, not culture, not history, that makes all the difference.

The challenge for policy is, as Andreas Schleicher, Director of the OECD's international study PISA, laments, that we do not have the sophisticated enough tools yet to map the quality of learning, the relationship between policy directive and the untrammelled experience of children's learning in and out of school.

In my view, we haven't really advanced very much. We aren't that modern in education I think. We don't even have the research tools, like longitudinal studies to a deeper understanding of educational processes. The same at micro level. What are the ingredients of the success for education systems? How do I configure those ingredients in my own contexts? How do we observe the relationships between intended policies, implemented policies and achieved policies? If I don't see that through this delivery chain, then you have these layers and layers and layers of unfinished and incoherent reforms all on top of each. That's what education systems are today. (In Bangs, MacBeath and Galton, 2010).

There are few who would argue that we ought to give up any attempt to evaluate what makes for good, or effective, teaching but we do need to consider how we may approach the issue with a more enlightened eye.

## The Enlightened Eye

The ability to discern patterns of behaviour in the classroom is what distinguishes the connoisseurs who come into classrooms unwilling to rush to judgments or apply a simple rating scale. The title of Elliot Eisner's book *The Enlightened Eye* was intended to capture a way of seeing that comes with years of practice and a deep understanding of classroom dynamics. Eisner contends that what distinguishes the connoisseur from the novice knows where to focus. Where less-practiced observers 'see everything and see nothing', suspending judgment and observing with insight helps to discern what is salient and what is worthy of attention. 'Insight' – the ability to perceive meaning within – is a skill which develops over time, with practice and with a grasp of the underpinning professional body of knowledge, of theory/practice, the inextricable mix of what we do and why we do it.

A close observer of teacher's craft, Kounin (1970) identified a number of skills that teachers drew on routinely in the classroom. While these were exercised apparently intuitively, Kounin believed that this body of professional attributes deserved a more systematic theoretical grounding and a more refined appreciation of the hidden expertise that expert teachers bring to their work. He developed a set of terminologies which have not survived in the drive for specific and measurable competences.

'Withitness' describes the ability to understand the simultaneity of what is going on in the classroom, to recognise and to predict the patterns of behaviour among the 32 players on the classroom's chessboard, to know all the moves, to distinguish the powerful players from the pawns. There is a high-level skill in holding in combination the individual, the group and the whole class and the subtle interplay among them, while also staying 'on task' and employing the combination of diagnostic and formative abilities.

'Overlapping' is the term Kounin applies to a learned ability to deal with a number of things simultaneously rather than sequentially. The skilled teacher reading a poem to the class, is also scanning the room, is making almost imperceptible but meaningful eye contact with a misbehaving pupil in the back row, and while with her left hand removes the comic a girl is hiding inside her poetry book. These 'low-level desists' do not interrupt the flow of the lesson, call attention to misbehaviour or provide an occasion for assertion of authority.

'Momentum', maintaining the flow and being prepared for the unexpected is related to 'managing transitions', moving seamlessly from equilibrium to disequilibrium, from disruptive incident to restoration of order, from low points of disappointment to high points of enjoyment.

These features of essential classroom management are a basis on which high-level pedagogy can build. Alexander (2004) characterised pedagogy as collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative and purposeful, getting a measure of their complex expression requiring more than the pedestrian checklist. He suggests nine facets that need to be attended to which, taken in concert, illustrate the highly skilled and demanding nature of what it means to be a teacher.

### Table 6 - Alexander's nine aspects of pedagogy

1. **Children:** their characteristics, development and upbringing
2. **Learning:** how it can best be motivated, achieved, identified, assessed and built upon
3. **Teaching:** its planning, execution and evaluation
4. **Curriculum:** the various ways of knowing, understanding, doing, creating, investigating and making sense which it is desirable for children to encounter, and how these are most appropriately translated and structured for teaching
5. **School,** as a formal institution, a micro culture and a conveyor of pedagogical messages over and above those of the classroom
6. **Policy,** national and local, which prescribes or proscribes, enables or inhibits what is taught and how
7. **Culture:** the web of values, ideas, institutions and processes which inform, shape and explain a society's views of education, teaching and learning, and which throw up a complex burden of choices and dilemmas for those whose job it is to translate these into a practical pedagogy
8. **Self:** what it is to be a person, an individual relating to others and to the wider society, and how through education and other early experiences selfhood is acquired
9. **History:** the indispensable tool for making sense of both education's present state and its future possibilities and potential.

Understanding what Andy Hargreaves (2007:1057) describes as 'the emotional geographies of teaching' requires the kind of sophisticated insights that Eisner describes, attending to the interplay of dimensions to which Alexander's nine dimensions refer. He offers a 'counter discourse' to 'the technical science-driven conceptions of teaching that dominate the language of educational policy and administration'. He also takes issue with explanations of teachers' emotional responses in terms of personal, psychological or individual dispositions rather than contextual factors which shape identities and relationships with colleagues, children and parents in distinctive ways.



In Senge's terms (1990), the complexity of skills which teachers draw on routinely is not easy to discern or measure because they lie in the 'deep structures' of school and classroom activity. These are tacit beliefs, values, and assumptions that underpin the day-to-day experiences not always visible in the surface structures – in the observable rules, policies, procedures, and explicit behaviours which can be counted and 'inspected'.

## An ecological perspective

Drawing on the work of Capra, in which the world becomes knowable through patterns of interdependence and reciprocity, Mitchell and Sackney (2011) describe the ecology of the classroom in these terms:

Teaching and learning are embedded in a context of events, experiences, activities, structures, networks, knowledge, people, histories, interests, recourses, artefacts, understandings, and commitments, all of which exert a mediating influence on teaching and learning processes (p. 976).

As Ken Robinson suggested: 'I believe our only hope for the future is to adopt a new conception of human ecology, one in which we start to reconstitute our conception of the richness of human capacity'. How then do we get a measure of teaching and learning that is able to capture not simply the snapshot of practice but a moving image of classroom life?

When the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards was created in 1987 in the United States, the founding group of educators – teachers, union leaders and academics – spent six years figuring out the standards and certification process. The primary document that emerged was 'What accomplished teachers should know and be able to do. With only minor changes over the last 25 years, the five core propositions outlined in that paper are still the beacon that guides the National Board's work. Some teacher preparation progress and some prominent reformers (Charlotte Danielson and Robert Marzano in particular) use this document in their work, but as with so much in K-12 education more conscious alignment is required across the field (see for example, Marzano, 2007)

### The Five Core Propositions

1. Teachers are committed to students and their learning
2. Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach these subjects to their students
3. Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.
4. Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience.
5. Teachers are members of learning communities.

The 2009 OECD report on the evaluation of teachers refers to 'the importance of including a diverse set of evaluators and criteria to better reflect the complexity of defining what good teaching is' (p. 32). The document cites the following key players - governments, local authorities, school leaders, educational researchers and experienced teachers, teachers unions and parents. Each of these brings differing perspectives to bear and view school quality and effectiveness through different lenses although frameworks and criteria are now common in most jurisdictions.

At a later point in the OECD document, the issue of students as evaluators is raised, described as 'extremely rare' with Mexico, Spain and Sweden cited as the exceptions. In fact, in many countries student voice has been given much greater attention in the last few years and it is now common practice in England, for example, for primary and secondary children to be involved at some stage in the appointment of new staff.

It is now widely acknowledged that there are few more insightful sources than those whose lives are lived for five or six hours a day, five days a week, 30 weeks a year in classrooms and who see things that the casual visitor, inspector, or school principal never sees. Asked to define what for them made a good teacher children's words have a freshness and insight that goes beyond the clichés and all-too-familiar lists of competences. Although presented as a list, they are in effect a constellation of attitudes, personal attributes and professional orientations.

#### **A good teacher,**

Is generous	Takes time to explain things
Listens to you	Helps you when you're stuck
Encourages you	Tells you how well you are doing
Has faith in you	Allows you to have your say
Keeps confidences	Makes sure you understand
Likes teaching children	Helps people who are slow
Doesn't give up on you	Makes you feel clever

*(In MacBeath, 1997, Schools Must Speak for Themselves)*

In more technical language, the characteristics, or criteria, might be described as diagnostic and formative feedback, proximal development, unconditional positive regard and a self-fulfilling prophecy, but as children perceive it, it says something that goes to very heart of teaching and self-evaluation in its richest sense.

## **School self-evaluation**

We are attracted to a model of accountability which encourages and supports schools towards a meaningful, continuous self-evaluation process, evidenced in a form which the school considers most appropriate and verified through inspection. We are persuaded that true self-evaluation is at the heart of what a good school does. For a school which is performing at a good level, embedding processes which encourage continuous self-improvement are likely to be of far more practical benefit than an inspection every few years (Paragraph 8, Government Select Committee, Session 2009-10, UK).

School self evaluation is now a common feature of policy and practice around the world but it is often a formulaic and ritual process, box-ticking and form-filling that makes it





such an onerous and tedious process for teachers and school leaders. It often takes the form of self-inspection, an event rather than an on-going process, often simply a prelude to external review.

Self evaluation can, however, assume a more dynamic form. It understands the iterative relationship between classroom life and school life, between school learning and out of school learning. It recognises that students' learning and teachers' learning are integrally connected and that teachers' learning feeds from, and feeds into, organisational, or community, learning. It is a process by which schools make their intellectual and moral journey; measuring the distance they have travelled, not in the simplistic trajectory of aggregated attainment scores, summative tools that say little about deep learning. The tools of authentic, professionally driven self-valuation, by contrast, are set in a social context. They encourage dialogue. They serve a primarily formative purpose. They are congenial, flexible and adaptable to new situations and new challenges. They measure how teachers are progressing in their thinking and practice and how the school is developing as a community of learners. They relish accountability because it is the platform for telling a story rooted in evidence of the most profound kind. It is this complexity and dynamic that is the missing ingredient in ritualised and formulaic approaches to self-evaluation.

How many evaluation decisions do teachers make in the course of a day? The English researcher, Ted Wragg, who actually counted them, found that typically a teacher made over 1,000 on-the-spot evaluation decisions a day. In those minute-by-minute evaluations a collegial critical friend observing classroom interaction might ask, 'What is the teacher doing?' 'What is he/she learning?' For the teacher, questions such as 'What do I need to do differently?', 'What will I do next?' tend to be implicit and intuitive but they are almost always a form of intuitive self evaluation. It is what teachers do. It is not written down or codified and often teachers are unable to explain what they do or why they do it but they can, by their own admission, do it better and are professionally inclined to do it better. When what they do is discussed, raised to consciousness and shared collegially it lays the groundwork for systematic built-in self-evaluation and improvement.

The complexity and dynamic of school as a living growing entity is what Arnold Tomkins, a New York administrator wrote about over a century ago:

The organisation of the school must be kept mobile to its inner life. To one who is accustomed to wind up the machine and trust it to run for fixed periods, this constantly shifting shape of things will seem unsafe and troublesome. And troublesome it is, for no fixed plan can be followed; no two schools are alike; and the same school is shifting, requiring constant attention and nimble judgment on the part of the school leader. (1895, p. 4).

Keeping a school mobile to its inner life is what self evaluation is about, a continuing process of reflection which is implicit in the way people (teachers, students and administrators) think and talk about their work and what they do to make their practice

explicit and discussable. Self-evaluation in its fullest sense is that continuing process of reflection, manifested in the dialogue that occurs in the classroom, in staff rooms, in formal meetings, in "the essential conversation" (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2003) that takes place between parents and teachers.

That continuing mutual exchange among teachers, as for example in lesson study, collaborative lesson planning and peer review lays a foundation for self-evaluation and is a precondition for sustained improvement. When teachers shut their classroom doors and deny entry to their colleagues they close themselves off from their own learning and from their own professional enrichment. They close themselves off from sources and opportunities which have found to be powerful in country contexts as diverse as Japan, New Zealand, England and Singapore. When teachers open their classroom doors and open their minds to challenge and change, a number of evaluation and professional development strategies are at their disposal.

**Peer observation** is a form of reciprocal learning that benefits from a clear sense of purpose, a protocol, clarity of focus and peer discussion before and after the event, with the acknowledgement that what is observed is open to critique as well as appreciative inquiry.

A variation on the theme is lesson study, practised initially in Japan but increasingly adopted in other countries. At the core of the **lesson study** approach (*kenkyu jugyo*), working in a small group, teachers collaborate with one another, meeting to discuss learning goals, to plan an actual classroom lesson (called a "research lesson"), to observe how it works in practice, and then to revise and report on the results so that other teachers can benefit from it. A lesson study cycle often concludes with an 'open house' one-day event in which the host school invites outside people, parents and policy people to participate in observing and discussing research lessons.

**Collaborative lesson planning**, a close relative to lesson study, is described by the Education Bureau in Hong Kong, as a process in which teachers co-operate, share and reflect on teaching and learning. During the meetings, teachers examine student performance and feedback, discuss students' learning difficulties, identify learning objectives in different key learning areas, talk about learning experiences and, based on their reflections, plan and design lessons and activities together.

This may, or may not, be a prelude to **co-teaching** but the strength of teachers sharing a lesson is that one can stand back and observe, a luxury often denied to the individual teacher who has to juggle pacing, timing and constantly strive to get the right balance among Task, Individual and Group (the TIG principle).

**Mentoring, coaching and critical friendship.** It is increasingly common for teachers in a number of countries to benefit from a mentor who helps them to reflect on their practice. These may be people internal to the school or external consultants from other schools, local authorities or universities. Coaching tends to be a more directive role, particularly valuable for newly appointed senior staff who finds themselves catapulted into



positions of responsibility for their erstwhile peers. Critical friendship brings to the relationship a sensitive balance of 'support' and challenge', support not simply cosy reassurance and challenge as constructive, realistic, and non-judgemental.

**Sharing and discussing students' work** serves a number of purposes. With a focus on quality and criteria for judgements of quality it brings to light unspoken assumptions about what makes a good piece of work, how assessment can be made more formative and raises deeper questions about the rationale for marks out of 10, percentages, grades, comment only marking and the nature of comments that demotivate or inspire.

Structured **practice-focused workshops**, a protocol that was used in a seven-country international project (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009) follows a procedure in which a teacher volunteers to occupy the Chair with colleagues seated in a circle around her. She describes an issue she is currently struggling with. Her colleagues listen with intent to understand. They are not allowed to offer advice but to try to grasp the nature of the problem within her frame of reference and to raise questions which lead them all progressively toward deeper understanding. Through this empathic process the teacher comes to see the way through her problem and begins herself to define ways of dealing with it.

**The learning wall** is a device for teachers to share to their problems, their solutions and breakthrough practice. A wall in the staffroom is devoted to teachers' exchange, posting notes describing a problem they are facing or an example of something they have done which they would like to share with others. Colleagues may pick up good ideas, try them out and report back or feedback on how they have dealt with an issue after receiving support or advice from other visitors to the learning wall.

All of the above have been shown in different contexts to both broaden teachers' thinking and repertoire of strategies. All contain some form of learning conversation, focused in some cases on children's learning, in some cases on teacher's own professional learning. At the core of all these strategies is the de-privatising of practice, learning with colleagues, watching and thinking about classroom practice in real time and problem solving together about how the practice would look in a real lesson sequence. As has been consistently found (for example, Joyce and Showers, 2002) it easy for teachers to know what they should do, harder for them to be able to do it and most difficult of all for them to embed it into their daily practice. Embedding effective practice into daily routines is a desired result of all professional development but not always with sustained success.

Beyond their strategic use lies a deeper purpose, one which helps teachers to consider what is worth learning and teaching, a process through which goals are scaffolded, rethought and reframed, and in which monitoring of progress towards those goals may dictate a different course of action and a readiness for surprise and unexpected outcomes. Without surprise learning, teaching can become a predictable and well-trodden a path.

'Nothing fails like success' is one of Peter's Senge 'organisational learning disabilities' (1990). The more success a teacher, a department, a school experiences the less likely they are

to questions it. The oldest aphorism in the book is 'if it ain't broke don't fix it'. 'There is nothing like success to breed complacency or arrogance, because being the best means not looking for the inconsistencies or deep seated assumptions which prevent radical change (Hammond and Mayfield, 2004).

Evidence from a number of countries leads to the same conclusion - schools that confront what Hammond and Mayfield describe as 'the un-discussables', are more open to change, are better able to take charge of change rather than being controlled by it, are more effective and improve more rapidly than ones that are not (Rosenholtz, 1989; Stoll and Myers, 1997; Gray et al., 1999).

## Inspection and external review

It is now accepted internationally that the essential purpose of inspection or external review is to gauge the quality, rigour and sustainability of schools' own internal processes of self-evaluation. A leading edge example is New Zealand, where the Education Review Office works with schools to agree the protocol for review visits, adopting 'proportional review' which means that external validation is tailored to the school's own confidence and rigour in its approach to evidence and use of evidence for professional development and improvement. As a recent OECD report concludes:

School self-review is at the core of the quality assurance and improvement process. It is conceived of as a rigorous process in which schools systematically evaluate their practice, using indicators as a framework for inquiry and employing a repertoire of analytic and formative tools. The Education Review Office has been engaged over the last few years in advocating evidence-informed inquiry, helping schools to engage in that process, and advising on how to use assessment information for improvement and accountability purposes (Nusche, Laveault, MacBeath and Santiago, 2011 Para 280).

However, there is a caveat which applies, not only to New Zealand, but to every system which is trying to find the balance between internal and external evaluation and between improvement and accountability purposes.

Self-improvement and external accountability are not natural bedfellows and few if any national systems have been able to find the perfect balance between the collaborative use of data for school improvement and the use of data for inter-school competitive purposes. The policy implications are to maintain and reinforce the improvement focus, through the ERO (Educational Review Office) and other avenues (teacher organisations for example) helping schools develop a strong sense of internal accountability through which it becomes easier for schools to have a credible story to tell to external bodies (Para 318).

How schools 'tell their story', to external agencies, to parents and for themselves is essential work for teachers. For external Inspection or review there is, suggest John Seddon only one question that should be asked: 'What measures are you using to help you understand and improve the work?' [http://www.emeraldinsight.com/learning/management\\_thinking/interviews/pdf/seddon.pdf](http://www.emeraldinsight.com/learning/management_thinking/interviews/pdf/seddon.pdf)



## Questions of voice

A key issue in both internal and external evaluation of schools is in relation to whose voice is able to be heard and by whom. Whose voice carries most weight? How the voice gets heard depends not only on who says it, but also on style and language in which it is couched. There are many silent or silenced voices - pupils who would like to say things about teaching and learning but who do not feel able to without a framework that legitimates comment and provides reassurance that teachers will welcome their comments and not retaliate. As Fielding and Rudduck write:

No matter how benevolent we may be towards those we study, no matter how concerned with 'their' liberation, with 'their' betterment, with preventing 'their' victimisation, etc., the fact is that 'we' do not make sense of 'their' lives in 'their' terms. 'We' do not even make sense of 'their' lives with them. Indeed, the language of the adult, whether teacher or external researcher, may be used to reshape the language of the students. (Fielding and Rudduck, 2001, p. 3)

The privileging of student voice carries with it attendant dangers. Teachers have legitimately asked "where is our voice?" The U.S. National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is an exemplar in this area. The standards and certification processes are overseen and maintained by active classroom teachers – most of whom are themselves beyond certified – and the scoring of candidates' submission is carried out by teachers. In other words, it is the voice of the highly accomplished teaching that created the process, implements it, and sustains it. It is telling that under these conditions only 40 per cent of candidates achieve certification on their first try and after three years of trying only 70 per cent of the original cohort earn Beyond Certification.

How do external bodies, researchers, policy makers, school leaders and teachers themselves 'make sense of their lives and are open to a deepened understanding of what it means to be a teacher in a changing world? With a deeper grasp of 'voice', the 'acoustic' of the school, as Fielding and Rudduck termed it, revisiting conceptions of accountability becomes less to be feared and more to be driven by teachers themselves. As Elmore (2005:17) characterises it, accountability has three inter-related constituents and is 'measured' by the degree of convergence among these - what individuals say they are responsible for (responsibility), what people say the organisation is responsible for (expectations), and the internal norms and processes by which people literally account for their work (accountability structures).

Without a strong sense of internal accountability, schools and teachers will always be subject to external pressures and remain reactive to externally driven change. They are more able to counteract the local, national and international forces at work when there is shared understanding of the difference between what they can and cannot do, but at the same time with a willingness to continuously push at the boundaries of what is mandated and what is within teachers' own compass and professional reach. In the best of practice, change forces arise from the inside, from a deeply rooted commitment to what is important and of lasting value.

In India, Pandey outlined a model of professional development known as 'Shoulder-to-shoulder learning', comprised of 11 components, offering a framework for getting a measure of teaching.

### 1. Leadership

Attending to those issues that may distract teachers from being engaged in teaching and learning. This element focuses on the role of teachers as leaders, where staff are proactive and empowered to work with each other to move forward, as vital members of the community working together to steer the school to a better place.

### 2. Action Learning

With an inquiry mind-set teachers engage in robust inquiry processes that enable work on an idea for a sustained period of time contextualising it for their school and their particular students, exploring and refining innovation, through trial and error, before embedding it in their classrooms.

### 3. Models of Effective Practice

This element is about developing situated expertise that provides a resource for continued learning with access to models of what practice might look like in different contexts and with differing inherent purposes.

### 4. Professional Learning Communities

The importance of a collaborative culture that is characterised by professional discourse with both formal and informal opportunities for collaborative problem-solving and shared pedagogies. This is achievable when the staff accepts co-responsibility for the learning of all students at the school.

### 5. Professional Learning Events

There will always be times when outside expertise is needed to take learning further whether through conferencing, workshops, school visits, professional reading and multimedia examples.

### 6. Evidence

A range of analysed and considered evidence ensures that the impact of each intervention is positive. This evidence serves as a means of accountability for the decisions which lead to embedding new practices and spotlighting those practices that are making the biggest difference.

### 7. Focus

The school focus draws the elements together in a practical way and aligns learning opportunities. The focus ensures that teachers have the opportunity to engage in deep learning for sustained periods of time rather than one-off learning opportunities or a split focus.

### 8. System Alignment

While the majority of learning occurs at the school site, it is important that, at the systemic level, aligned support is provided both onsite in each school and through the provision of professional learning events.

### 9. School Support Consultants

School Support Consultants (SSCs) work onsite within and across schools helping staffs to embed the processes and structures needed to support collaborative learning. As each SSC works with a limited number of schools, they develop a deep understanding of the contextual needs of each school and support each school to become self-directed in their learning while connecting them to other schools and systemic professional learning.

### 10. Specialist Area Consultants

A team of Specialist Area Consultants work to help develop contextually-rich models of effective practice, working with targeted classroom teachers to transfer



professional learning into embedded practice in key areas of the curriculum content and progressions of learning, teaching strategies; and the analysis of data and evidence to direct student learning.

### 11. Student Support Programs

The team of consultants works in schools, with teachers providing teaching and learning advice and helping to problem-solve the needs of individual students, trying to ensure that learning support and intervention for students is approached from a whole-school perspective where all teachers are responsible for the learning and development of every child.

### 12. Bringing the Elements Together

To achieve a successful outcome, all elements must be in place and their interdependence harnessed. Synergy amongst the elements is greatly enhanced when two further concepts are employed: evidence and focus. This can be seen as a process of capacity building. As such it has a number of key features.

Frameworks such as this which move evaluation into teachers' province are the counterpoint to the dreary mechanistic pursuit of what Giroux calls the 'master narrative' and the 'omniscient narrator' – the agency or authority that tells the learning story on teachers' behalf. 'There is no grand narrative that can speak for us all', says Giroux (p. 11). Rather than internalising the master narratives, it is incumbent on school staff and those who lead them to examine how ideas and panaceas become constructed, what they mean, how they regulate our social and moral experience and how they convey particular political views of the world. Exploring what is worth learning and what is worth 'counting' then lays the groundwork for self-evaluation - a reflective, critical, on-going and dialogic process.

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# CHAPTER 5

## Stories of change

What are the likely scenarios for the future which follow from different policy premises? What conditions, forms of support and policy frameworks are most likely to enhance the self-worth and self-efficacy of teachers and of those they teach? What is the process by which the system moves from the status quo to a different or more desirable future?

Drawing on three influential models of change, this chapter begins with outlining these three theoretical scenarios, none of which attempts to predict an uncertain future but all of which recognise the impediments to change, the process by which paradigm shifts occur and the implications which these change processes bring with them.

The second half of the chapter examines aspects of the future already in the present – initiatives that have been taken to explore learning beyond curriculum and beyond the conventional parameters of the school. These carry implications for the future of teaching, primarily the 'where' and the 'how' as well as the 'what'.

### Expectations, challenges and processes of change

It is claimed that a PowerPoint presentation entitled 'Shift happens' has been seen by over 150 million people and has frequently been used by conference presenters to challenge the assumptions of the present. Among its provocative claims is that:

- Today's young people will have 10 to 15 jobs by the time they are 35
- The top 10 in-demand jobs in the UK didn't exist in 2004
- Shakespeare had 24,000 words to work with while a pop artist such as Eminem can call on a repertoire of one million, with 1,000 more added every month
- Nine out of 10 teenagers in the UK have their own home computer, mobile phone and games console
- More than three million books are published every day
- 'We are currently preparing students for jobs that do not yet exist, using technologies that haven't been invented in order to solve problems that we don't even know are problems yet' (<http://www.slideshare.net/jbrenman/shift-happens-33834>)

There were echoes of this at the recent Asian World Summit in Kuala Lumpur. Employers from multinationals, medium and small businesses expressed concern that we are producing children without the skills needed to thrive in the dot.com age - skills such as critical awareness, managed autonomy, collaborative endeavour, teamwork and self-

direction. They reiterated now well-established themes. They cited the seven key attributes looked for by employers as initiative, communication skills, and ability to work in a team, ability to cope with setbacks, openness to learning, problem solving and commitment.

These themes are now well-rehearsed but do point up the gap between the passivity, conformity, individual knowledge and testing of the traditional classroom on the one hand and the 'real' and 'virtual' worlds of childhood on the other. However, what can be said to constitute the 'real' world is less and less easy to define as the 'world' is now mediated in many more diffuse and complex ways than in previous generations when knowledge was 'passed on' by parents and teachers, their authority rarely contested. While in the past, books and comics offered alternative accounts of social life, and peers helped to invent alternative realities, there was little intermediate territory between the world of fact and the world of fantasy. While radio, television and recorded music extended the boundaries of knowledge, the significant paradigm shift began with technologies that allowed children to be not merely consumers but producers of knowledge on a global scale.

For teachers, coming to terms with the changing world of childhood means addressing the conjunction between what is happening in the economic world, in the social world, in family, street and peer groups and what takes places in the classroom. A transmission model (those who know telling those who do not know) is increasingly limited in effect and requires to be complemented by imaginative and stimulating pedagogies which match, and perhaps even go beyond, what interactive technologies can offer. At the same time teachers are faced with the dilemma of holding on to 'the best that has been thought and said' (Matthew Arnold, 1867), unwilling to capitulate to the instant gratification culture at the expense of a rich intellectual and moral capital, one that demands disciplined and discriminating attitudes of mind.

People who write and speculate about preparing children for life in the 21st Century contemplate a different and even unimaginable future yet have to be acutely aware that looking forward also means looking back. In addressing the following question of the OCED/CERI programme, the implicit question is: Where do transformation and conservation meet?

How can today's schools be transformed so as to become environments of teaching and learning that makes individuals lifelong learners and prepare them for the 21st Century?

The future of teachers and the teaching profession is intimately connected to the future of schools. It is almost inevitable that schools in some form will continue to exist into the foreseeable future but it is also inevitable that teaching and learning will continue to expand to sites other than schools. As we know, looking back, the achievement gap has not been closed by schools alone and, looking forward, that this is an even less plausible



scenario in the future. The implications of the Greenfield findings into learning sites (described in Chapter 3) carry far reaching implications for the what, where, when, who and how of learning and, of increasing significance, the 'why'.

## Do schools have a future?

The story begins with the future of schools. In 2001, the OECD suggested six potential scenarios for the future. 'Distilling the infinite range of possible futures into a limited number of polar "types", however, stimulates consideration of the strategic choices to be confronted and the principal dimensions of change. The scenarios invite the questions: a) how probable, and b) how desirable, each is.' (OECD, 2001:77). These have been revisited and recast a decade later but rest on similar assumptions and projections.

### Scenarios 1 and 2: maintaining the status quo

The first scenario ('robust bureaucratic systems) describes what currently exists but with a progressive tightening of the essential features of schooling, distinctive institutions 'knitted together within complex administrative arrangements', holding in place curriculum and assessment which also serve an accountability and competitive purpose. As well as their academic remit schools have a guardianship and socialisation role, while continual extension of the schools', and teachers', social responsibilities brings new challenges and stretch resources. In this scenario, radical change is resisted due to a fear of dilution of academic standards and the putative equality of opportunity that is offered by uniformity and standardised supervision or inspection.

A second scenario under the broad heading of 'maintaining the status quo' is described as 'teacher exodus, the meltdown scenario'. This foresees a major crisis of teacher shortage, triggered in part by a rapidly aging profession, by low teacher morale and resistance to much of the policy thrust, together with more attractive opportunities in other graduate jobs. With crisis management as the norm a fortress mentality prevails, which could lead to 'a vicious circle of retrenchment and conflict', or spurring radical innovation and collective change. In such a situation of teacher scarcity, rewards and conditions of service could be enhanced.

### Scenarios 3 and 4: Reschooling

The third and fourth scenarios, under the broad heading of 'reschooling', give schools a central but extended place as 'core social centres' and as 'focused learning organisations' respectively.

The first of these two scenarios posits extensive shared responsibilities between schools and other community bodies, sources of expertise, and institutions of further and continuing education. This would contribute to, rather than diminish, high levels of teacher professionalism together with 'generous levels of financial support needed to meet demanding requirements for quality learning environments in all communities and to ensure elevated esteem for teachers and schools'. As schools would be in dynamic interplay with diverse community interests and formal and non-formal programmes it implies widely distributed, and often collective, leadership with strong local decision-making. Teachers would enjoy varied contractual arrangements and conditions, in collaboration with other professionals, community players, parents, with a 'blurring' or overlapping of roles.

Schools as Focused Learning Organisations presume a culture of high quality, experimentation, diversity, and innovation. In hierarchy and regulatory punitive accountability approaches, schools no longer obtain in 'flatarchies', which draw on widely distributed expertise, using teams, networks and diverse sources of expertise with embedded quality norms and self-evaluation. Research on pedagogy and new forms of evaluation and competence would flourish. Teachers, highly motivated by the stimulating challenges of working in such a collegial environment, would then develop a strong sense of individual and collective ownership over their work. With significant investment in updating the quality of the physical premises and resources, open to the community, efforts have to be made to ensure that the divides of affluence and social capital do not widen.

## Scenarios 5 and 6: Deschooling

The third, category, contains two further scenarios - 'learner networks and a network society' and 'extension of the market model'. The first of these contrasts with the second by envisaging new forms of co-operative networks in contrast with the competitive mechanisms of the market model.

Learner networks in a learner society could arise primarily through dissatisfaction with institutionalised provision and emerging forms of knowledge offered by increasingly sophisticated, powerful, inexpensive information and communication technologies. So, it is hypothesised, schools would be progressively dismantled and replaced by a multitude of learning networks. There is little room in this scenario for particular professionals called 'teachers' as demarcations between teacher and student, parent and teacher, education and community, blur and sometimes break down. As authority becomes widely diffused patterns of governance and accountability assume new collegial expressions. New learning professionals emerge, whether employed locally to teach or as consultants. These may, of course, be qualified teachers but exercising their craft in contexts other than classrooms.

Extending the Market Model, it is hypothesised, would occur through governments seeking diversification in a broader environment of market-led change. With a more open educational



market new providers would seize opportunities to offer their services, encouraged by fundamental reforms of funding structures, incentives and regulation. This scenario would gain its greatest impetus in countries where schooling is viewed as a private as well as a public good. The most valued learning then becomes determined by the consumer, by choice and by demand, 'buying' educational services from a variety of competing providers. Indicators, measures, and accreditation arrangements then start to displace direct public monitoring and curriculum regulation. As innovation abounds, so do 'painful transitions and inequalities'. Teachers are replaced or subsumed as new learning professionals, public and private, full-time and part-time, operate in the learning markets. New forms of training and accreditation opportunities would necessarily emerge in this new environment. However, 'market forces might see these professionals in much readier supply in areas of residential desirability and/or learning market opportunity than elsewhere'.

In each of these six hypothetical scenarios, the school plays a role from occupying centre stage at one extreme to a place in the supporting cast on the other. Whether or not knowledge and skills may be gained in sites other than school, the powerful social and moral role of schooling should not be omitted from the equation. Nor do the interests and priorities of the 'market' vouchsafe the role of schools as guardians of our most deeply held educational values.

## The probable and the desirable

The OECD scenarios begin with the tension between the probable and the desirable. When viewed as encompassing all OECD countries the 'probable' is likely to be constrained by historical and cultural forces on the one hand while at the same time given impetus by global pressures and competitive norms. This may be resolved either by unhappy compromise, by the powerful inertia of the status quo, or by a country re-alignment of school conventions with an emerging international consensus. The voice and strength of teacher organisations and the degree of their participation in the discourse will play a differing but determining role from country to country.

It would be hard to contest the view that the first of these three categories – robust bureaucratic systems - lies closest to a 'pure' model of schools as we know them. However, the extent to which their traditional mould is deeply embedded and resistant to change will differ widely, determined by a complex inter-relationship of historic, cultural and political factors. Schools have been described as having a cannibalistic function, consuming their own products, successful pupils returning as teachers to perpetuate what they have been taught, parents content for their children to experience what they experienced, politicians playing safe to the expectations of their constituencies.

Nonetheless, within this deterministic scenario elements of all the other possibilities can be found to some degree and in some places. There are always teachers and school leaders who are creatively discontent, bucking the trend, innovating at the margins within their own classrooms and schools, creating a future in the present. 'Latent innovation' is already there yet often hard to recognise because it is tempered by the power of the status quo, 'hindered at least in part because they [change agents] have not reckoned with the power of the sunk infrastructure to constrain innovation' (Leicester p. 38)... even in the face of evidence that they [education systems] are not fit for purpose' (p. 18). For example, the conception of schools as learning organisations is a big idea, and one which has gained increasingly wider currency, but more identifiable in the literature than in the reality of the day-to-day life of hard-pressed schools. Schools as learning networks are embryonic in some places, driven in part by economies of scale but also constrained by competitive targets and institutional self-interest.

These 'probability' scenarios may or may not reflect what is 'desirable', a future of schooling driven not by rational or moral choice but by economics, vested interest or political expediency. What is 'desirable' has political and pragmatic meanings as well referring to ideals resting on a set of principles which, as adults and educational guardians, we owe to the next generation – ambassadors from the world of knowledge to the kingdom of the child.

The degree to which schools are able to adapt to the network society within which they operate, without compromise of their essential values and educational mission, presents a hugely demanding set of challenges. A teacher exodus, as foreseen in the second 'meltdown' scenario may occur as systems are seen to drift further away from the core values of schooling, in part a response to competitive international pressures, in part a perceived disjunction between schools in their familiar mould and the world in its unfamiliar social configurations. This is the 'Future Shock' that Alvin Toffler anticipated four decades ago – the collision of the past and present with the future, moral attrition and 'information overload' manifesting itself in teacher stress and disorientation.

### Three horizons

It is in this tension between the probable and the desirable that provides the central thesis of a second model elaborated in the Futures Forum (Leicester, Bloomer and Stewart, 2009). Three possible 'horizons' are posited, described as 'a useful framework both for understanding the deeper processes of long term societal change, and for designing more effective policy interventions' (p. 3). Although closely paralleling the OECD scenario this process model focuses on how the evolution from one horizon to the next may occur.



The first horizon (H1) is 'business as usual' akin to the OECD scenario one. It is represented by 'standards-based systematic reform', a highly influential model of how to get the most out of the system as it exists but condemned to 'go on measuring the wrong things as a misleading proxy for the right ones' (p. 18).

<b>Have resources</b>	Help them learn from best practice	Exemplars – spread the word
<b>Don't have resources</b>	Failing school – take it over	Ready to improve – fund them
	Don't know what to do	Know what to do

This model may be characterised 'more of the same but better' yet, as 'shift happens' it begins to feel more and more out of place and no longer fit for purpose. Inevitably the 'business as usual' model is superseded by new ways of doing things. So, as the shortcomings of the first horizon system become more and more apparent a second horizon is formed - 'a moving border between past and future'.

The second horizon is the 'Cinderella zone', struggling for recognition as it moves away from the comfortable familiarity of H1 and inevitably judged by its conservative standards. While containing elements of the first horizon which work well, it contains elements of a more aspirational and risky kind.






It is clear that the challenge lies in the transition zone, the second horizon. This is the risky space. It can be chaotic and confusing with so many ideas competing for attention (p. 26).

However, as the status quo appears to be threatened it may, at least temporarily, give way to the 'capture and extend' scenario in which 'innovations in H2 are mainstreamed' in order to prolong the life of the existing system against the grain of a changing world' (p. 4).

The third scenario (H3) represents 'the ideal system we desire and of which we can identify elements in the present that give us encouragement and inspiration' (p. 5). A distinction is made between innovations that are essentially technical, serving to prolong the status quo and those that are transformative and help to bring the third horizon vision closer to reality. A 'mature perspective', it is argued, accepts the need both to address the challenges to the first horizon and nurture the seeds of the third. There is a need to 'keep the lights on' today and to find a way of keeping them on a generation from now in very different circumstances' (p. 5).

This is the work of 'pragmatic visionaries', teacher leaders and teacher organisations who understand the nature of the bridge between the present and future, and between the probable and the desirable. This implies knowing where the levers of change lie, how to address both strengths and limitations of the present and play a part in the shaping of the future.

In the following diagram, the essential characteristics of the first and third horizons are depicted while the arrows represent the push and pull that occurs in the second horizon. These both push back to a need for stability while also pushing forward, learning to embrace uncertainty, and holding on to comfortable and familiar measures of success while opening the door to new and more challenging measures.

Attraction of H1		Attraction of H3
Stability/predictability		Uncertainty, dynamism excitement
Fixed infrastructure		Flexible, creative spaces
Clear measures of success		Emergent measures of success
Short term evidence (crops)		Long term evidence (trees)

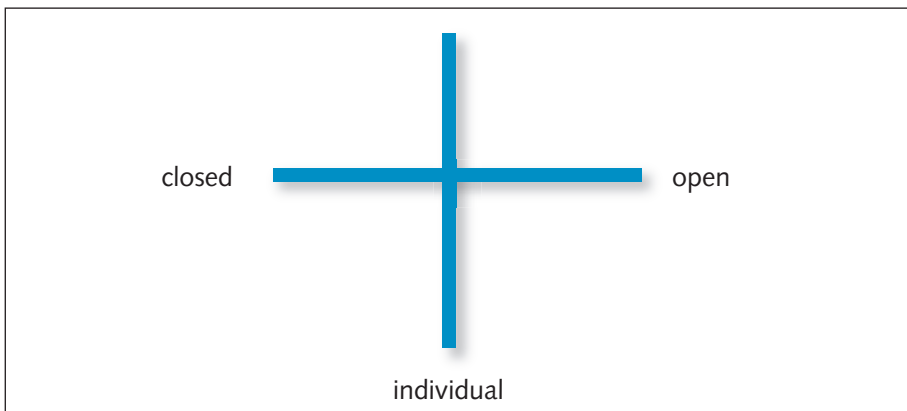
This movement from H1 to H3 cannot happen, it is argued, as long as there are dichotomies, paradigm wars, claims and counter claims between the 'little enders' and 'big enders'. The much overused word 'synergy' refers, not to compromise, but to getting the best out of both worlds.

The questions it leaves us with are the assumptions which underpin the third horizon – both questions of probability and desirability. To what extent will the future be defined by uncertainty, flexible and creative spaces and on what evidence does such a scenario rest? Is such a future desirable and by whom and in what context? Geert Hofstede's studies over two decades report large differences among countries on indicators such as 'tolerance of ambiguity'. Countries strongly rooted in cultural and religious traditions prove much less likely to welcome uncertain change than countries in which scepticism and distrust of authority have become the norm. These issues become particularly salient in an educational context where desire for security and predictability is at a premium, in social world where schools alone may provide consistency and stability.

## Four quadrants

A further formulation of possible scenarios is offered by Jean-Paul Saussois (2009), whose speculations on the future posit a range of alternatives and conditions in which much depends on the direction and vagaries of travel. His quadrant tool, it is claimed, ‘facilitates the understanding of the dynamics of transformation of the school system by moving around the quadrants horizontally and vertically’ (p. 13). It offers a basis for analysis of how the system may move from one steady state to another, who the main players may be in making that shift, and what social and environmental change forces may be at work. The questions it raises are in whose interests is a change from one quadrant to another? What are the internal and external forces that push politicians and policy makers from conservation to survival (back to basics? International benchmarking? Scarcity of resources? Pressure groups and special interest groups?). What forces drive the change from the transformational models towards a more market orientated system (political ideology? Parent lobbies? Service providers? Employer groups? Mass media?).

The four quadrants are defined by a north-south axis from social to individual, and a west-east axis from closed to open. North-south deals with normative contents and expectations about schooling and is labelled the “value line”. The “east-west” dimension is the socio-technical aspect of schooling – the “supply line” –in which the school is considered as a system, closed and held in place by convention or, alternatively, challenged by a more open set of social and economic forces.



*From north to south*

Schools are embedded within societies which value social and individual orientations differently and place the purposes of schools somewhere between those two extreme poles. To the north, education is socially oriented and schools are aimed at cohesion, equity and reproduction (close to OECD scenario 1). The south is individualistically oriented,

with schooling increasingly geared to its clients as individual consumers (OECD scenario 6). These two poles express a range of values as to how people are bound together in social arrangements in which schools are an integral part. The teacher plays an active, if implicit, part in the transmission of values as the school is a key expression of the social fabric.

The individual teacher becomes the provider of services, and parents expect from the school a service delivery to fulfil their child's needs while at the same time meeting the demands of curricular and assessment mandates defined increasingly at an international remove from the classroom. The increasing use of the word 'delivery' in English is symptomatic of a change in the conception of a teacher's authority, as an intermediary 'delivery service' rather than defined morally, socially or within the subject expertise where teachers' authority has traditionally been located.

However, with a global move occurs towards the southern pole of the value line, the institutional authority of the school diminishes and the knowledge authority of the teacher decreases because 'individuals are making decisions and acquiring knowledge through different networks, through newspapers or the television, or the internet. Opinions are formed through informal discussion with parents and friends rather than recourse to an external scientific authority: "my opinion is as worthwhile as the teacher's" (p. 9).

#### *From west to east*

The move along the west-to-east axis can be seen as a re-engineering of the central administrative procedures through decentralisation, shifts in decision-making processes, re-designed to accommodate new and differing modes of co-ordination, workforce remodelling, and changes in the recruitment of teachers with differing profiles. These change forces which impel a more open and market-orientated system are made possible, argues Saussois, where there are weak teachers unions, lacking in voice, without public support or lacking the internal solidarity to resist change or propose viable alternatives.

When schools operate as *closed systems* it means they are sufficiently independent as the reference point for what they offer, defined in terms of internal structures, timetables, subjects, standard operating procedures, and distribution of rewards and punishments through specific rules and internal committees. Teachers are certified by their specialised knowledge - knowledge why, knowledge what, and knowledge how - the last named being the most difficult to acquire and defining of a 'good teacher'. Schools' tight integration, co-ordination, and control, 'aim to ensure stability, which become ends in themselves rather than means to an end' with concentration on the principles of internal organisational functioning. (p. 11).

As schools move towards more open systems, the "equi-finality" principle comes into play – that is, there are more ways than one of producing a given outcome. As the variety of demands grow these have to be matched by a variety of initiatives coming from both



the inside and without the constraints of controls from a central authority. Options or electives come less and less from the supply side (that is, teachers deciding what is taught in the discipline they are familiar with) but determined by stakeholders in a more market driven system. Teachers are then obliged to shift or widen their role from 'delivery' to collaboration in emerging networks and inter-agency initiatives.

Drawing on the Einstein maxim that problems cannot be solved by thinking within the framework in which they were created, the future of schools, schooling and education may go in essentially two diverse directions – one, to extend their compass (a form of reschooling), the other to move towards a more modest role as a co-ordinating hub, the centrepiece in a network of small, people-friendly, local-based community sites (a form of deschooling).

The first of these two scenarios is much the likelier given the inertia and institutionalisation of schools, the investment in buildings, logistics and control, health and safety issues. This scenario proposes a model akin to an educational mall, offering something for everyone and open 24 hours a day for 360 plus days. It is an extension of what is known as the 'full-service' school: learning on tap for adults as well as children, alive to a 24-hour world economy to an information network that never sleeps, accommodating people who work unsocial hours. For the whole community it gives access to libraries, laboratories, the internet, fitness and recreation facilities at times which are people, rather than institutionally, orientated. It is a revisiting in modern guise, of Henry Morris' vision in the 1930s Chief Education Officer for Cambridgeshire, of a village college:

It would take all the various vital but isolated activities in village life – the school, the village hall and reading room, the evening classes, the agricultural education courses, the Women's Institute, the British Legion, boy scouts and girl guides, the recreation ground, the branch of the county rural library, the athletic and recreation clubs – and, bringing them together into relation, create a new institution for the English countryside. It would create out of discrete elements an organic whole; [in which] the whole is greater than the mere sum of the parts. It would be a true social synthesis – it would take existing and live elements and bring them into a new and unique relationship. (Henry Morris, *The Village College. Being a Memorandum on the Provision of Educations and Social Facilities for the Countryside, with Special Reference to Cambridgeshire, 1925, section XIV*)

Contrasting metaphors for the school are the village and the factory. The latter is in fact much closer to the reality of schools as we know them, as its historic origins are in a 20th Century factory model and are exemplified in the structures of school buildings and logistics and in much of the industrial language of supervision, quality control, efficiency and effective inputs and outputs. The village metaphor suggests a form of converse that brings provision closer to people, on a smaller more intimate scale.

## An alternative scenario

An alternative scenario proposes that rather than moving libraries, internet cafés, fitness centres, football pitches, basketball courts and health clinics into new mega-community 'schools', such resources could be moved out closer to where people live and play. For example, internet cafés are now a common feature of high streets and shopping centres. Similarly tutorial centres are, in many countries, to be found in neighbourhoods, supermarkets and shopping centres. Teachers, tutors and education advisers can already be found sited in shop-fronts, supermarkets, high flats, community centres, churches or anywhere that people congregate. Breakfast clubs, study support facilities, football clubs and residential centres, Saturday and Sunday schools (a common feature of urban areas in Malaysia for example) also complement the limited 9am to 3pm experience. In the future, such community-based services may play a greater role as primary sites for learning rather than simply as supplementary, or compensatory, to what is on offer in schools. In other words, the future is already incipient in the present.

## Challenging the 'fossilised' curriculum

Like the old conundrum of the chicken and the egg, the question is, 'Which came first: the curriculum or the school?' Before the invention of school, the 'curriculum' was a family and community responsibility. In African countries imperial colonisers, brought with them a model of school which undermined the collectivist nature of education in traditional communities, encompassing the total way of life of the society. Education as a shared responsibility meant that the learning of all children was the responsibility of the community. The whole community benefited from the education of the child and individual success was a success for all, while shame was equally distributed (Antwi, 1992). The first 'school' was the home: the 'teachers' were the parents and the elders in the family. The 'curriculum' was life and learning was by observation and by doing. The essential purpose of education was the inculcation of good character, responsible behaviour and sound health. Traditional teaching was grounded in passing on knowledge of the people's history, beliefs and culture, enabling children and young people to participate fully in social life (McWilliam and Kwamena-Poh, 1975).

As the church came to monopolise religion, so the place of schools as the 'secular church', wrote Illich (1971, became progressively and globally affirmed and eventually confirmed by law and statute. Schooling was defined by a specialised curriculum containing knowledge which was not accessible elsewhere and it became commonplace for parents to be discouraged from teaching their children. The primary role for assessment was as a sifting mechanism, determining those eligible for further study or fit for a hierarchy of vocations. The Platonic myth of the gold, silver and base metal children was given concrete expression. With progressive standardisation of the curriculum and assessment the groundwork was laid for school effects to be determined. Comparative measures could then be developed, based on pupils' differential levels of success in mastering the curriculum and teachers' differential levels of success in getting them over the hurdles.



So deeply embedded in policy thinking are comparative 'effects' of schools and the relative performance of the individual teacher that any radical moves beyond current assumptions poses a major challenge as this casts doubt on the sacred canons of performance tables, value-added and accountability. However desirable a third horizon may be, or however probable a deschooling or meltdown scenario, there is little latitude for change without a fundamental rethinking of the curriculum, and its inseparable bedfellow assessment.

Perhaps the biggest concern about achievement testing involves the fossilised rigidity of the subject matter that is tested compared to the dynamic needs of children and the rapid evolution of knowledge in the 21st Century. Achievement testing presumes that certain subject areas identified in 1892 should be the focus of education in the 21st Century as if these subjects alone are the only intellectual "ore" necessary to be mined for the future (Martin, 2011, p. 7).

In his book, *Learning to Think –but not in School* (2007), Patrick Lewis describes the 'hydra curriculum'; as each head is lopped off another appears to take its place. Yet there is little wiggle room to accommodate new 'subjects' as the traditional core of the curriculum remains firmly in place. So, teachers are pressed into covering content, while what they are required to assess and account for, reflects less and less what is important to them and of diminishing relevance to the lives of children and young people growing up in the 21st Century.

## Schools as anchors

The challenge to the curriculum and the school day which contains it has re-emerged in different guises over the years. Tim Brighouse, up until 2009 leader of the British Labour Government's London Challenge and long-time advocate of re-invented schooling, envisaged a future for schools in which they would act as a hub or anchor, orchestrating a range of experiences beyond school, with far reaching implications for the nature of the curriculum, assessment, learning and teaching. Brighouse described how, in the early 1980s as Director of Education, he had tried to engage debate on the nature of the school day and the curriculum, with a series of packed meetings all over Oxfordshire and extensive press coverage. However exciting the prospect of radical redesign, the school day and the curriculum contained therein were too sacrosanct and too deeply embedded in policy and public consciousness to be fundamentally challenged (in Bangs, MacBeath and Galton, 2010).

It is as if learning is not taking place unless students are being taught. Rather than weaning youngsters the system seems bent in playing down their ability to do something for themselves. In a variety of subtle and not so subtle ways, Western society has trivialised all levels of young people in school. Is it any wonder teenagers say they feel bored, uninvolved and often in conflict with a world that tells them what to do, rather than expects them to work it out for themselves? (Abbott and Ryan, 2000, p. 218)



While the vision emerging from Brighouse's wide-ranging discussions in Birmingham proposed a bridge too far (between Leicester et al.'s H1 and H3), it did expose the inherent limitations of the curriculum diet and the unrealistic expectations of what a conventional school day, week, or year could achieve for children. The less constrained by physical boundaries, and the greater the opportunity for learning to cross spatial boundaries, the greater the challenge is to the physical structures which try to contain and limit its scope. As the legacy of old buildings and old ways of thinking conspire against new forms of learning, it implies the dismantling of dividing walls, first in the metaphorical sense, in turn stimulating a re-examination of the physical structures. In designing schools for the future the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) in the UK works from the premise that there is a direct relationship between open spaces in physical architecture and open spaces in thinking.

Strapping the jet engine of new technologies to the horse and buggy assumptions of conventional schooling, writes Papert (2002) 'just ends up shaking the buggy to bits and scaring all the horses'.

## Open spaces: beyond curriculum

Conceiving of the school as a hub, the centre which draws together and makes coherent different learning experiences, was, in the heady days of the 1970s, to flourish in numerous places in the US and the UK in Boston's Home Base School, a small building was enough to provide the base for students venturing into community learning sites. In Scotland, Barrowfield Community School occupied a suite of three small rooms above a Glasgow taxi office with the 'curriculum' to be found in social agencies, local businesses, museums and excursions to the other towns and cities. The logical extension of extending school as a hub was to take learning out of school entirely. Instead of bringing a range of activities within the school walls, ventures such as Philadelphia's Parkway, took learning to places in and around the Parkway, offering a powerful alternative to desk-bound study. Parkway, the central artery which runs through the heart of the city, offered the learning space for the whole of the curriculum and beyond. This not only saved millions of dollars on school buildings, textbooks, administration and all the paraphernalia that consumes the lion's share of the education budget, but also showed that young people have a much greater capacity for initiative and agency than they are typically given credit for.

Far from making teachers redundant these 'deschooled' ventures presented them with new professional challenges, exploring new sites for individual and small group work, conducting individual counselling and seminars with young people in any of the congenial spaces that a city can offer. Helping young people to make sense of their experience promoted 'horizontal connectedness' across areas of knowledge and subjects. Removed from the insulation in the timetable and the abstracted classroom context and its attendant sanctions, knowledge came to acquire new meanings.



Parkway had offshoots in other American cities and for an 11-week period in Scotland. In an experimental programme with disaffected 15 year olds, their individualised week was structured around places and events that could be found in the telephone directory and Yellow Pages. For the entire period, these young people never touched down in their school. Their daily timetable took them to learning sites such as hospitals, museums, zoos, observatories, hotels, supermarkets, train and bus stations, court houses, police stations, the Ambulance Service, the Automobile Association, the Navy, the Scottish National Orchestra, the Observatory, supermarkets and factories. As in Philadelphia, Rochester and Boston, teachers met with individual students in cafes, parks or in the workplace to discuss, extend and evaluate their learning.

While the project enjoyed success far beyond expectations of teachers, students and the Director of Education, for the latter the potential risks involved had provided too many sleepless nights for the experiment to be continued. However, a great deal had been learned about the initiative, resilience and unseen capabilities of young people and the consequent need to take stock of where failure lay, not in the potential of the young but in the limitations of curriculum and assessment.

These issues are revisited in *The Child in the City*, written by Colin Ward in 1978. His study offers valuable insights into the nature of intellectual adventuring in urban areas, experiential learning in children's street culture, the variety of sensual and spatial experiences to be found, the creative initiatives and games that children invented, organised and managed for themselves. These new experiences and the ability to move around, to explore and invent were, wrote Ward, an important part of a child's education. 'The city is in itself an environmental education, and can be used to provide one, whether we are thinking of learning through the city, learning about the city, learning to use the city, to control the city or to change the city' (p. 3). It parallels Wacquant's studies of adolescent culture in Paris 'banlieus' described in Chapter 2.

The range of opportunities for adventure in large cities is, of course, not available in rural areas but challenges there take on a different form. In the Highlands and Islands of Scotland where schools are separated by hundreds of miles and stretches of water, students are able to download video lessons in all school subjects and view them at home or on their portable devices. On a two-hour bus or ferry journey, a student may review work or catch up on lessons missed. The development of an on-line Integrated Learning Community enables teachers to exchange practice and offer collegial support and mentoring to their colleagues in other schools. The increasingly sophisticated and interactive resources and off-site accessibility of videos, podcasts, curriculum and assessment materials raise a challenging question for these young people, as well as for their teachers – is your journey really necessary?

A powerful innovative venture in California offers an answer to that question. Salomon Khan, founder of Khan Academy, a non-profit organisation, has created 2,500 short interactive videos covering much of the elementary and secondary curriculum. Students can engage with these videos at home or in the classroom, reviewing, pausing and repeating

without censure, embarrassment or a feeling of guilt for wasting the teacher's time. The teacher, freed from lecturing and marking attends to individuals or groups who require help, benefiting from a sophisticated feedback system which provides on-going information on how children are learning, where they are stuck, and illustrating how they are attacking and trying to resolve problems. Peer to peer tutoring takes place not only in the classroom but in 'home work' both locally and globally as children and young people connect with their peers and share their lessons across national boundaries. What Khan has found is that assumptions of ability and labelling are confounded by the evidence of 'slow learners' who suddenly accelerate, and by reluctant learners for whom threat and failure no longer exist.

Exploiting the potential of insights to be gained from venturing beyond the classroom led, in Britain, to the founding of Education Extra ('commitment to the needs which all young people have for engaging in enjoyable and supportive learning, above and beyond the curriculum and well beyond the classroom'). The 'extra' did not imply extending the school day - for some policy makers the perceived solution - but on the contrary, its purpose was to create opportunities for children to learn for themselves, in contexts other than school, unfettered by prescriptive processes and lockstep progress towards mandated targets. It was designed to similarly free teachers to teach in new ways and to learn together with their students.

This was to pave the way for other initiatives such as a government-funded initiative *Playing for Success* which created spaces in Premier League football clubs for out of hours learning. It fostered creative approaches to project work around the mathematics, history and sociology of football for example, gradually expanding access to other sporting venues such as rugby, hockey, tennis and badminton clubs which provided spaces for homework, study, individual and small group work. The most vibrant expression of learning beyond the curriculum is the Children's University, by 2011 encompassing over 2,700 schools with out-of-hours access to over 150 'learning destinations' including the Strozzii museum in Florence. "Nobody ever failed a museum," says its director James Bradburne, emphasising that sites such as his can provide carefully scaffolded learning experiences which inform and challenge emotionally and intellectually.

In September, a 10-year-old boy was presented by the Mayor of Plymouth with the 100,000<sup>th</sup> learning passport, the document which children carry with them into learning destinations, accumulating credits which lead to graduations, attended by parents who might never have darkened the door of the school, often for them too saturated with memories of failure and inadequacy.

The more children and young people assume control of their own learning and the more there are opportunities to exploit learning sites beyond the classroom, the greater the pedagogic insight and skill it requires of teachers. The more children and young people become independent and inter-dependent learners the greater the strategic resourcefulness it will imply for those who lead and shape children's learning. The more there is a genuine sense of agency among learners, the greater the need for an enhanced capacity on the part of teachers to steer, guide, intervene or stand back as the occasion demands. This



does not preclude conventional teaching strategies - question and answer sessions, demonstrations and direct instruction, for example, but these become a smaller and complementary part of the teacher's repertoire and rest on a fine judgment as to when, where and how to intervene in the learning process and to what end.

While initiatives such as the Children's University do not directly challenge the 'business as usual' model, they play out in 'the moving border between past and future'. Models which leave schools and curricula more or less intact, but extend their compass and functions to a wider clientele, can be accommodated within the current paradigm where H1 and the OECD's 'reschooling' meet. However, as the H1-H3 model suggests, there is a point where the water meets the ice and the fluidity of change cannot be arrested.

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## CHAPTER 6

### Changing minds: towards a professional future

To what extent is the future a captive of the past? And to what extent is teaching and teacher education a captive of unforgiving policies? To what extent is teacher professional development a conservative force and what scope does it allow for innovation, radical change or critique of established canons of practice?

What will be the nature of the professional identity and priorities for the next generation of teachers? What does it mean for change to be driven by the profession, by professional bodies and by essential professional values? What are the seminal principles for a more confident autonomous profession and the nature of practice, and policy, which this implies?

#### Being and becoming a 'professional'

It is quite possible that the current definitions of teachers professionalism, as taught and transmitted to every new generation of teachers, is somehow 'out-of-tune' with contemporary expectations, challenges and processes of change and that it is necessary to reconceptualise the knowledge and competency core of teachers' professionalism in order to be 'tuned' to developments in learning sciences, challenges in classrooms and schools and expected future innovations in teaching and learning.

(Innovative Teaching for Effective Learning Centre for Educational Research and Innovation, OECD)

The definition of professionalism in Chapter 1 sets out in general terms what we have come to understand by the concept of a 'profession', a set of criteria which are both inclusive and also exclusive of a large body of people who might describe themselves as 'professional' but who do not meet those stringent standards. For school systems in many parts of the world, struggling to recruit teachers, these are aspirational criteria that may not all be met on initial appointment but nonetheless provide a benchmark for on-going professional development. In well-resourced countries with demanding and competitive levels of qualification, the nature of professionalism will often exceed those baseline criteria. Traditional criteria that gave a license to teach four or five decades ago, extending from recruitment to retirement, require to be revisited and refined in a fast moving social and economic world in which what it means to be a teacher is changing, and is likely to continue to change over the next few decades.

As a doctor or lawyer who qualified 30 years ago would be unable to operate in a modern hospital or law firm without significant upgrading of knowledge and skill, so teaching the children and young people of 'Generation Y' (also known as the 'Millennial

Generation' or 'Generation Next') will less imply an updating of subject knowledge than a deepening understanding of classroom pedagogy and how it connects with the wider world of learning. The content of Latin, French or History may be essentially unchanged but what has changed, and is continuing to change, is the nature of pedagogy, the technologies of teaching and learning, new contexts of learning, the social world of the child, the occupational and economic structure and a career in which progression lies at its heart. Beyond a concern for the health and welfare of children in their charge, teachers' new professional remit extends to collaboration with colleagues, team working, and participation in school-based alliances, teacher networks, professional associations and continuing professional development in a range of school and 'not-school' settings.

Comparing the traditional model of schooling with the most effective systems, Andreas Schleicher (2011) identifies some of the radical changes which will necessarily have differential impact on teachers' professional lives, learning and career structures in differing part of the world. How they impact in practice will depend on the extent to which teachers themselves are in the driving seat of change.

THE PAST	THEME	THE MOST EFFECTIVE SYSTEMS
Some students learn at high levels	<i>Student inclusion</i>	All students learn at high levels
Routine cognitive skills for lifetime jobs	<i>Curriculum instruction and assessment</i>	Learning to learn, complex ways of thinking, ways of working
Taught to reach established content	<i>Teacher quality</i>	High level professional knowledge workers
'Tayloristic' hierarchical	<i>Work organisation</i>	Flat, collegial, differentiated and diverse careers
Primarily to authorities	<i>Teacher evaluation and accountability</i>	Also to peers and stakeholders

(Source: Schleicher (2011) *Building a High Quality Teaching Profession; Lessons from around the world, Teachers Summit, New York*)

Before its abolition by the Coalition Government in the UK, the Training and Development Agency (2007) defined five career steps from being simply qualified to teach to becoming a 'post-threshold' teacher, then to an 'excellent' and to an 'advanced skills' teacher. At each level of progression a set of demanding standards were set out providing a continuum of expectations as to the level of engagement in

professional development, one that provides clarity and appropriate differentiation for each career stage. As a teacher progresses professionally, not only do standards of pedagogy become more demanding but his/her role extends to team working, collegial planning, assessment and evaluation and at its most expert level to leading colleagues within and beyond the school. Some of the 41 standards in the taxonomy include:

- Have an extensive knowledge on matters concerning equality, inclusion and diversity in teaching
- Contribute to the professional development of colleagues through coaching and mentoring, demonstrating effective practice, and providing advice and feedback
- Work closely with leadership teams, taking a leading role in developing, implementing and evaluating policies and practice that contribute to school improvement
- Possess the analytical, interpersonal and organisational skills necessary to work effectively with staff and leadership teams beyond their own school.

Lauren Resnick takes the professional definition a bit further, describing it as a social activity which is both shaped by, and shapes, the institutional context in which it is expressed.

One key attribute of successful institutional learning programs is that they consistently involve socially shared intellectual work, and they are organised around joint-accomplishment of tasks... work, personal life, and recreation take place within social systems, and each person's ability to function successfully depends on what others do and how several individuals' mental and physical performances mesh (Resnick, 1987, p. 18).

To pursue and meet high level professional standards such as these rests on both structure and culture and their interdependence. Reflection is not simply that lonely activity that teachers engage in on the way home or at 4am when they recall their handling of a critical incident. Professional development is a joint activity. David Perkins (2003) has graphically portrayed the nature of professional intelligence in this metaphor: 'Neurons connect parts of our brains with one another but no cables made of neurons drape from person to person. We talk about ideas. We share insights. We pool recollections' (p. 22).

We have also learned that effective individual professional development sits alongside collective learning, with teachers exchanging ideas and collaborating to improve classroom practice. Japan's example of the "open classroom" principle where peer observation of classroom teaching is embedded and welcomed as standard practice (Angel Gurría, OECD Secretary-General?New York, 17 March 2011)

Collective learning in which teachers have time to reflect together about their practice is a more studied and systematic process than the daily spontaneous individual





reflection and recrimination. 'Collaborative inquiry' is a systematic process for learning, in which a group works together in repeated episodes of reflection and action to examine and learn about an issue that is of importance to them, write Timperley and Earle (2010).

Engaging in collaborative inquiry allows educators to work together searching for and considering various sources of knowledge (both explicit and tacit) in order to investigate practices and ideas through a number of lenses, to put forward hypotheses, to challenge beliefs, and to pose more questions. It is the foundation of conceptual change as individuals come across new ideas or discover that ideas that they believe to be true don't hold up when under scrutiny. When teachers engage in this kind of progressive inquiry, they move far beyond story swapping to constructing new knowledge through solving problems of understanding. (Timperley and Earle, p. 23).

Recent work shows that when professional development becomes professional learning, new learning on the part of teachers can make a substantial difference in student outcomes but it is not easy. Making significant changes in practice requires intensive and challenging professional learning experiences that not only extend teachers' repertoire of strategies and approaches, but also engage them in activities and dialogue that allows them to examine their existing beliefs in order to identify the difference between the beliefs they hold and the beliefs underpinning the new ideas. (Timperley and Earle, p. 23).

## Changing minds

In a recent study in the Netherlands on how teachers change their beliefs (Jacobiene et al. 2010), the issue of 'sharing' and changing mind sets was critically reviewed, going beyond more tokenistic observation and discussion. The research team examined four different approaches:

- exchanging ideas for alternative teaching methods
- exchanging and discussing experiences of experimentation with alternative teaching methods
- identifying and solving shared problems in teaching
- identifying and solving individual problems.

The researchers found that teams in which teachers exchanged alternative teaching methods and experimented with these, and when teachers started from shared concerns, beliefs about teaching changed significantly. This was attributed to the high level of interdependency as teachers moved towards aligning their goals. An interesting finding was that a relatively high numbers of teachers 'changed their beliefs about teaching and learning in a way congruent with the aims of the reform' (implementation of the new national curriculum and mandated standards in senior secondary) (p. 178).

However, some teachers also changed their beliefs in a way that was incongruent with the aims of the reform. These were teachers who 'had high initial mean and maximum scores on student oriented beliefs', and were self-confident and resilient enough to 'fly below the radar'.

Reporting on OECD findings as to what teachers found most helpful in improving their practice, Andreas Schleicher (2011) identified six strategies rated highly by teachers. These were, in descending order of impact:

- Individual and collaborative research
- Qualification programmes
- Reading professional literature
- Courses and workshops
- Professional development networks
- Mentoring and peer observation

That research heads the list may come as surprise but when research is cast in Cooperrder and Sravista's terminology (1987) as 'appreciative inquiry' it is readily understood. Rather than focusing on problems and dysfunctions, narrowly defined, it seeks to grasp where the potential for development and change may lie and how to promote it. It seeks deeper explanations and more refined understanding of the five W's plus H of teaching and learning<sup>1</sup>.

## Where the water meets the ice

David Perkins' notion of 'learning in captivity' (discussed in Chapter 2) has an obvious corollary - teaching in captivity. In many developed countries teachers are, together with their students, trapped in systemic ice, affected by global warming but with decision makers in denial of its existence. The water is, in Leicester at al model (Chapter 4) the fluidity which flows between H1 and H2, between the solidity of business as usual and the aspiration of a reshaped professional future in which teachers themselves are actively engaged.

The tensions between the conservative present and the radical future become particularly germane for newly qualified teachers entering the profession. They can, all too easily, become captives of the physical, ideological and curricular structures to which they are introduced in induction programmes which bypass colleges and universities with their 'tiresome' theories, disciplinary knowledge and academic 'conceits'. Yet without exposure to alternative insights into what it means to be a professional educator in a changing world, there is less and less opportunity for the future to exist in the present.

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<sup>1</sup> The what, where, when, who, why and how.



Now that governments have established a strong grip on schools through a combination of testing, measurement, inspection and league tables, they are turning their attention to the education of teachers in order to establish total control over the educational system. There is therefore a lot at stake with regard to the question about the future of teacher education (Biesta, 2011 p. 3).

While the political capture of pre-service education is a worrying trend it exists alongside recognition that teacher education is the work of a lifetime. Together with the apprenticeship model it is widely acknowledged that pedagogy is necessarily informed and enriched by theoretical insights. Vital among these is an understanding of what social psychologists have termed 'behaviour settings' (or 'ecological niches'). When the all-too-familiar classroom is seen with the 'enlightened eye', at a theoretical distance, it offers a new and challenging perspective on the mould which both casts and solidifies pupil and teacher behaviours and holds them in shape by its inherent conventions.

Our sight is so suffused with knowing we fail to know what we see. We must learn to know what we see rather than seeing what we already know. (Heschel, 1969, p.3)

When we see with new eyes and explore the limits and possibilities of differing kinds of behaviour settings we gain a more fine-grained appreciation of the extent to which our attitudes, aspirations and abilities are shaped by the places in which we work and play and in which we rub up against other people, whether temporarily or for more extended periods. It poses the question - to what extent does each familiar social setting dictate a certain form of behaviour and accompanying social convention? To what extent are our attitudes and expectations shaped by those settings? To what extent can we predict how people will behave and interact simply by the nature of the physical context, or 'container' in which they find themselves, for example, the football stadium, the church or mosque, the fairground, the dentist's waiting room, the pub, the plane, the lecture theatre and the classroom? All of these settings shape attitudes and feelings, sometimes on a temporary basis but often more insidiously over a longer time frame. And while behaviour settings have the capacity to liberate and inspire they can also be the root causes of stress, phobias and mental illness.

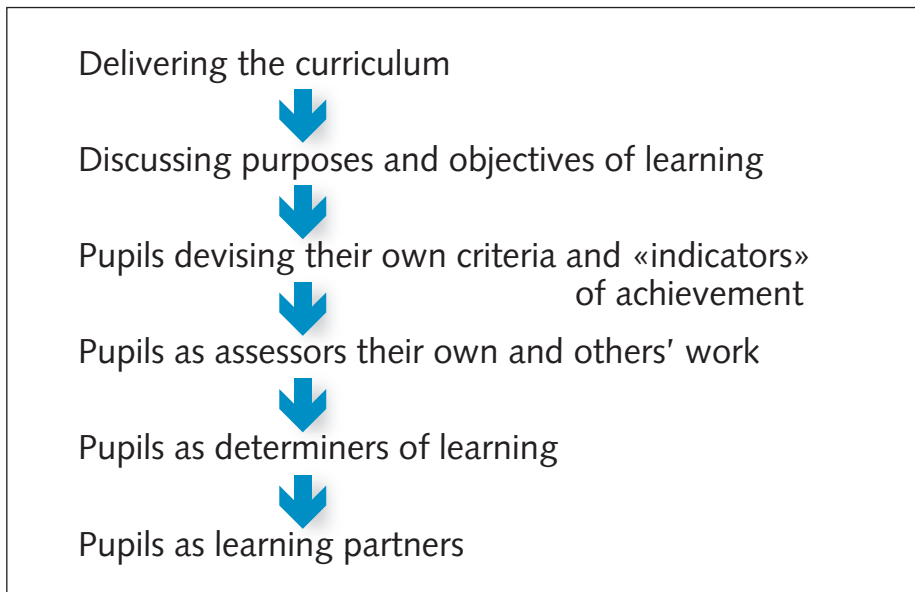
## Room to grow

What we learn from differing ecological niches in which children explore their feelings and discover themselves is the latitude the amount of 'room' (in both a metaphorical and literal sense) which these sites afford for emotional and intellectual growth on the part of children and the latitude they afford for teachers to grow in insight and agency. The tighter the setting and the more prescriptive its parameters, the less the

likelihood of transformational change. Testing, league tables and other competitive pressures on teachers 'cast a cloud, on the 'emotional' and intellectual' with too little room for teaching related to feelings or social commitment' (Lyard, 2009;103-4). In the case of children and young people, where tight constraints impose limits on initiative and freedom of association they will often exercise the creativity denied by conventions and find alternative outlets for their subversive energies. Since schools were invented, this has prompted the escape from the classroom, while imaginative teachers have always understood the frustrations of captive energy and have found ways of pushing back the boundaries of convention whether by field trips, inter-school, inter-family or inter-country exchanges, residential experiences and extra-curricular activities.

These extensions of the classroom may be complemented by finding alternative venues for learning and/or by creating and recreating the classroom as a different kind of learning environment. Examples of how teachers engage students in the remodelling of the classroom both in physical terms and in learning/teaching routines illustrate how learning and teaching may be re-invigorated. In a Rotterdam school, for example, a classroom teacher invites his students on the first day of a new school year to explore the classroom as a learning space and to engage with him in a design, or redesign, of the environment. This is open to being revisited in the course of the year as young people become increasingly aware of what may inhibit or promote their learning.

In a Cambridgeshire school in England, a teacher described a six-stage process that evolved over a period of two to three years with same primary class (in MacBeath, 2006:78).





It was, as she described it, a gradual maturing of expertise on both her part and the children's part that led them progressively towards a collaborative process of learning, and learning about learning. As she explained, having been with the same class for over two years, it takes time and patience and a high level of professional self-assurance to establish such a classroom climate and to recognise the seeds of the future in the present, the journey between H1 and their own self-determined third horizon.

While researchers consistently find that students' bonding with their teacher is important, and at its most crucial for the most vulnerable and unpopular of students, a number of factors may conspire to mitigate this - large class size, disciplinary demands, attending to children with special and complex needs, pressures to cover the curriculum and enough time to begin to develop a relationship of reciprocal trust. This emphasises the importance of teacher-student relationships in less pressurised settings in which teachers and young people are able to step out of role and enjoy a more reciprocal approach to their shared learning.

In such contexts, reported McNeely and Falci (2004), there were reliable and predictable improvements in students' psychosocial adjustment while there was a strong positive relationship between students' perceptions of teacher support and increases in self-esteem, with commensurate decreases in stress and depression.

Initiatives such as Playing for Success, the Children's University, forest schools, the Khan Academy, and outdoor centres (described in Chapter 5) are important in opening our eyes to the potential of alternative 'mindscapes', potential learning spaces to be mined by adventurous teachers. One of the important and less understood contributions of well-managed informal environments is in fostering peer relationship and friendships. There is persuasive evidence (e.g. Parry Langdon, 2008) to show that the larger the friendship groups that children enjoy, the less likely they are to experience behavioural and learning problems.

In 2006, the Scottish Executive wrote:

We see community learning and development as central to 'social capital' – a way of working with communities to increase the skills, confidence, networks and resources they need to tackle problems and grasp opportunities. We want community learning and development to bring together the best of what has been done under the banners of 'community education' and 'community development' to help individuals and communities tackle real issues in their lives through community action and community-based learning.

Who but teachers can build the intellectual, emotional and social bridge between the learning in the community and the learning in the classroom? Forging alliances with others whose work impinges on the lives of children is likely to be at a greater premium as schools become less and less removed from the communities they serve.

Teaching requires a progressive deepening understanding of how young people construct meaning from their experience, in differing situations and through the interplay of the various sites in which they struggle to find meaning and coherence – so powerfully illuminated in Weis and Fine’s collection of essays on ‘construction sites’ (Chapter 2).

The more we venture into this territory the more complex and contested becomes our knowledge of children’s learning, its social and emotional character and the precarious path that young people have to tread to make sense of what schools promise them. How to help children and young people bridge their learning across these disparate construction sites continues to elude school effects and other quantitative studies and poses new, and not always unwelcome, challenges for the teaching profession.

## Looking in the wrong places

There is apocryphal story of the drunken man looking for his keys under the lamppost, not near to where he actually dropped them but because that was where the light was. Policy solutions to the persisting achievement gap have consistently looked in the wrong place, to more testing, more targets, more, earlier, and longer time in the classroom and increased pressure – what was described in Chapter 1 as ‘intensification’.

If the way we think of change is limited by imagining things very much like the ones we know (even if ‘better’), or by confining ourselves to doing what we know how to implement, then we deprive ourselves of participation in the evolution of the future. It will creep up on us and take us unawares (Papert, 2004).

Those words, written in 2004, are a reminder of the growing disjunction between the context of classroom teaching and contexts of growing up. These words are reminder of the limitations and sterility of so much education policy. There is a telling health warning from the US where teachers’ ‘cheating’ has become endemic in a number of cities and school districts – a response to the systemic gap between the social world of children and young people and the world of policy makers. Among the many exposes in different parts of US, an 800-page report in Atlanta in July 2011 documenting the wide scale alteration of students’ test scores concluded that cheating had been going on for nearly a decade. It first came to light when the state noticed an alarming number of erasure marks on students’ answer sheets. Teachers and principals were rubbing out the wrong answers and filling in the right ones, the report said. At one school, the faculty even held weekend pizza parties to correct answers before turning them in. Over the course of a single year, scores at the school had jumped 45 per cent.

The report from the Georgia Office of Special Investigators makes clear the link between high-stakes testing and ‘cheating’ which, it asserted, was not produced by the failings of individual teachers but by a systemic pressure to achieve targets.



'A culture of fear, intimidation and retaliation spread throughout the district [and] ... emphasized test results and public praise to the exclusion of integrity and ethics'. The report said school leaders, often set impossible test score targets and 'put unreasonable pressure on teachers and principals to achieve targets'. (*How many testing scandals do we need as a wake-up call?* Washington Post, August 11, 2011). 'We were told to get these scores by any means necessary', claimed one fourth grade teacher. 'We were told our jobs were on the line'. The response of the school district to fire all teachers and administrators implicated in the scandal is a classic example of looking for the solution under the lamppost, in entirely the wrong place.

It does take such blatant manipulation of the system to bring to light the failings of policy at too far a remove from the classroom. It takes these extreme forms of playing the system to reveal the extensive damage to children, to teachers and their professional integrity of ill-conceived policies. How could teachers be trusted in the face of evidence of widespread cheating, it might be concluded? In Professor O'Neill's 2002 Reith lecture, *A Question of Trust*, she argued that professional trust had been eroded by simplistic accountability measures. "I think we may undermine professional performance and standards in public life by excessive regulation, and that we may condone and even encourage deception in our zeal for transparency...We need more intelligent forms of accountability," she concluded, echoing Richard Elmore's treatise on 'internal accountability' (2005) which defines a professional ethic as what one owes to one's colleagues and to children as the prelude to accountability elsewhere.

## Turning the tables on targets and testing

We do need to dare to be creative; we do need to shake off the oppressive burdens of targets, tests and tables. We have to free ourselves from the clutches of curriculum accountants and assessment auditors. And yes... it is high time to trust schools. (Mick Brookes, National Association of Head Teachers in England).

It is the 'we' in the above quote that is at the heart of the challenge. If the future of the teaching profession is to be different it will require that the 'we' is able to address Barnett's depiction of the 'struggle' for status, the tendency to conformity and compliance, and the urgent need to take back the definitions of good teaching and good schools from those who have misappropriated them.

Relative to other professions, teachers still have to wrestle for status and respect, and while they often are expected to be smart and entrepreneurial, they also are expected to be compliant and conforming. At the dawn of the 21st Century, good teaching and good schools are concepts defined not by successful teachers but by school boards, administrators, textbook companies, for-profit curriculum developers, and the testing industry. (Barnett, *The Future of the Teaching Profession*), <http://www.divinecaroline.com/22354/26969-future-teaching-profession>



Katzenmeyer and Moller's (2001) reference to 'awakening the sleeping giant of teacher leadership' is an apt metaphor as it captures both the dormant qualities of an underestimated and undervalued profession and the massive potential for leadership lying unexploited. Notions of 'leadership' are so imbued with mental models that teachers are often reluctant to see themselves as leaders or as exercising leadership. Even when they do exercise initiative beyond their own classrooms they tend to use a different language to describe their actions. While we have been conditioned to view 'agency' and 'leadership' as distinctive concepts, they are closely related.

Teacher leadership symbolises distribution...provides teachers the opportunity of exercising leadership beyond the limits of formal hierarchical leadership models within the school. It involves, 'not just a matter of delegation, direction or distribution of responsibility but rather a matter of teachers' agency and choice in initiating and sustaining change whatever their status  
(MacBeath, in Frost and Durrant, 2003, p. 174)

When teachers exercise their agency beyond the classroom, with colleagues, with parents and other agencies or with policy, they exercise leadership. When they do so as part of a collective endeavour leadership becomes a shared activity. Despite a body of writing on teacher leadership, much of it fails to grasp or explore the connections between individual agency and the collective. Teacher leadership is construed as a role or as status within the institutional hierarchy rather than captured in the flow of activities.

The roles and activities of leadership flow from the expertise required for learning and improvement, not from the formal dictates of the institution.  
(Elmore, 2008 in OECD, 2008)

In Italy, Brotto and Barzano (2008) describe a teacher workshop for aspiring principals in which a distinction is made between 'stare con' ('being with') and 'essere per' ('being for') - 'being with', marked by 'contagious' listening, empathy, teamwork and sense-making, allied with 'being for' as mutual empowerment and service to one another (2008: 235). There are strong resonances with Liebermann and Friedrich's accounts of teacher leadership in a US context.

They [teachers] learned to recognise the fear that accompanies sharing practice publicly and came to understand more acutely what underlies the reticence to expose practice to one's peers. They developed a wide range of strategies for building community, for drawing expertise from teachers' participating in professional development, for sharing knowledge and for sharing leadership with others. It encouraged them to work collaboratively and to go public with both their successes and their questions.  
(Liebermann and Freidrich, 2007, p. 49).



In Latin-American countries, Ecuador, Chile, Mexico and Paraguay, each with their own very different political and socio-economic histories, there appears to be a common growing understanding that teachers should less be passive recipients of policy direction and become more active participants in shaping the educational process (Aguerrando and Vezub, 2011).

It is through a culture of inquiry and self-evaluation deeply embedded in the daily routines of classroom life, that schools gain strength of conviction to expose what constrains authentic learning and, with an enhanced sense of agency, able to show how things can be different. (p.66)

The challenge required to change the minds of policy makers, parents and public is nowhere better illustrated than in countries of Eastern Europe where the weight of convention and authority are powerful disincentives to teachers exercising influence. The International Teacher Leadership Project, encompassing Eastern European countries has had, from the outset, to confront the deeply embedded cultural assumptions about who leads, who follows, who talks and who listens. As David Frost describes it, 'it attempts, on the part of teachers, to exercise leadership would be seen as subversive and illegitimate' by authorities and by teachers themselves 'seen as presumptuous and offending against the unwritten code that all members of the teaching staff are equal' (2011, p. 19).

Giroux (1992) leaves little room for compromise when he asserts that, no matter the oppressive cultural and political obstacles, 'teachers must take responsibility for the knowledge they organise, produce, mediate and translate into practice. If not there is a danger that they come to be seen as simply the technical intervening medium through which knowledge is transmitted to students, erasing themselves in an uncritical reproduction of received wisdom' (p. 120).

However, inherent in this counsel are two main assumptions. One is that there are senior leaders, confident and courageous enough to foster a culture in which teachers' professional autonomy may be realised, and secondly, that teachers have the strength, resilience and self-confidence of their own to assume agency and leadership beyond their own classrooms. The problem is that the greater the emphasis on the heroic head teacher or principal, the more disempowering it may be for teachers. There is an incipient danger in declaration such as the following from the UK Coalition Government.

At the heart of this Government's vision for education is the determination to give school leaders more power and control ... not just to drive improvement in their own schools – but to drive improvement across our whole education system (DfE 2010).

Head teachers, accountable to their political masters, owe an allegiance to the grand narrative of standards, targets, benchmarks and comparative performance, powerful

and oppressive in its hegemony, hard to resist and virtually impossible for teachers to counter as individuals. Where these policies fail teachers is when their individual or collective self-efficacy is dependent on a leadership structure which controls and mediates access to basic professional entitlements and agency. In these circumstances it frequently disempowers teachers' confidence in their own learning and leadership potential. While the term 'distributed leadership' has now entered the policy lexicon it appears to be understood as a form of hierarchical delegation in which teachers are allocated responsibility and commensurate accountability for compliance. If teachers are to take the responsibility and exercise the leadership that Giroux propounds, it requires a collective will and solidarity and the promotion of a counter culture premised on what we know about learning and teaching, and on what inhibits and what enhance it.

The opportunity for such collective will to be mobilised, writes John Bangs (2011), is when teacher associations/unions perceive, and act to fill, the vacuum left when intervention and support services are withdrawn. The progressive downward shift to local autonomy in many countries, motivated primarily for economic reasons, leaves the door for union-led professional development, policy discourse and policy influence at school, network and system level.

...with the responsibilities of the state for education receding it appears that unions have an opportunity to fill this vacuum...they have the opportunity to enhance the collective agency of teachers. The devolution of powers and responsibilities to schools, opens up significant opportunities for unions to provide the sites in which teachers can engage in professional discourse, exchange professional practice, and gain the confidence to lead professional change in their schools...teachers' own organisations can provide national professional learning communities in which teachers can both enhance their learning and contribute to the formation of policy (Bangs, 2011 forthcoming).

## Maps and map makers

Saussois' distinction between maps and map makers is a telling metaphor. He compares the map to a transcript. The map of the educational system as we see it may offer differing routes to our destination but however much we travel we cannot change the nature of the landscape which is laid out for us. In education to be a map-maker is to imagine different landscapes, to build up an image of what a system might look like in the future.

Reflecting the standards set out by the Teacher Development Agency, cited above, the implication of the OECD TALIS study is that teachers' self-efficacy is integrally about teachers proactively making a difference, not only to the learning of the young people they teach but to the policies and direction of their schools.



Leadership is expressed in a variety of ways, informally and formally, supporting, helping and guiding others as well as taking a back seat when appropriate, encouraging the work of colleagues. The flipside of leadership is followership, requiring the self-confidence to allow others to lead, whether at classroom, school or community level. Leadership is expressed as activity rather than as role or status. David Frost similarly takes issue with the ways in which teacher leadership tends to be cast as an assigned set of tasks, quoting Yukl's (1994) definition of leadership as 'intentional influence', as Leithwood and Riehl (2003) put it:

At the core of most definitions of leadership are two functions: providing direction and exercising influence. Leaders mobilise and work with others to achieve shared goals. (p. 2)

The idea of 'direction' can loom large in some people's minds. For them the word leadership immediately conjures up the idea of hierarchy with someone having the authority to take decisions that affect other people. Leithwood and Riehl's statement could be reframed by saying that 'leadership involves the mobilisation of, and working with, others to achieve shared goals'. This small change makes the conceptualisation more inclusive.

Good teachers have always known how to follow their own best instincts, innovating where innovation accorded with their priorities and resisting when policy dictate ran counter to their educational and moral values. Good teachers do not underestimate their own sense of agency and refuse to collude with the victim mentality which relinquishes initiative, self-belief and a sense of agency. They may be encouraged supported and empowered by the most forward looking of senior leadership teams who understand that schools learn and change from the bottom up. When such support is missing, however, they seek other sources of collegial counsel, drawing on their colleagues, their informal networks and the formal networks of their unions and professional associations.

There is a Spanish saying attributed to Antonio Machado, 'Caminante, no hay camino, se hace camino al andar' - Traveller there is no path. We make the path by walking. Leadership may be seen as creating the path for others to follow but, more adventurously, leadership is expressed in new untrodden paths, not necessarily to a predetermined destination but often to new and previously unforeseen destinations.

As Angus MacDonald, former head teacher and local authority adviser in Scotland warned, to stray too far from the well-trodden path is to enter Terra Incognita as 'Here be Monsters' (In MacBeath, 1998; 168) but risk, confidence and trust come from the strong collegial support that teacher organisations can offer to promote 'confident uncertainty' (Claxton, 2006). Phillipa Cordingley identifies a similar disposition in resilient teachers which she terms 'reciprocal vulnerability' (2012).

## Between the rock and the whirlpool

In Charles Hampden Turner's terminology, this is the 'dilemma space' which occurs between the rock and the whirlpool. The rock values – consistency, transparency, reliability, comparison of performance are counterpointed with the whirlpool values of choice, diversity, dynamism, spontaneity, autonomy. There are inevitably tensions between conservation and radical change, between certainty and uncertainty, between H1 and H3. As Leicester and colleagues argue, 'it is very easy to identify compromise solutions that suppress the tension without addressing it' (p. 35). They quote William Gibson's axiom that 'the future is already her, just unevenly distributed. But we first have to know what we are looking for'.

Three years ago at the OECD/CERI conference in Finland, Timo Lankinen outlined 11 aspects of what he saw as a third horizon:

- Ubiquitous technology, ubiquitous opportunity
- Collaborative, social-constructivist learning
- Problem-based teaching
- Progressive inquiry, experimental study
- Peer feedback and peer cooperation
- Contextual, authentic learning sites
- Networked local, technological and social forums of learning
- Hands-on, on-the-job, real-life learning arrangements
- On-line study in virtual environments through social media, with mobile tools
- Blended teaching methods, hybrid learning resources
- Public-private partnerships (Lankinen, 2008)

There is an old standard joke of someone asking the way to his destination and being told, 'Well, if I were you I wouldn't start from here'. Realising Lankinen's ubiquitous collaborative, networked and exploratory principles would ideally not start from here but, as Finland has been one of the first countries to recognise, it will be a destination difficult or impossible to achieve without adventurous partnerships with the associations and unions who speak for teachers.

## Making the connections

Ben Levin, of the University of Toronto, identifies a direct connection between strong teacher organisations and the success of educational systems.

A lot of education rhetoric these days includes mention of the supposedly negative impact of teacher unions on reforms. For a few commentators, eliminating union opposition is one of the most essential, or even the most single, most



important component in creating improvement, while for many others it is part of the package. But here is an interesting observation. Virtually all the top-performing countries on international education measures have strong teacher unions, including Finland, Korea, Japan, Canada, Australia and others. Of course, such a relationship does not imply causation but it does suggest that there is no necessary conflict between strong teacher unions and good outcomes. Moreover, some countries or sub-national units that took steps to weaken the influence of their unions did not demonstrate any subsequent improvements and, in some cases, such as England, later had to take many measures to improve the situation of teachers to get an adequate supply and, thus, improve student results. (Levin, 2010)

He goes on to argue that teacher organisations can have a key role in creating a knowledge base of professional practice and in finding, ‘better ways of organising and supporting professional learning, a child supported by teachers’ (p. 1). This view is endorsed by Nina Bascia, who has conducted extensive research as to the relationship between policy-makers and teacher unions (for example, Bascia, 2009).

The fact, teachers’ unions are nearly the only organisations that have paid substantive attention to the actual conditions of teachers’ work... because they are rarely invited to the table to discuss substantive policy issues with education decision-makers, teachers’ organisations can only react after the fact to decisions that have already been made. (p. 3)

While forums for teacher organisations with governments have existed and, indeed, do exist, it is in Europe that they are most commonly found. A form of social partnership existed between education unions, employers and the governments in England and Wales between 2002 and 2010, and similar forms of dialogue exist in countries such as Finland and Norway. (For a description of the origins and backgrounds of such partnerships, see Bangs, J. (2006) ‘Social Partnership: The Wider Context’, *Forum: For Promoting 3-19 Comprehensive Education*.)

Despite their relative rarity, there is enough evidence to show that dialogue between teacher organisations and government can be productive irrespective of whether they are bounded by formal agreements. The evidence, as well as the belief by teacher organisations that they can make a policy difference on behalf of teachers, provides fertile ground for research on enhancing teacher leadership and for providing policy guidance to all associations and unions who speak for teachers.

The roles and activities of leadership flow from the expertise required for learning and improvement, not from the formal dictates of the institution”. (Elmore, 2008 in OECD, 2008)

Forward thinking which brings teacher associations, academics and policy makers to the same table has been led by the National Board in the United States, the catalyst for a range of significant initiatives in teacher leadership. *Teacher Leader Model Standards* developed by the Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium in the US whose members range from representatives of the NEA and the AFT to representatives of the US Department of Education, education departments in a number of States, higher education and the Education Testing Service (ETS). (Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium, 2011). Both teacher unions have taken the lead on writing the model standards and setting up a website to promote them.

Discussion as to the future of the teaching profession may assume that the shape of that future will be defined by the soothsayers, think tanks, policy apparatchiks and corporate gurus. While all may stake a claim to that discursive space, their ambitious blueprints will fail to materialise without the engagement of those closest to the action, in touch on a daily basis with the lives of children and young people. That implies a dialogic intent and a large measure of goodwill. 'Dia logos', the Greek term from which we derive our much misused word, may be translated as 'meaning flowing through it', a process of engagement which begins with a desire to understand and to seek out the future already in the present.

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